

Communication Strategy for Religious Counseling Counseling in Minimizing Divorce in Gunung Meria District, Aceh Singkil Regency

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to find out what counseling communication strategies are used by religious instructors in Gunung District, Aceh Singkil Regency to reduce divorce rates, as well as what follow-up steps they take to ensure the strategy has the desired effect. To conduct this qualitative study, the researcher interviewed a religious figure from Mount Meriah who he considered an expert in his field. Non-participant observations, interviews, and key documents were used to collect information about participants in the marriage counseling program, sakinah family, marriage counseling program, and other factors relevant to this research involved in the counseling process concurrently as priest and teacher. The consultation services provided are also still not effective due to the lack of people who are aware of the duties and functions of BP4 related to marriage consultation and fostering sakinah families. Researchers found that unmarried individuals who had previously been registered with the Office of Religious Affairs in Gunung Meriah Regency were the most likely to attend marriage counseling. Every bride-to-be is expected to feel more secure in their wedding plans after attending marriage counseling and receiving materials on topics such as: planning a wedding with a sakinah family; managing marriage and family dynamics; meet family needs; maintain family reproductive health; prepare the next generation for success; and managing conflict and building family resilience. Participants in the marriage mentoring program felt confident in their ability to continue their marriage, and the program also succeeded in meeting the needs of the bride and groom.

Keywords

communication strategy; religious; counseling



I. Introduction

To achieve the objectives, the strategy requires careful preparation and competent leadership. However, to get there, the strategy can't just be a roadmap showing where to go; it should also show operational tactics. A communication strategy is a plan and approach for using communication to achieve a set of goals.

Humans, it is believed, must try to improve their physical and social environment, so planning is needed. People are hard-wired to solve problems. As thinking creatures, humans have the ability to change their lifestyle, away from the shackles of the past and toward the comforts of the present. The planning philosophy is based on the idea that people want to improve their lives, and that they will make changes to do so, with the best

possible outcome and, if those results do not materialize, will make adjustments to achieve them. Large number of people with the intention of influencing them to change their actions.

Humans as social and civilized creatures, with their intelligence and knowledge, need a set of laws to bind them as husband and wife, making their marriage legal and full of responsibility. When two people tie the knot, it is the start of a new chapter in their life together as they start raising a family and creating a home. Those who live together and are led by someone who has family ties are considered as family (whether by blood, marriage, or otherwise).

Communication is an integral part of being human. Every aspect of life, from casual conversation to specialized learning, requires some form of interaction and information exchange. Transmission and interpretation by the communicator are both components of communication. Positive changes in the views, values, and actions of the communicator should be anticipated as a result of the process.

Ustadz and the Ministry of Religion work together in several ways, one of which is to offer guidance for sakinah families, Islamic religious counseling, and guidance services. The Ministry of Religion and Islamic Teachings has organized courses for prospective brides as part of the service for fostering sakinah mawaddah warrohman families in accordance with the Decree of the Director General No. 373 of 2017. It is hoped that Islamic religious educators who are at the forefront of the ministry will be able to organize and participate in such events to play a methodical and significant role in society and fulfill their role in the field of joint efforts and long-term sustainable development. In accordance with the role of Islamic religious educators as educators, informants, consultants, and protectors of the community. Based on the background of the problem above, the researcher is interested in studying how the Communication Strategy for Religious Counseling Counseling in Minimizing Divorce in Gunung Meriah District, Aceh Singkil Regency is used.

II. Research Method

It is important to note that this study is qualitative in nature. Qualitative research is a method of collecting information that can be described. That is, conducting research in natural settings (hence the name Naturalistic approach to learn more about phenomena of interest (natural settings). Furthermore, qualitative research is research that produces written or oral data.

In this investigation, the researcher used contextual data in the form of narrative stories provided by knowledgeable sources. The research team gathered information from in-depth interviews and document review to answer research questions about premarital counseling for brides-to-be. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Descriptive research is research that aims to provide a comprehensive picture of the current state of the subject or object of research.

The analysis aims to provide a descriptive solution to the existing problems. Any quantitative (numeric) examples are included for the purpose of clarifying the analysis and strengthening the research arguments presented.

