INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

ISSN(print): 2643-9840, ISSN(online): 2643-9875

Volume 09 Issue 03 March 2026

DOI: 10.47191/ijmra/v9-i3-12, Impact Factor: 8.685

Page No. 981-988

Reconstruction of Marriage Guidance and Its Relevance to Family Resilience in Palu City: A Maqashid Syariah Perspective

Sitti Nurkhaerah[1], Marzuki[2], M. Taufan B[3]

[1,2,3]Department of Islamic Law, Postgraduate Studies, Universitas Islam Negeri Datokarama Palu, Indonesia

ABSTRACT: This study is motivated by the limited effectiveness of premarital guidance as a preventive instrument for strengthening family resilience in Palu City. Although the program is normatively supported by policy and religious foundations, empirical findings reveal a gap between program design and its implementation. This condition highlights the urgency of reconstructing premarital guidance to better respond to the real needs of families. The study aims to reconstruct premarital guidance and analyze its relevance to family resilience from the perspective of maqāṣid al-sharī'ah. This research employs an empirical qualitative approach through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation involving program administrators, facilitators, and participants. Data were analyzed thematically to identify implementation patterns and program effectiveness. The findings indicate that program effectiveness is influenced by limited resources, predominantly normative approaches, and weak evaluation and sustainability mechanisms. The impact of premarital guidance on strengthening family resilience remains limited. Therefore, reconstruction based on maqāṣid al-sharī'ah is required through strengthening institutional actors, developing contextual materials, and applying participatory and sustainable methods. Such reconstruction is expected to enhance the preventive function of premarital guidance in building systemic family resilience.

KEYWORDS: Reconstruction of Premarital Guidance; Family Resilience; Maqasid al-Sharīah

I. INTRODUCTION

To achieve family resilience, the government has issued a policy on family development through marriage counseling. Marriage counseling is a process or program designed to help couples who are about to marry or are already married build a healthy, harmonious, and sustainable relationship (Farnam, Pakgohar, & Mir-mohammadali, 2011; Trainer, 1979). The goal of marriage counseling is to help couples understand their roles and responsibilities in marriage, develop effective communication skills, resolve conflicts, build intimacy, and prepare them to face challenges that may arise in marriage. Marriage counseling is considered a valuable investment in the marital relationship and can help couples overcome the difficulties they may encounter along the way.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs implemented the marriage guidance concept through a policy involving a premarital course program, known as the prospective bride and groom course or Suscatin (Fadhilah, Kustini, & Atieqoh, 2025). This is stipulated in Regulation No. DJ.II/491 of 2009 of the Director General of Islamic Community Guidance, which Regulation No later updated. DJ.II/542 of 2013 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of Premarital Courses. The purpose of this course is to increase knowledge and understanding of family life, aiming to create harmonious, loving, and compassionate families while reducing conflict, domestic violence, and divorce. The Suscatin policy was further strengthened in 2019 by the Ministry of Religious Affairs' Pusaka Sakinah (Sakinah Family Service Center) program.

However, the implementation of this marriage guidance policy has been inversely proportional to the rising divorce rate year after year (Kasiani, Wahyuni, & Wicaksono, 2024). The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) reported that Indonesia experienced 516,344 divorce cases in 2022, marking a 15.3% increase from the 447,743 cases recorded the previous year. This upward trend in divorce rates declined in 2020, with 297,677 cases. Meanwhile, between 2015 and 2019, the divorce rate in Indonesia rose. In 2015, there were 353,843 divorce cases, and in 2016, 365,564. This trend continued in 2017, with 374,516 divorce cases, and in 2018 and 2019, with 392,610 and 438,013 divorce cases, respectively (Heaton & Cammack, 2011).

