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## **Creating Family Resilience in Indonesia: A Study of “Marriage Guidance” Program in Aceh and South Sumatera**

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### **Abstract:**

Indonesia still experiences the increasing of divorce rates. To address this issue, the government through the Ministry of Religious Affairs has carried out several strategic programs, including Bimbingan Perkawinan (Marriage Guidance). The

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study of this paper examines the influence of the program on family resilience in the provinces of Aceh and South Sumatra. It used the normative approach in sociological studies. Data were collected by means of interviews, document studies, and questionnaires. The results of the study by referring to the questionnaire and interview show that the program in Aceh and South Sumatra has been running well. However, it has not been able to create family resilience and the divorce rate still keeps increasing. It is expected that post-marriage counseling should also be conducted so that married couples can establish family resilience as aspired within the community and country.

**Keywords:**

Marriage Guidance; Family Resilience; Legal Sociology;  
Aceh and South Sumatra

**Abstrak:**

Indonesia terus mengalami kenaikan angka perceraian. Untuk mengatasinya, pemerintah melalui Kementerian Agama meluncurkan beberapa program strategis, salah satunya adalah Program Bimbingan Perkawinan. Artikel ini membahas pengaruh program Bimbingan Perkawinan terhadap ketahanan keluarga di Aceh dan Sumatera Selatan. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan normatif sosiologis dengan menggunakan teknik pengumpulan data wawancara, studi dokumentasi dan angket. Hasil penelitian berdasarkan angket dan wawancara menunjukkan bahwa program Bimbingan Perkawinan di Aceh dan Sumatera Selatan telah terlaksana dengan baik. Akan tetapi, program tersebut belum dapat memberikan kontribusi secara signifikan pada ketahanan keluarga sehingga tingkat perceraian masih tinggi. Oleh sebab itu, program semacam ini seharusnya juga dilaksanakan sesudah pernikahan sehingga ketahanan keluarga akan terwujud sebagaimana diinginkan oleh masyarakat dan negara.

**Kata Kunci:**

Bimbingan Perkawinan; Ketahanan Keluarga; Sosiologi  
Hukum; Aceh dan Sumatera Selatan

## **Introduction**

Family resilience is a central theme not only in Indonesia but also in other Muslim countries. It has been pursued by reforming the family law acts in several countries such as Egypt in 1929, Syria in 1953, Tunisia in 1957, Morocco in 1959, and Iraq in 1959. These acts primarily aim to reflect benefit and justice in the forms of the regulation of minimum marriage age, marriage registration, divorce, *iddah* (waiting period for widow) maintenance, women's rights and protection, child care, mediation of family conflicts, and *waqf* (endowments).<sup>12</sup>

According to Islamic law, child care is known as *hadhanah*, which is later called *kafalah*. In Morocco, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates, *kafalah* is the care and raising of children as a measure not to legalize adoption. *Kafalah* becomes a legal alternative in maintaining a biological lineage to continue the family line.<sup>3</sup> In Pakistan, meanwhile, the government's efforts to strengthen family resilience included the enactment of the Muslim Family Law Ordinance in 1961. Through this regulation, the divorce procedure and guarantees for women after divorce were made stricter as an effort to protect women.<sup>45</sup> In Malaysia, the Act of the Islamic Family Law in Federal Territories was enacted in 1984. The Act, implemented by the Sharia Court, regulates the age limit for marriage, divorce, polygamy, *hadhanah* rights, and mediation in court. The Act is applied in the Federal Territories and

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<sup>1</sup> Tahir Mahmood, *Family Law Reform in The Muslim World* (Bombay: Tripathi PVD LTD, 1972).

<sup>2</sup> Nur Taufiq Sanusi, "Diversity in Muslim State Legislation (Comparative Study of Islamic Family Law Pakistan, Egypt and Indonesia)," *Jurnal Al-Qadau* 4, no. 2 (2017): 331-34.

<sup>3</sup> Andrea Büchler and Eveline Schneider Kayasseh, "Fostering and Adoption in Islamic Law-Under Consideration of the Laws of Morocco, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates," *Electronic Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law (EJIMEL)* 6 (2018): 31, <http://www.ejimel.uzh.ch>.

<sup>4</sup> Anderson JND, *Islamic Law in Modern World* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959).

<sup>5</sup> Fatum Abubakar, "Islamic Family Law Reform: Early Marriage and Criminalization (A Comparative Study of Legal Law in Indonesia and Pakistan)," *Ahkam: Jurnal Syari'ah Dan Hukum* 4, no. 2 (2019): 97-118.