Qualitative studies are studies that generate new insights and theoretical frameworks through methods that have not been tried before. Rather than relying on numbers full of percentages, qualitative research tends to pursue verbal data that is more representative of phenomena.

Such studies are considered qualitative because they do not rely on numerical calculations or statistical analysis to draw conclusions, but instead use a more in-depth scientific approach that produces results that cannot be achieved through more traditional measurement methods.

III. Discussion

3.1 Factors causing divorce in Gunung Meriah District, Aceh Singkil Regency

Divorce in Gunung Meriah District, Aceh Singkil District, is driven by a variety of issues, reflecting the diverse nature of the population. Here are the elements to consider.

a. There is no Harmony

When a husband and wife decide to file for divorce at the Syaria Court of Aceh Singkil, one of the reasons they give is the lack of harmony in their relationship. The absence of harmony in the household is the biggest factor that causes constant squabbles and disputes that will lead to divorce rates. This is due to bad attitudes and behavior from the husband or wife, such as husbands often being rude to their wives, husbands rarely coming home, husbands who are not independent (always dependent on parents) and husbands who are always more concerned with their families than the wife. Likewise, the wife does not obey her husband's orders, or does not carry out her obligations as a wife.

b. No Responsibility

The Aceh Singkil Syaria Court also accepted "not guilty" as the reason for the divorce. Ignoring one's responsibilities in one's own household is a prime example of a lack of responsibility. Due to frequent absences, the husband is not financially responsible for maintaining the household.

c. Economy

Many domestic arguments can be traced back to money issues or other financial strains on one or both partners. The financial situation of the family is very important for its development and growth, and often determines the fate of the individual family unit. The economy isn't everything, but it's a big problem, and without it, there would be a lot of problems.

Tuti Handayani was interviewed at the Syaria Court in Aceh Singkil, and the findings showed that the husband was unable to provide for his family financially for various reasons.

d. Education

Learning is essentially a cognitive process that has the support of psychomotor functions (Arsani, 2020). According to Nurgiyantoro in Putriyanti (2019), religious education values are high spiritual values and absolutely come from human belief in God. Low education is a major contributor to the high divorce rate in Aceh Singkil, which is directly linked to the increasing prevalence of first marriage among youth in the region. Divorce is always affected by a lack of education, according to Tuti Handayani at the Singkil Aceh Syaria Mahkamah getting married to assign adult responsibilities, but divorce rates are rising quietly behind the scenes.

e. Moral Crisis

There is a moral emergency because of the husband's treatment of his wife and children. The husband often yells and is rude to his wife, and neither of them treats her with

the respect she deserves as a wife. This ethical dilemma stems from the husband's doctrinal obedience. The wife wants her husband to pray, fast, and carry out other religious orders, but he refuses and opposes it and instead continues to carry out dangerous behaviors such as gambling, drinking, and so on.

f. Third Party Interference

One of the root causes of marital discord is outside interference. If the divorce is attributed to a “third party”, then the cause of the break in relations is not only between husband and wife, but also by several external factors. According to information compiled through interviews with judges, third party intervention is the presence of a third party or the presence of another Ideal Woman (WIL) in domestic life, both of which contribute to the breakup of a marriage. The main source of marital discord is when one partner finds out that the other has or is in a romantic relationship with another woman (cheating). Divorce is a common result of marital discord, and only human beings are disillusioned by their spouse's infidelity.

g. Religious Conversion

The divorce rate in Aceh Singkil Regency is higher than the national average, partly because of the high number of marriages conducted there with the intention of one of the partners changing religions. That is, if a husband and wife were of different religions before they got married, and at least one of them changed religions because they liked each other, the marriage could not continue. However, it is this religious issue that causes divorce after the couple binds themselves, such as the desire of one partner to change religion (apostasy) due to daily interactions, which in turn creates the desire of the other couple to marry someone else.

h. Adultery

Adultery, having sexual relations with someone other than the spouse during marriage, is another cause of concern in divorce. What happens adultery outside of marriage is due to courtship and adultery of husband and wife is due to infidelity and this is due to the lack of knowledge about religious knowledge.

i. Marriage without Love

A marriage that does not have love in the husband and wife relationship will make it difficult to solve a problem in the husband and wife relationship because there is no cooperation in producing the best decision. So marriage should be carried out with love between both parties.

j. There are Problems in Marriage

Family problems are inevitable, so it's important for couples to learn effective communication and conflict resolution skills, such as being honest and respectful with each other.