Several studies have confirmed that programs aimed at mitigating the risk of divorce, such as Suscatin and Pusaka Sakinah, are considered ineffective (Haine, Sandler, Wolchik, Tein, & Dawson-McClure, 2003). This is due to several issues that hinder their effectiveness. Studies that have examined the effectiveness of Suscatin and Pusaka Sakinah include Musyafa'ah's study, which found that the implementation of the Bimwin Suscatin program at the Gedangan District Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) was ineffective. This effectiveness was influenced by infrastructure, funding, and a lack of enthusiasm among prospective brides and grooms for marriage counseling. Furthermore, another study found that Suscatin's implementation was suboptimal and impacted the program's success in achieving family well-being (Wolchik, Schenck, & Sandler, 2009). Several gaps in the implementation of marriage counseling were identified, including participant attendance, the availability of resource persons, and a lack of media and infrastructure.

The increasing number of divorces and the challenges encountered in implementing marriage counseling are the first steps toward mapping ways to mitigate divorce-related issues and build family resilience (Wagner, 2020). This is crucial, given that divorce significantly impacts the existence of a family, which can impact national issues such as the rise of poverty, particularly for women and children. Divorce can prevent children from achieving a healthy and prosperous life and can lead to the neglect of children's rights. Furthermore, poverty, children's rights, and a healthy and prosperous life are three fundamental components of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which have been endorsed by 193 countries, including Indonesia.

Previously, studies (e.g., Bagarozzi & Rauen, 1981; Farnam et al., 2011) on marriage guidance have used various concepts and approaches. These studies are categorized into three categories. First, studies on marriage guidance focusing on the effectiveness of its implementation. Second, studies examining marriage guidance focusing on its influence and relevance to family resilience. Third, studies on marriage guidance focus on its role in strengthening family relationships and integrity. However, within these three categories, no comprehensive study has yet been found that focuses on reconstructing the concept of marriage guidance. Based on the social facts and research described above, this study makes at least three assumptions. First, the implementation of marriage guidance (Suscatin and Pusaka Sakinah) faces challenges in reducing the rate of divorce and domestic violence. Second, the implementation of marriage guidance must be strengthened by strengthening its relevance to family resilience. Third, a comprehensive reconstruction of the concept of marriage guidance is needed to reduce the rate of divorce and domestic violence.

To address these issues, researchers employed a maqashid sharia perspective to reconstruct the Suscatin and Pusaka Sakinah marriage counseling models, effectively mitigating marital problems. This perspective was used to assess the extent to which the benefits and beneficence values presented by Suscatin and Pusaka Sakinah's marriage counseling strengthen the quality of individuals, families, communities, and the humanitarian side of building a family resilience system. Therefore, it is worth further examining the reconstruction of family resilience through marriage counseling from a maqashid sharia perspective.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Reconstruction

The terms "renewal" and "reconstruction" have different meanings. "Reconstruction" is derived from the prefix "re," meaning renewal, and "construction," which refers to the creation or formation of a new system or structure (Guo, Ding, Yang, & Liu, 2022). Reconstruction involves reorganizing or re-imagining existing materials and rearranging them to reflect their original state or the way they were created. Meanwhile, Bryson (1997) defines reconstruction in three important aspects. First, reconstruction involves preserving the core of the original structure while maintaining its character and distinctive features, and second, repairing damaged components and strengthening weak elements. Third, renewal is achieved by incorporating improvements without altering the original's fundamental character. This illustrates that renewal does not mean creating something completely new, but rather reconstructing and adapting it to suit current circumstances. In this study, reconstruction refers to the process of reorganizing, restructuring, or re-evaluating the regulations that serve as technical guidelines for implementing marriage programs. The goal is to increase the effectiveness and maximize the benefits obtained from these programs.

B. Marriage guidance

Guidance is the act of directing or guiding others onto the right path. Prianto and Erman Anti describe guidance as assisting individuals or groups—whether children, adolescents, or adults—to help them develop their abilities independently and utilize their strengths in accordance with applicable norms. In other words, guidance is the process of guiding an individual or group of individuals by an expert. In this context, guidance is defined as psychological/mental guidance, rather than physical guidance,

because the goal of guidance is to achieve a better life. The fundamental basis of marriage is defined as a personal relationship between a man and a woman, and a biological relationship for mating and reproduction.