States in Malaysia with slight differences.<sup>67</sup>

In Indonesia, efforts to create family resilience began with the enactment of Law No. 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage and then proceeded with Presidential Instruction No. 1 of 1991 known as the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI; *Kompilasi Hukum Islam*). The two regulations basically regulate marriage registration, marriageable age, dowry, divorce, maintenance provided by the husband after divorce, child guardianship, and all issues related to marriage and divorce as well as their legal consequences. Bowen, Hooker, and Salim consider that KHI is one of the steps for codifying contemporary Islamic law in Indonesia which mostly refers to the Shafi'i school as well as three other schools (Maliki, Hanafi, and Hanbali) and also the *fatwas* (rulings) or *ijma'* (consensus) of Indonesian *ulemas* (Islamic scholars).<sup>891011</sup>

Meanwhile, studies on the high divorce rates in Aceh and South Sulawesi have found the causes beyond the rate which range from economic factors, education, and lack of religious understanding, social media, and early marriage, to lack of empathy for husband/wife obligations. Such high divorce rates have led to negative impacts on children, families, and the nation. To overcome

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<sup>6</sup> Muslim Ibrahim and Muhammad Safiq Imran bin Samsudin, "Prosedur Poligami Di Malaysia (Analisis Undang-Undang Keluarga Islam Wilayah Persekutuan)," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 2, no. 1 (2018): 1-26.

<sup>7</sup> Tarmizi M. Jakfar and Nur Azizah Fayyadhah Binti Baharuddin, "Peran Majelis Sulh Dalam Penyelesaian Hak Hadhanah Pasca Perceraian (Studi Kasus Mahkamah Syariah Kabupaten Tawau, Provinsi Sabah, Negara Malaysia)," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 2, no. 1 (2018): 195-125.

<sup>8</sup> John R Bowen, *Islam, Law, and Equality in Indonesia: An Anthropology of Public Reasoning* (Cambridge: University Press, 2003).

<sup>9</sup> MB Hooker, "Southeast Asian Sharī'ahs," *Studia Islamika* 20, no. 2 (2013): 206-8.

<sup>10</sup> Arskal Salim, *Contemporary Islamic Law in Indonesia: Sharia and Legal Pluralism* (Edinburgh UK: Edinburgh University Press, 2015).

<sup>11</sup> Ahmad Khoirul Anam, "Penerapan Hukum Keluarga Muslim Di Asia Tenggara: Sebuah Perbandingan," *Jurnal Bimas Islam* 10, no. 1 (2017): 129-145.

this issue, the government has made several efforts including organizing pre-wedding courses, providing marriage sermons to strengthen families and prevent divorce, organizing happy family competitions, and designing marriage guide modules for prospective brides and grooms.<sup>12</sup>

The study of family resilience in Indonesia is important to particularly examine how effective the program in maintaining the marriage bond and eradicating the high divorce rate. The selection of Aceh and South Sumatra as research locations is because of divorce rates in both areas. South Sumatra is one of the ten areas with the highest divorce rate in Indonesia. Meanwhile, although Aceh is excluded from the top ten, its rate is categorized as high. In 2022, the divorce rate (filed by wives) in South Sumatra is 2,473 while the divorced divorce (filed by husbands) is 8,719 making 11,192 the total number. Meanwhile, Aceh numbered 4,532 divorced and 1,558 divorced divorces, 6,090 divorce cases in 2020.<sup>13 14</sup>

More importantly, even though government programs have been implemented, the divorce rate continues to increase. This implies that things have not been running effectively. Therefore, this study will discuss one of the government's programs to enforce family resilience and its impact on reducing the divorce rate ranging from the definition and coverage of family resilience, the urgency of the program, to its effect on the divorce rate in the context of Aceh and South Sumatra.

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<sup>12</sup> Mursyid Djawas and et.al, "The Government's Role in Decreasing Divorce Rates in Indonesia: The Case of Aceh and South Sulawesi," *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 21, no. 1 (2021): 163-188.

<sup>13</sup> Ahmad Naufal Dzulfaroh, "10 Daerah Dengan Angka Perceraian Tertinggi Di Indonesia", in [https://www.kompas.com/tren/read/2022/03/09/062500765/10-Daerah-Dengan-Angka-Perceraian-Tertinggi-Di-Indonesia?page=all](https://www.kompas.com/tren/read/2022/03/09/062500765/10-daerah-dengan-angka-perceraian-tertinggi-di-indonesia?page=all), Accessed on May 22, 2022.," n.d.

<sup>14</sup> Khalis Sury, "Angka Perceraian Di Aceh Capai 6 Ribu Lebih Pada 2020, [www.Antarane.ws.com](http://www.antarane.ws.com), Accessed on May 22, 2022.," n.d.

## Method

This study used the normative approach in sociological studies or empirical law.<sup>15 16</sup> It utilized the theory of law as a means of social engineering that helps shape society. It believes that the law's function to create an ordered society can be seen in legal relations and social change.<sup>171819</sup> While the data collection techniques used were interviews, documentation studies such as relevant laws and legal regulations, marriage modules, and distributed questionnaires to religious educators, Offices of Religious Affairs (*Kantor Urusan Agama*) staff, and the public in general. The informants interviewed were the Head of the District Ministry of Religion (1 person), the Head of the Religious Affairs office (3 people), and 1 person from the Religious Counselor in Aceh and South Sumatra.