3.2 Communication Strategy for Religious Counselor Counseling in minimizing divorce in Gunung Meriah District, Aceh Singkil Regency

Religious teachers are tasked with fostering growth in their communities according to established goals, which need to be supported by well-defined strategies. To reduce the occurrence of divorce, religious leaders share advice on how to build a *sakinah mawaddah, warohmah* family, maintain family resilience, and effectively deal with household problems. When couples are able to work together to solve problems and make decisions through

mutual discussion and compromise, this presents both opportunities and risks in the context of formulating this counseling communication strategy. While one of the parties is not present at the mediation and no attempt is made to reconcile or reconcile, the party faces the threat that will arise if the two parties come into conflict and then fail to find a satisfactory agreement efforts to reduce divorce. According to Michael Kaye's communication management theory, the first line of communication for an extensionist is with himself, and this takes the form of planning. Specifically, the operational work plan is an activity that describes every activity contained in the annual work plan so that it clearly describes the goals, objectives, timing of the implementation of religious guidance and counseling activities to be carried out.

An extension worker's primary responsibility is to collect and analyze demographic information about the population he or she is trying to reach; from there, he or she can formulate strategies on how best to reduce the incidence of divorce in assigned areas by adapting their communication methods to the specific demands of their job. By carrying out their duties and functions as extension agents for the ministry of religion, extension workers play an important role in reducing the number of divorce cases in certain communities through various programs and activities and perform at the top level.

Through the use of group communication strategies, such as marriage guidance activities for brides and grooms organized by KUA or carried out by extension workers using guidance and counseling activity materials delivered through the taklim assembly, extension workers have been able to fulfill their responsibilities to educate society about marriage. As Mukhlis, a religious instructor on duty in the Gunung Meriah sub-district, said:

"Efforts made by extension workers to the age of pre-marital and husband and wife are to build a sakinah family for the prospective bride and groom and provide education to the bride and groom about the duties and obligations of husband and wife. Marriage guidance is carried out 1 or 2 weeks before the Kabul consent is carried out". Likewise, what has been done by Asma Laili BP4 on duty in the Gunung Meriah sub-district said: "They immediately came to the husband and wife's office and came for consultation on household cases. But there are also times when they are doing it at the taklim assembly."

The extension agent's responsibilities include carrying out formal and informal activities, such as guidance and counseling in the target group or providing time for the community to conduct counseling at the instructor's residence via cell phones and social media. This is what Gepeng Rambe, an extension worker in Gunung Meriah sub-district, said in an interview about his role as facilitator:

"I often receive complaints about household problems from the community, the number is erratic. Usually the consultation comes directly. The problem experienced is about economic factors. The methods used are dialogue, education and mediation affect the continuity of their household to make peace, but if a consensus cannot be reached, he also asks for directions on how to apply for a religious court.

As a mediator, the extension worker is in a position to help break the relationship between the conflicting parties by bringing them together and directing them in a mutually agreed direction. The neutrality of the counselor is essential to this process, which aims to encourage fighting couples to make up and live together peacefully. This is what Mukhlis, a religious leader from the Gunung Meriah area said: "Mediation is often done by making calls through letters, some people come and reconcile, some don't come. However, an extension worker never recommends divorce.

Extension efforts in minimizing divorce are by being a resource for marriage guidance to prospective brides, delivering material about the sakinah family in guidance and counseling activities and receiving family consultations. Then, the sakinah family is guided and supported, and becomes a source for married couples seeking advice. In accordance with

the previous description, extension workers carry out counseling communication activities, such as education and mediation, in an effort to reduce the number of divorce cases by focusing on the couple's interpersonal relationships.

Through the consultation and mediation stages, where the extension worker uses a pattern that provides more enlightening alternatives to the problem presented, the conflicting partners begin to open up in the communication process, enabling a two-way flow of information. Many different strategies, both formal and informal, are used by extension workers in their efforts to reduce the number of divorces in the communities they serve. Researchers build a descriptive framework based on data collected through observation and interviews to describe the stages of this process.