Furthermore, marriage can be defined as a physical and spiritual bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife to form a happy and eternal family (household) based on the One Almighty God. According to Sajuti Thalib, marriage is a strong, legitimate, sacred bond between a man and a woman, with the goal of forming an eternal, loving, harmonious, peaceful, and happy family. Meanwhile, marriage guidance refers to the process of providing knowledge, skills, and awareness to young people about marriage, and to prospective brides and grooms about married life and family dynamics. Therefore, marriage guidance is the process of helping individuals fulfill their marriage obligations in accordance with God's provisions and guidance.

C. Family resilience

Resilience can be defined as the ability to survive and bounce back from life's challenges (Mayo-Wilson, Li, Fusco, Dickersin, & investigators, 2018; Reed, 1964). Resilience involves a dynamic process that fosters positive adaptation in the face of adversity. The concept of resilience was initially developed through studies of children's positive adaptation to adverse circumstances. Early descriptions of resilience focused on the personal qualities of resilient individuals, such as autonomy and self-esteem. As the concept of resilience evolved, the focus shifted from identifying individual personality factors to the crucial influence of positive relationships with family, relatives, and mentors. Scholars (e.g., Simon, Murphy, & Smith, 2005; Walsh, 2003) characterize family resilience as a set of qualities, dimensions, and attributes within families that enable them to survive change and adapt effectively during times of crisis. According to the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, family strength or resilience is having sufficient and durable access to income and resources, enabling the fulfillment of basic needs such as food, clean water, health care, employment opportunities, education, housing, time to participate in social activities, and integration into the community. In this context, five dimensions of family resilience are used to assess a family's vulnerability. These dimensions include: the legality of the structure; physical resilience; economic resilience; social and psychological resilience; and cultural resilience.

D. The Concept of Maqashid syariah

The term maqaṣhid (plural: maqāṣid) means goal, principle, purpose, intention, end, target (Tumewang, Rahmawati Dewi, & Amin, 2023). This word comes from the verb qaṣada-yaqṣudu and has several meanings, such as heading in one direction, goal, middle way, justice, consistency, not going beyond the limits, the straight path, and the middle way between excess and deficiency. Meanwhile, the word shari'a etymologically means al-'utbah (the lap of the valley), al-'atabah (the door and stairs), mawrīd al-sharīah (the path where the thirsty seek water), and al-ṭarīq al-mustaqīmat (the straight path). Schacht said, Shari'a is the sacred law of Islam that regulates the life of every Muslim in all aspects; it consists of regulations regarding worship and rituals, as well as political and (in the narrow sense) legal rules.

In short, maqāṣid shari'a refers to the purposes behind the implementation of Islamic law (Rahmadhani, Attamimi, & Hanafi, 2023). Al-Juwayni classified Maqasid Sharia (Maslahah) into five levels. Al-Ghazali later summarized this concept into three levels: dharûriyat (primary), hajiyat (secondary), and tahsiniyat (tertiary). Al-Ghazali outlined the levels of dharûriyat into five pillars: safeguarding religion, life, lineage, intellect, and property. This concept was subsequently reconstructed by Imam As-Shatibi, who integrated it with ushul fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence). The concept of maqasid sharia continues to evolve in response to the challenges faced by the Muslim community. One figure who contributed to the development of maqasid sharia was Jamaluddin Athiyyah. Jamaluddin Athiyyah developed the concept of maqasid al-Sharīah, known for its five essential objectives, which were later broken down into four more specific categories. Maqasid al-Sharīah is viewed through the lens of meeting the needs of individuals and larger societal groups. This comprehensive explanation reinforces the notion of the state's responsibility to ensure societal well-being, from maintaining domestic civilization to the broader communal entity often referred to as the state. This division encompasses guarantees at the individual, family, community, and humanity-wide levels.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study uses qualitative methods. In qualitative research, the use of theory is only a guide, with the research focus determined by the facts in the field (Nurdin & Pettalongi, 2022; Nurdin, Stockdale, & Scheepers, 2016). The data was collected through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and written document analysis at the research site (Rusli, Hasyim, & Nurdin, 2021; Rusli & Nurdin, 2022). This research was carried out at all Religious courts in Palu city, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia.The choice of location

for this research was based on the uniqness of marriage guidance policy implementation roles in serving local citizens when they want to get marriage service the religious courts.