## Discussion and Result

### Definition and Coverage of Family Resilience and the Indonesian Government's Effort to Create It

Creating and developing family resilience is not only the responsibility of the government but also role of society. Village officials can partake in helping to resolve family disputes through customary or *'urf* mechanisms so that disputes can be avoided.<sup>20</sup> Various efforts have been made by the Indonesian government to create family resilience while suppressing high divorce rates.

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<sup>15</sup> Salim HS and Erlies Septianan Nurbani, *Penerapan Teori Hukum Pada Penelitian Disertasi Dan Tesis (Buku Kedua)* (Jakarta: Rajawali Persada, 2017).

<sup>16</sup> Munir Fuady, *Metode Riset Hukum: Pendekatan Teori Dan Konsep* (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 2018).

<sup>17</sup> Munir Fuady, *Teori-Teori Besar (Grand Theory) Dalam Hukum* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2020).

<sup>18</sup> Satjipto Rahardjo, *Hukum Dan Masyarakat* (Bandung: Angkasa, 1980).

<sup>19</sup> Sri Astuti A Samad, "Kajian Hukum Keluarga Islam Dalam Perspektif Sosiologis Di Indonesia," *El-Ussrah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 4, no. 1 (2021): 138-52.

<sup>20</sup> Mursyid Djawas and Sri Astuti A Samad, "Conflict, Tradition and Family Resistance: The Pattern of Dispute Resolution in Acehnese Community According to Islamic Law," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 4, no. 1 (2020): 65-84.

They include making legal regulations that tighten the rules taken on by the husband to divorce his wife. The government, for instance, enacted the 1974 Marriage Law and 1991 KHI which stipulate that divorce can only be done before a court. This state rule is a formulation of Islamic law derived from *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) rules and the opinions of Islamic scholars.<sup>2122</sup> The attempt aims to help create family resilience.

Families, which consist of fathers, mothers, and children, play a crucial function for each of them. The functions of a family have been described in the Government Regulation No. 21 of 1994 concerning the Implementation of Prosperous Family Development in paragraph (1). They discuss (a) religious function, (b) socio-cultural function, (c) love function, (d) protection function, (e) reproductive function, (f) socialization and education functions, (g) economic function, and (h) environmental development function.

In addition, experts also explain that there are eight family functions consisting of reproduction (for the preservation of the social system), maintenance (care and child care), placement (giving social positions to family members), socialization (embedment of social values so that children can socially be acceptable), economics (sufficient for the needs of family members), care of the ages (care for elderly family members), political center (providing a political position in the community they live in), and physical protection (physical protection, especially clothing, food, and housing).<sup>23</sup>

In the Law No. 52 of 2009 concerning Population and Family Development (abbreviated as Law on PKPK; *Perkembangan Kependudukan dan Pengembangan Keluarga*), as a complement to the Law No. 10 of 1992, "family resilience" and "prosperous family" are mentioned in one article, namely Article 1 paragraph (11). Family

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<sup>21</sup> Mark Cammack and et.al., "An Empirical Assesment of Divorce Law in Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 4, no. 4 (1997): 93-108.

<sup>22</sup> Maimun and et.al., "The Development of Fiqh Munakahat Ini Madurese Islamic Universities and Its Relation to Gender Equality and Divorce Prevention," *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pranata Sosial* 15, no. 2 (2020): 279-300, <https://doi.org/>. <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-ihkam.v15i2.2734>.

<sup>23</sup> Imam Barnadib, *Pemikiran Tentang Pendidikan Baru* (Yogyakarta: Andi Offset, 1983).

resilience and welfare are described as a dynamic condition in which families have tenacity and toughness as well as physical and material abilities to live independently and develop themselves and their family members to live harmoniously in increasing physical and spiritual well-being and happiness.

Meanwhile, according to the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, family strength or family resilience is a condition of adequacy and continuity of access to income and resources to meet various basic needs ranging from food, clean water, health services, opportunities, education, housing, time to participate in society, and social integration. Another view defines family resilience as a dynamic family condition that has the tenacity, toughness, and physical, material, and mental abilities to live independently. Family resilience also implies the ability of the family to develop itself to live in harmony, prosperity, and happiness both physically and mentally. It involves the ability of the family to manage resources and problems to achieve prosperity and the ability to survive and adapt to various conditions that are always changing. Further, family resilience is defined as the ability of the family to ward off or protect itself from various problems or life threats, either from within the family itself or from outside the family such as the environment, community, society, and the state.<sup>24</sup>

In other words, family resilience is the tenacity and resilience as well as the physical-material and psychological-mental spiritual abilities of a family in dynamic conditions to live independently and in harmony. There are three factors that support family resilience: 1) Physical endurance, which illustrates that the better the physical resources, the lower the physical problems will be and that better problem-solving in a family encourages better physical well-being; 2) Social resilience, which is described in the better non-physical resources, the lower handling of non-physical problems will be; and 3) Psychological resilience, illustrating that the lower the non-physical family problems experienced, the better the psychological well-being

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<sup>24</sup> M. Wardi et al., "Entrepreneurship and Financing in Islamic Educational Institution of Darul Ulum Banyuanyar Pamekasan," *Academy of Entrepreneurship Journal* 25, no. Special Issue 2 (2019).