Researchers found that extension workers did not always follow standard procedures for completing various tasks; this may be due to the fact that not all extension workers follow the same work schedule or engage in the same number of activities, as instructed by religious leaders: "Congregants who receive education from religious instructors do not always solve their marital problems, but many also which adds only adds insight into marriage".

Despite the fact that the statement above shows the use of informative communication during the counseling process at the educational stage, the instructor's success in carrying out educational efforts has not been maximized because during the guidance and counseling activities, the instructor's religion only conveys no interactive dialogue, and the instructor also sometimes does not know that the congregation is experienced household problems and some of the congregation received the material of piety. Extension workers, on the other hand, carry out guidance and counseling activities in the target group consistently, systematically moving through the stages of the counseling process. To facilitate the mediation process and its stages, as well as to educate the engaged couple through events such as the marriage guidance taklim assembly, mediators carry out activities such as conducting private or small group consultations with disputing household partners, mediating conflicts between disputing spouses through the use of assertive communication, and so on carried out by interested parties if mediation is carried out by outside parties. The process carried out in an effort to reduce the divorce rate is carried out systematically and thoroughly for extension workers who understand their roles and responsibilities; on the other hand, there are more than a few extension workers who do not understand their roles and responsibilities or do not understand the steps to be taken. Most extension workers fail to carry out their functions and responsibilities outside the mediation stage of the education process. The role of facilitator and advocate has not been used often because it is considered difficult and time consuming.

The guidance system is carried out on three things; firstly strengthening the spiritual perspective of marriage, secondly justice and mutuality, thirdly the ability of participants or prospective brides to become partners. When experiencing difficulties in implementing Suscatin, Bimwin or counseling, fellow extension workers communicate well with other extension workers.

Personally, if the BP4 instructor faces problems in the implementation of guidance, he must try to find new strategies to deal with these difficulties. For example, looking for the root of the problem when facing difficulties in conducting coaching, then all relevant parties work together to discuss and find the best solution for the difficulty guidance on marriage and domestic matters. If there are prospective brides who after being contacted to attend a prenuptial course, but they do not come, then after marriage, the submission of marriage certificates is suspended until they come to attend the course.

Depending on who prefers to get out of the marriage, divorce can take many different forms. There are four different types of results here:

- a. The death of either husband or wife ends the marriage because it was God's plan all along. Because of death, marriage cannot continue forever.
- b. It is the husband's discretion, for certain reasons, and in certain languages, to dissolve the marriage. Talak is the Arabic word for divorce in this way.
- c. When a wife sees something forcing her to end her marriage but her husband doesn't, the wife has the final say in the matter. When a husband wants to leave the marriage and expresses that desire in a certain way, the wife usually accepts it and she will break the marriage in her own words. The term "khuluk" is used to describe this type of divorce.
- d. A legal separation occurs when one spouse files for divorce after the other has experienced or witnessed circumstances that made maintaining the marriage impossible. This method of divorce, known as "fasakh", is common in some Muslim countries.

The reasons for divorce are listed as one of the causes of divorce in Article 116 of the Compilation of Islamic Law in Indonesia, including:

- 1) One partner engages in behaviors that are difficult to treat, such as adultery, excessive drinking, compulsive gambling, etc.
- 2) Without the approval of the other party and without any good reason or due to circumstances beyond his control, one of the parties leaves the other party for 2 (two) consecutive years.
- 3) After marriage, one of them is threatened with a minimum imprisonment of 5 (five) years.
- 4) One party engages in horrific acts or severe abuse, putting the other party in danger.
- 5) Serious illness or injury prevents one partner from fulfilling his or her role as husband or wife.
- 6) There is no way for husband and wife to resolve their differences and return to a state of harmony at home.