will be.<sup>25</sup>

There are at least, therefore, five aspects that indicate the level of resilience of a family: 1) the attitude of serving each other, 2) the existence of intimacy between husband and wife towards a good quality of marriage, 3) the availability of parents who teach and train their children with various creative challenges, consistent training, and skill development, 4) the existence of husband and wife who lead all members of their family with great affection, and 5) the presence of children who obey and respect their parents.<sup>26</sup>

Accordingly, Khoiruddin Nasution states that family resilience has several indicators as follows: first, the family has tenacity and resilience, and second, the family has the physical and material abilities to 1) live independently, 2) develop themselves, 3) live harmoniously and 4) increase the welfare of physical and spiritual happiness.<sup>27</sup>

Of the many functions of the family, there are three functions that are almost irreplaceable by institutions outside the family, namely:<sup>28</sup>

*First* is the biological function in the form of regeneration/continuation of offspring. It can be understood as the parents' function to regenerate and carry on offspring by which the parent (mother) gives birth to children who are the successors of the family (regeneration) and at the same time become the basis for the survival of society.<sup>29</sup>

In the Qur'an, there are several verses that explain this biological function, such as QS. ash-Shuraa (42): 11 which reads, "(He is) the Originator of the heavens and the earth. He has made for you

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<sup>25</sup> Valentina Siwi Saridewi, Armaidly Armawi, and Djoko Soerjo, "Penggunaan Teknologi Informasi Komunikasi Dalam Manajemen Asi Bagi Ibu Bekerja Guna Menjaga Ketahanan Keluarga (Studi Anggota Grup Facebook Asosiasi Ibu Menyusui Indonesia)," *Jurnal Ketahanan Nasional* 22, no. 1 (2016): 76-93.

<sup>26</sup> Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, "Pembangunan Ketahanan Keluarga" (Jakarta, 2016).

<sup>27</sup> Khoiruddin Nasution, "Peran Kursus Nikah Membangun Keluarga Sejahtera," *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 15, no. 2 (2015): 183.

<sup>28</sup> Khairuddin, *Sosiologi Keluarga* (Yogyakarta: Nur Cahaya, 1985).

<sup>29</sup> Khairuddin.

spouses from among yourselves, and (made) mates for cattle (as well)-multiplying you (both). There is nothing like Him, for He (alone) is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing.” Another one is the verse of QS. an-Nahl (16:72) that reads, “And Allah has made for you spouses of your own kind and given you through your spouses’ children and grandchildren, and He has granted you good, lawful provisions.”

*Second* is the affective function or feeling of love both by loving and being loved. It suggests that parents (father and mother) have a function to build the creation of a relationship of love and affection between family members; initially establishing love between spouses and then continuing with love among parents and children. From this loving relationship, a generation is born, and from this generation, fraternal relations, friendships, habits, identification, common views regarding values, views of life, attitudes, and character are also born. The basis of love and affection is an important factor in the personal development of children.

The function of love and affection is also described in QS. Ar-Rum (30:21) states that Allah has placed upon spouses the seeds of love and affection to be nurtured so that they will grow stronger. Such love and affection will then be passed on to their posterity.

*The Third* is the social function which is also known as the socialization function. In the family context, it is related to how family members socialize the living values in society with the children. This function shows the role of the family in shaping the children’s personality (character) because, through social interaction in the family, children learn patterns of behavior, attitudes, beliefs, ideals, and values living within society. This function is performed to ensure good personality development for children. As such, the function of socialization is synonymous with the function and process of forming a child’s character (morals). Morality is highly significant in Islam as the main mission of the Prophet Muhammad saw (peace be upon him) is, in fact, too perfect morals.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Moh. Wardi and Ismail Ismail, “Following The Prophet Muhammad Character Through Ngabuleh Tradition in Pondok Pesantren Darul Ulum Banyuanyar Pamekasan,” *EL HARAKAH (TERAKREDITASI)* 20, no. 1 (June 1, 2018): 49, <https://doi.org/10.18860/el.v20i1.4473>.

Additionally, Law No. 52 of 2009 stipulates that family resilience can be measured using a systems approach which includes input components (physical and non-physical resources), family management processes (family problems and coping mechanisms), and outputs (fulfillment of physical and psycho-social needs). This approach indicates that family resilience is a measure of the family's ability to manage its problems based on the available resources to meet the needs of its members. Thus, a family is said to have a high level of family resilience if it fulfills several aspects, comprising: 1) physical resilience, which refers to the fulfillment of food, clothing, housing, education, and health needs; 2) social resilience, which is oriented to religious values, effective communication, and high family commitment; 3) psychological resilience, which includes the ability to overcome non-physical problems, positive emotional control, positive self-concept, and husband's concern for his wife.<sup>31</sup>

In a short words, family resilience is considered one of factor of harmony that exists in the household with an implication for harmony in society. Therefore, the values of family resilience based upon religious values need to be understood as a shared need in the family in order for harmony and happiness as the ultimate goals of marriage can be realized.<sup>32</sup>

### **The Urgency of Marriage Guidance Program in Indonesia**

The Marriage Guidance program is considered an effective way to maintain the marriage bond through providing in-depth understanding and marital knowledge to the bride and groom. It is designed to facilitate both to know the world of marriage as an effort to make marriage bond tough passing through several problems and challenges ahead.

Etymologically, guidance is the process of providing assistance by an expert to any individual, such as children, adolescents, and adults so that the individual can develop his/her

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<sup>31</sup> Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, "Pembangunan Ketahanan Keluarga."

<sup>32</sup> Rizqi Maulida Amalia, M. Yudi Ali Akbar, and Syariful, "Ketahanan Keluarga Dan Kontribusinya Bagi Penanggulangan Faktor Terjadinya Perceraian," *Jurnal Al-Azhar Indonesia Seri Humaniora* 4, no. 2 (2017): 134.

own abilities and be independent.<sup>33</sup> Guidance can utilize individual strengths and other suggestions to be developed based on applicable norms.

Meanwhile, according to the Compilation of Islamic Law, marriage is a strong solemn covenant or *mitaqan ghaliza* aiming to obey Allah's rules because carrying out marriage is an act of worship. Shafi'i scholars are of the view that the essence of the covenant is when it is related to the life of husband and wife that applies afterward, i.e., they are allowed to get along after marriage so that before the covenant takes place, the two of them are not allowed to get along.<sup>34</sup>

From the explanation above, it can be understood that marriage guidance means giving advice or guidance to prospective brides and grooms before carrying out the marriage contract. The legal basis for the Marriage Guidance is the Decree of the Director-General of Islamic Community Guidance No. 379 of 2018 concerning Instructions for Implementing Premarital Marriage Guidance for Prospective Brides and Grooms. The Decree states that the basis for implementing marriage guidance is as follows: the 1974 Marriage Law, the Government Regulation No. 45 of 2013 concerning Procedures for the Implementation of the State Revenue and Expenditure Budget, the Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs No. 34 of 2016 concerning the Organization and Work Procedure of the Subdistrict Office of Religious Affairs, and the Decree of the Director-General of Islamic Community Guidance No. DJ.III/600 of 2016 concerning Technical Guidelines for the Management of Non-Tax State Revenue for Marriage or Reconciliation Fees outside the Subdistrict Office of Religious Affairs.

The Marriage Guidance program covers the following objectives: 1) to provide teenagers of marriageable age, namely prospective brides and grooms, with sufficient knowledge prior to entering married life, 2) to establish a strong and sustainable household towards the creation of a *sakinah* (tranquil) family, and 3) to

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<sup>33</sup> Printo and Erman, *Dasar-Dasar Bimbingan Dan Konseling* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 1999).

<sup>34</sup> Amir Syarifuddin, *Hukum Perkawinan Di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2011).

minimize the number of disputes, divorces, and domestic violence.<sup>35</sup>

The enactment of regulations and legal rules related to Marriage Guidance which then makes participation of the program one of the requirements for carrying out marriages shows that this program is considered very important. In reality, however, Marriage Guidance has not properly been conducted and it is still a formality. Therefore, this program should receive serious attention and be improved and developed according to the needs and developments of society. Further, the government should also pay considerable attention to this issue before it becomes a problem that may affect the quality of the next generation.<sup>36</sup>

Marriage Guidance is supposed to help to generate a prosperous family and family resilience which ultimately affect the welfare of the nation. To achieve this, prospective brides and grooms are required to possess sufficient competence and understanding of marriage before the marriage takes place. One of the efforts to obtain such knowledge and understanding of marriage is by participating in the Marriage Guidance program.<sup>37</sup>

Khoiruddin Nasution asserts that Marriage Guidance holds an important role in helping to achieve national development goals by creating a prosperous family. Thus, this program, according to him, should receive considerable attention from the government and all related institutions from the national to the village level. In addition, the financial support for the program should also be prioritized in the national and regional budget funds.<sup>38</sup> Additionally, cooperation at the lower level between families, communities, and the Offices of Religious Affairs is deemed essential to create *sakinah* families and family resilience.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Achmad Muhlis et al., "Students' Destructive Behavior Towards The Teacher in The Teaching and Learning Process," *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan Dan Kemasyarakatan* 1, no. 1 (2021): 21-46, <https://doi.org/10.21154/cendekia.v1i1.2392>.

<sup>36</sup> Nasution, "Peran Kursus Nikah Membangun Keluarga Sejahtera."

<sup>37</sup> Nasution.

<sup>38</sup> Nasution.

<sup>39</sup> Erie Hariyanto, Maimun, and Ainurrahman Hidayat, "Pencapaian Keluarga Sakinah Melalui Pemberdayaan Ekonomi Di Desa Buddagan

The Marriage Guidance program is one of the national strategic programs launched by the Ministry of Religious Affairs to respond to the high divorce rates in Indonesia.<sup>40</sup> However, the data shows that divorce rates are still increasing. Even, according to a report by the Religious Courts of the Supreme Court, there has been an increase every year since 2015 (394,246 cases), 2016 (401,717 cases), 2017 (415,510 cases), and 2018 (444,358 cases). In 2020, as of August, the number has reached 306,688 cases.<sup>41</sup>

As such, family resilience is highly necessary. In this context, it can be understood that family resilience is closely related to the high divorce rate. It means that the higher the level of family resilience, the lower the divorce rate that occurs in society.