3.3 Which is the Inhibiting Factor and Solution in the Counseling Communication of Religious Instructors in Minimizing Divorce in Gunung Meriah District, Aceh Singkil Regency

Constraints faced various efforts and programs have been carried out by extension workers in collaboration with the head of the KUA, and the Islamic Guidance Section of the Regency Ministry of Religion, in order to minimize the divorce rate. However, the results are not directly proportional to the divorce rate in Gunung Meriah District, which is increasing every year. Most of the informants who are extension workers and the head of KUA admit that the performance of extension workers is still not effective in minimizing the divorce rate in Gunung Meriah District as a formidable challenge for religious instructors in maximizing the performance of fostering sakinah families and minimizing divorce rates.

The religious instructors also acknowledged that they faced both internal and external obstacles. Internal constraints include aspects of competence or resources for religious instructors at the Sub-district KUA office which still need to improve their insight and competence. As an extension worker, it is necessary to understand and fully understand the character of the prospective husband and wife, then be given guidance and understanding of the conditions in the family that will later be fostered. The Suscatin, Bimwin and counseling processes carried out so far by extension workers only suggest the importance of fostering a sakinah family. Changes in the context of improvement are urgently needed in conveying material for the bride and groom, as well as after the bride.

Extension workers need to always make system changes, so that participants can participate in counseling activities properly. Likewise, the presenter Suscatin, in order to

develop methods of delivering material and increase his scientific insight, so that participants feel interested in this activity. According to Al-Sadar (BP4 instructor), matters related to external constraints include obstacles in the implementation of the bride and groom which are carried out at the KUA office. The time is very limited, so they do not have the opportunity to have a dialogue with the bride and groom. The reason is budget constraints so that competent experts such as psychologists or academics cannot be involved.

There are still many brides and grooms who think that it is not too important to attend a pre-wedding course. The participants of the bride and groom sometimes do not attend the same time, so that not all the material for the bride and groom is followed. men) come from outside the region. The short time and implementation make it difficult for the bride and groom to follow the guidance material, because it is carried out consecutively for two days. The implementation of guidance at the Ministry of Religion's office has a very limited budget, so the number of participants is limited.

Another obstacle is inadequate facilities and infrastructure. For example, a narrow meeting room, which can accommodate a maximum of fifteen couples. In the process of implementing Suscatin and Bimwin, it was found that there were many things that became serious challenges for religious instructors. For example, some catin do not understand their duties and responsibilities as husband and wife. Sometimes there are catin who are underage. This is very vulnerable to divorce, even though there is a dispensation from the court. It was found that many catin were still illiterate in the Koran. Because they did not know Koran, then to understand religion in depth is still very difficult. There are still many catin who do not fully understand the meaning and purpose of marriage.

Most of the prospective bride and groom have not yet matured preparations to build a household, both in terms of age and in terms of responsibilities in fostering a household. Psychologically, it appears that the prospective bride and groom lack the ability to take solutions, when there will be disputes between families, so that the development of the sakinah family will not be achieved as desired by the government, especially BP4 extension workers.

Constraints in conducting counseling are usually difficult to manage time between spouses and extension workers. For example, because sometimes there are programmed activities at the Aceh Singkil Ministry of Religion, so that not all catin receive guidance. Post-marital counseling also has problems with the awareness and seriousness of young couples to come for further information and guidance (Rahmad Sadli, head of KUA, Gunung Meriah) the background of the low level of community education and the lack of public awareness about the mindset and attitude in dealing with household conditions and problems are also obstacles reflected, basically BP4 and the Ministry of Religion need an evaluation to be more creative and innovative in providing information, thus sparking awareness of young couples to follow guidance consultative services from BP4 extension workers have not been effective.

When there is a household problem, they go directly to the PA who should have received advice from BP4 at the sub-district level. When they want to get a divorce, the couple no longer goes to the BP4 or KUA instructor for advice, but goes directly to the PA office to arrange a divorce trial. Another thing is because of the desire of the divorced couple to complete the divorce faster, so there is no need to go to the KUA for advice. Even if someone comes to consult their household problems, the problem is that no one can mediate from the family or friends. As a result, after the counseling there is no follow-up or control that should be the authority of family or friends.