### **The Impact of Marriage Guidance Program on Family Resilience in Aceh and South Sumatra**

Based on the questionnaires distributed in two provinces, namely Aceh and South Sumatra, the answers from respondents consisting of religious instructors, KUA (*Kantor Urusan Agama*; Office of Religious Affairs) staff, and the community in general can be explained as follows;

#### **1. The Government has Strived to Create Family Resilience**

The first notion of the questionnaire is whether the Indonesian government has made efforts to create family resilience in Indonesia by implementing a Marriage Guidance program. Relating to this, a questionnaire was distributed to check this program. The result of the questionnaire can be seen in Chart 1 below.

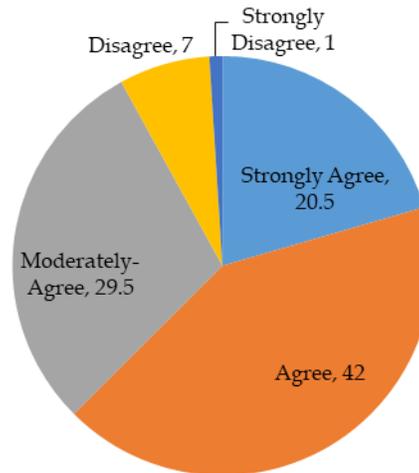
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Kecamatan Pademawu," *Pêrdikan: Journal of Comminuty Engagement* 2, no. 1 (2020): 1-9.

<sup>40</sup> Munawwarah Qatrunnada, Munawwarah Nur Rofiah, and I. Abdul Qadir, F., & Muzayyanah, "Modul Bimbingan Perkawinan Untuk Calon Pengantin" (Jakarta, 2017).

<sup>41</sup> Djawas and Samad, "Conflict, Tradition and Family Resistance: The Pattern of Dispute Resolution in Acehnese Community According to Islamic Law."

**Chart 1.** The Societies' Response to Government's Effort to Create Family Resilience



Based on Chart 1 above, the questionnaire showed that 27.5% of the respondents strongly agree with the notion. 56% agree, 12.5% moderately agree, 5% disagreed, and 3.5 % strongly disagreed. The findings here indicate that people generally believe that the Marriage Guidance conducted by the government through the Ministry of Religious Affairs can help to create family resilience for couples who are about to get married.

Fithria Mursyidah, a religious counselor of KUA Bukit Kecil, Palembang, described that the Marriage Guidance program, known as *sucatin* (*kursus calon pengantin*, a course for prospective bride and groom), is carried out regularly every week on Tuesday from 10.00 am to 12.00 pm. Before the marriage contract is held, the KUA will organize the program which every prospective bride and groom is obliged to follow regardless of whether the marriage is held at the KUA or at home. Religious counselors will also always recommend prospective brides and grooms participate in the program.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>42</sup> "Interview with Fithria Mursyidah, Religious Counselor of Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) Bukit Kecil, Palembang, April 7, 2020," n.d.

## **2. Marriage Guidance Helps to Create Family Resilience**

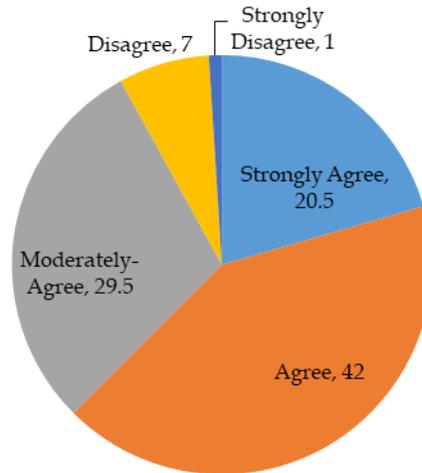
The statement that Marriage Guidance is able to help establish family resilience has been admitted by Daiyul Ma'ruf, a staff at KUA in Baiturrahman Subdistrict, Banda Aceh City. He argued that the program has been very good because it has provided adequate facilities and infrastructure. However, he added, Marriage Guidance would sometimes not be conducted regularly due to a time shift in any sudden change. It means that sometimes after the staff has set a day, the bride and groom don't come; they will move it to another day.

Nevertheless, according to him, the influence of the program has been highly influential on family resilience because of the wide range of knowledge it provides. The Marriage Guidance has greatly increased prospective brides' and grooms' knowledge, especially regarding the rights and obligations of the husband and wife. As such, this program can be useful in preventing divorce and building family resilience; In general, the program carried out by the Ministry of Religious Affairs plays an instrumental role in the resilience of marriages.<sup>43</sup> To ensure the argument, a question was specifically designed to check whether the program affects positively to family resilience. The result of the questionnaire can be seen in Chart 2 below

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<sup>43</sup> "Interview with Daiyul Ma'ruf, Staff of Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in Baiturrahman Subdistrict, Banda Aceh, March 23, 2020," n.d.

**Chart 2.** Respondents' response to the notion that Marriage Guidance creates family resilience



Based on Chart 2 above, it can be known that 30.5% strongly agree, 60% agree, 6.5% moderately agree, 1% disagrees, and 2% strongly disagree. Chart above shows that most of the respondents agreed that the Marriage Guidance has a positive effect on family resilience.

### **3. Marriage Guidance Helps Increase Knowledge for Spouses**

In response to whether Marriage Guidance program can increase knowledge about the rights and obligations of husband/wife, a question was distributed to respondents. The result can be seen in Chart 3 below.

**Chart 3.** Respondents' response to notion that Marriage Guidance adds more marital knowledge

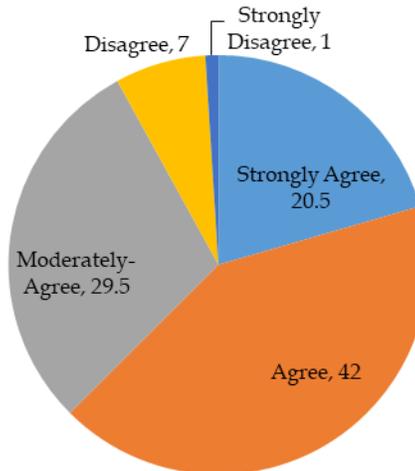


Chart 3 above shows the percentage of various answers on whether the Marriage Guidance adds more knowledge about the rights and responsibilities of wife and husband. It can be seen that 47.5% of the respondents strongly agreed with it. 50.5% agreed, 2% disagreed, while none disagreed nor strongly disagreed.

Regarding this matter, Saiful Bahri, The Head of KUA in Syiah Kuala Subdistrict, Banda Aceh, is of the view that the Marriage Guidance program organized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs has been running quite well as the Ministry has provided relevant facilities to conduct the program. Prospective brides and grooms are required to partake in the program because it is a requirement prior to marriage. However, the human resources (instructors and KUA staff) who carry out the program, for him, need capacity building, both regarding their performance and their knowledge. Also, the budget provided by the government in this program has been relatively low and thus, the facilities needed for prospective brides and grooms have not been met properly.

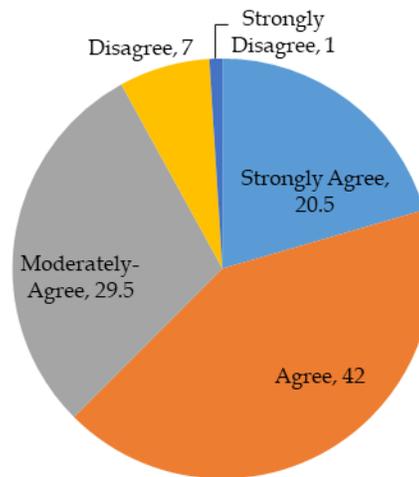
Nevertheless, the program was regarded to provide a number of effects, either directly or indirectly, on the resilience of the family. One important effect is that it adds significant knowledge about the rights and obligations of the husband and wife. Therefore, it can be

helpful in preventing divorce. Couples who do not follow the program may bear the possibility of divorce bigger than those who made it because they might not likely be able to distinguish between rights and obligations properly and correctly. The program conducted by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, above all, for him, is a great effort in preventing divorce among prospective married couples.<sup>44</sup>

#### **4. Marriage Guidance Helps to Prevent an Increase in Divorce**

Another notion is that the program is very much useful for preventing the increase in divorce in Indonesia. To prove this, we distributed the questionnaires and it shows that most of the people agree that marriage guidance helps to prevent divorce. It is then presented in Chart 4 below:

**Chart 4.** Respondents' opinion that Marriage Guidance prevents divorce



From Chart 4 above, it can be seen that 41.5% respondents strongly agreed that the program is useful for preventing an increase in divorce. Other 50% agree, 6% moderately agree, 2% disagree, and 5% strongly disagree.

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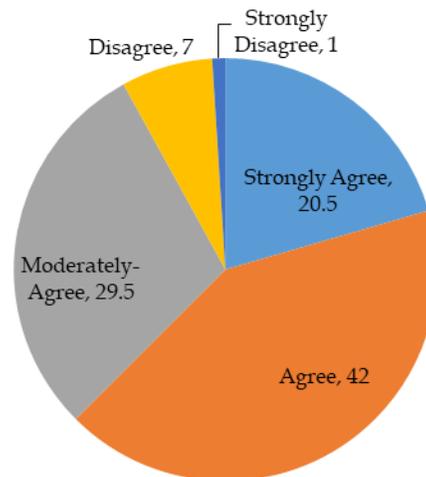
<sup>44</sup> "Interview with Saiful Bahri, Head of Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), Syiah Kuala Subdistrict, Banda Aceh, March 23, 2020," n.d.