There needs to be cross-sectoral collaboration with PA, for example, there must be regulations governing the divorce system or mechanism. Those who want to divorce must first get guidance from a religious counselor at the sub-district level only about 10% of

couples or one of them come to BP4 for advice and guidance. Quantitatively, the consultative role of BP4 instructors is still less effective. In fact, when referring to the main tasks and functions as BP4 instructors, it is a consultative role for people who have problems in the household. This requires more intensive socialization to increase public awareness that BP4 is a consultative and communication institution if there are problems in the household. To about 10% of couples who come for consultation, BP4 extension workers must try to provide maximum service to those who are experiencing problems in the household.

The consultation service, if necessary, brings the parents of each partner for guidance, so that they can advise each of their children. If one partner wants a divorce, the other must first be counseled to determine the issues that led to the spouse's decision to separate.

Family members of BP4 extension workers should be approached with as much persuasion as possible. When all other avenues for reconciliation have been exhausted, couples are advised to seek a settlement through the religious court, which requires them to present the following documents: original marriage certificate, photocopy of marriage certificate, certificate from village head, photocopy of family card, and photocopy of birth certificate children, all of which must be stamped.

If both parties are cooperative and willing to talk about problems in their marriage, it will be easier to offer guidance to someone who is considering divorce. The good faith of a married couple who is supported by the social and family environment. The willingness of a married couple to come and be willing to give advice regarding the problems they face and easily accept solutions. The willingness of a troubled married couple to come for advice, guidance, and direction.

Marriage at a young age can have a negative impact on a family by increasing the likelihood that couples will fight and eventually separate. Teluk Rumbia Village, Singkil District, Aceh Singkil Regency is one example of an area experiencing an increase in the marriage rate of teenagers and young adults. People who marry at a young age often don't really consider the long-term effects of starting a family. They just focus on moving in with their partner as soon as possible, rather than making plans for their future together.

The Advisory Council for the Advancement and Defense of Marriage is a non-profit group that works to strengthen marriages. The main focus of this group is to reduce marital discord by providing resources and support to couples experiencing conflict. When both parents work, it can cause stress at home. Achieving the goals of the Indonesian people, namely a just and prosperous society and a happy and prosperous family, requires cooperation. All this can only be solved with improved institutions. If BP-4 is to be effective in preventing divorce, the sole purpose of BP-4 must be to facilitate the peaceful resolution of conflicts between husband and wife.

Discussions or interviews between BP4 officers and the parties to the dispute are just two of the methods used by the advisory body in Aceh Singkil District to resolve marital conflicts. Thus, the problem can be determined, and BP-4 can then offer advice on how to fix it. BP4 gives a decision to the disputing couple and asks for clarification. If husband and wife cannot resolve their issues amicably, there is no need to involve the family in the process until later. Advisory Body for advice on how to proceed with fixing the problem. The Advisory Council prays that they can mend their differences and stay together.

In Aceh Singkil, most divorces can be attributed to financial difficulties. The Singkil Sharia Court received 59 applications for divorce between January and May 2022, including information on 37 divorces and 22 divorces."So until May 2022, there have been 59 divorce cases".

IV. Conclusion

Aceh Singkil Regency has a high divorce rate because domestic disputes are common there. When husband and wife have constant and unresolved arguments, divorce may be the only option. Because he has no sense of responsibility towards his family, the husband is blamed for everything and everyone's misfortune.

Higher economic demands, especially when the wife is not aware of her husband's ability to earn a living, are a contributing factor to divorce in Aceh Singkil District. This is consistent with the consequences of marrying at a young age that lack of education is a major cause of divorce, as it prevents husbands and wives from developing a mature mindset and, thus, being unable to make good plans and plans avoid making hasty decisions that could have a long-lasting negative effect on their relationship. A moral crisis ensued, and the husband stopped caring about his family. Many divorces occur in Aceh Singkil Regency because of third party interference and unhealthy polygamous behavior, especially polygamy without the knowledge of the first wife.

However, in reality, the divorce rate in Gunung Meriah District has increased significantly every year. This shows that the extension program in terms of marriage guidance is still not effective due to various internal and external constraints.

The obstacle experienced by religious instructors and BP4 in their activities is the lack of awareness of partners to participate in counseling. The lack of time for the extension workers is due to the fact that the instructor sometimes doubles as a priest and teacher. The consultation services provided are also still not effective due to the lack of people who know the duties and functions of BP4 related to marriage consultation and fostering the sakinah family.

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