Fithria Mursyidah explained that Marriage Guidance has been implemented for almost 12 years ever since she became a newcomer in 2008. It aims to provide prospective married couples knowledge and insight about household things so that they can avoid getting divorced.<sup>45</sup> It was also mentioned that prospective couples who follow the program will obtain more knowledge of marriage law and marriage issues.<sup>46</sup>

### 5. Likelihood of Divorce for Prospective Couples Not Attending Marriage Guidance

In regard to the possibility of prospective brides and grooms who do not take a part in Marriage Guidance program experience a divorce, the questionnaire was also distributed. The result can be seen in Chart 5 below.

**Chart 5.** Respondents' belief about the big chance of divorce for those who did not take the Marriage Guidance program



<sup>45</sup> "Interview with Fithria Mursyidah, Religious Counselor of Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) Bukit Kecil, Palembang, April 7, 2020."

<sup>46</sup> "Interview with Tgk. Ahmad Adami, Religious Counselor of Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), Muara Satu Subdistrict, Lhokseumawe, March 25, 2020," n.d.

It can be seen from Chart 5 above that there were 20.5% of people strongly agree, 42% agree, 29.5% moderately agree, 7% disagree, and 1% strongly disagree.

Toni Ariandi, the Head of KUA Hilir, Bukit Kecil, Palembang, said that the program has been applied since the Ministry issued the regulation as an attempt to prevent divorce. Marriage Guidance at KUA Hilir is a requirement that prospective married couples need to take. In the past, the program was used to be carried out by a *penghulu* (marriage registrar), but at present, it is scheduled to carry out at the KUA office in accordance with existing regulations. The activity has been organized for a number of couples and regularly conducted for two days, with each day running for eight hours.<sup>47</sup>

The findings from questionnaires here reveal that Marriage Guidance program has an effect on family resilience in Indonesia, especially in Aceh and South Sumatra. However, it is still difficult to accurately measure the level of influence of marriage guidance on family resilience, whether it is small, medium, or large, as the divorce rates in Indonesia, in general, remain considerably high.

To date, the Marriage Guidance programs have also been well implemented in Lhokseumawe and Central Aceh, as confirmed by the Head of KUA Banda Sakti Subdistrict, Lhokseumawe City. He described that the program has been a routine activity carried out by the KUA so that if prospective couples do not attend it, they cannot get married there. This activity has been properly organized by the government for prospective brides and grooms.<sup>48</sup>

Nevertheless, Ahmad Marjan, the Head of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Central Aceh, is of the view that Marriage Guidance program has little effect on family resilience. He argued that family resilience is derived from within the married couple so the program has not served any influence on the resilience of a family. Still, Marriage Guidance has helped to increase the knowledge of couples regarding their rights and obligations since the program has provided explanations clearly and in detail. However, he added,

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<sup>47</sup> "Interview with Toni Ariandi, Head of Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) Hilir, Bukit Kecil, Palembang, April 9, 2020," n.d.

<sup>48</sup> "Interview with Ibnu Hasyim, Head of Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), Banda Sakti Subdistrict, Lhokseumawe, March 25, 2020," n.d.

Marriage Guidance has not been beneficial for the couples because the resilience of the family will depend on the couple themselves in carrying out the marriage. Thus, if a couple wants to get married without attending the program, it will not contribute to a divorce. As a program promoted by the Ministry, sometimes it has little effect in reducing divorce rates, and in principle, family resilience can be also achieved by couples without any marriage guidance or other same programs.<sup>49</sup>

Ahmad Marjan's opinion here indicates that one of the factors to promote family resilience relies on the way married couples manage their own family matters. Both spouses certainly play an influential role in creating family resilience. Nevertheless, divorce rates in Indonesia show an increasing trend and many divorce cases also come from couples with decent educational backgrounds.

The findings of the study have shown that Marriage Guidance has been well applied in Indonesia, especially in the provinces of Aceh and South Sumatra. In addition, as one of the government's efforts, it has also been recognized to have an impact on developing family resilience. Still, the ever-increasing divorce rates in Indonesia remain a huge concern. In this case, apart from conducting the pre-marriage guidance program for prospective brides and grooms, it is suggested that the government also carries out post-marriage counseling for married couples to help solve marital issues. This post-marriage counseling can be implemented in the same procedures as the pre-marriage guidance, being a regular activity that follows the appropriate guidance module of the Post-Marriage Counseling program.

### **Conclusion**

Based on questionnaire and interview data as well as the results of the analysis of the Marriage Guidance program in the provinces of Aceh and South Sumatra, it has been running well as one of the requirements for prospective brides and grooms prior to getting married. Moreover, as one of the government's efforts, it is supported by relevant human resources, facilities, infrastructure, and budget.

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<sup>49</sup> "Interview with Ahmad Marjan, Head of Office of Ministry of Religious Affairs, Central Aceh, Aceh Province, March 26, 2020," n.d.

However, this has not prevented the high divorce rate in Indonesia yet, including in South Sumatra and Aceh. Therefore, a follow-up program is necessary, such as post-marriage counseling. It is expected that such counseling offers married couples further knowledge about marital issues and it can eventually help to create resilience within the family.

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