Data were collected through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and written document analysis. The interviews involved five local religious court leaders, four judges, four office staff for religious affairs, and two marriage registrars. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were consulted with participants to obtain their consent (Nurdin, Scheepers, & Stockdale, 2022; Nurdin, Stockdale, & Scheepers, 2014). The data analysis used a deductive approach, which can be interpreted as a research procedure that produces deductive data from interviews and field notes. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis from Strauss and Corbin (1998). The analysis started with open, axial, and selective coding. The final result of the data analysis is the themes found from the data.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Marriage Guidance Implementation Method

Based on field observations, it was concluded that the marriage guidance method relies heavily on a one-way lecture approach, positioning participants as recipients of information rather than as subjects actively involved in the relational learning process. In this context, the lecture method is relatively effective in transmitting norms, rules, and the legal-formal framework of marriage. Still, it has significant limitations in developing communication and problem-solving skills. This aligns with the results of an interview with Ibu Dewi, who stated:

> "When we attended the guidance, we mostly heard about laws and obligations. When it came to differences of opinion or financial issues, they weren't often discussed. So after getting married, we learned on our own."

The interview results above indicate that strategies for dealing with differences of opinion and financial issues were not discussed in depth, as the lecture method did not provide space for exploring understanding, negotiating meaning, or simulating conflict situations common in married life. Meanwhile, the results of the cluster diagram analysis (see figure below) also show that themes related to husband-wife relations and family dynamics were not strongly clustered with the themes of the learning methods.



Figure 1. Diagram on the Relationship Between Husband-Wife Relationship Themes and Weak Marriage Guidance Methods

This situation undermines the weak internalization of relational skills among prospective couples, as key issues in husband-wife dynamics are not explored through methods that facilitate dialogue, reflection on understanding, and problem-solving exercises. As a result, marriage counseling functions more as a transmission of norms than as a space for developing the adaptive capacity needed to build family resilience. The results of the analysis above align with several studies that confirm that premarital counseling approaches dominated by lectures tend to only increase normative knowledge, without effectively developing couples' communication and conflict management skills.

For example, a longitudinal study by Howard et al. found that premarital interventions emphasizing communication exercises, problem-solving, and conflict simulations had a greater impact on relationship quality and marital readiness than purely informative approaches. Meanwhile, research conducted by Ezadany confirms that the effectiveness of premarital counseling is largely determined by the extent to which the learning method provides space for dialogue, reflection on experiences, and practice

of relational skills. From this explanation, it is clear that the weak relationship between family relationship themes and learning methods has implications for the limited internalization of couples' adaptive capacity to face real-life marital conflicts. The results of the analysis above also contradict Friedman's view in Susanto et al., who positioned family communication as a structural dimension that connects values, roles, and decision-making. In addition, the results of the cluster diagram analysis above also contradict the principles of family communication in QS. Asy-Shura [42]:38, which states:

..... وَاَمْرُهُمْ شُوْرٰى بَيْنَهُمْ ....

Translation:

..... while their affairs (are decided) by consultation among themselves (spouses)....

The above verse emphasizes that joint family matters are decided through deliberation. The verse also explicitly requires agreement and deliberation between husband and wife, even in technical matters of the household. These two verses indirectly conclude that without participatory communication before marriage, couples lack an adequate communicative framework for establishing a sustainable structure for role-sharing and family decision-making.

B. Critical Analysis of Marriage Guidance Construction

The cluster diagram analysis above shows that marriage guidance is still structured formally as a means of transmitting norms, rather than as a space for developing couples' relational capacity. The dominance of normative, regulative terms is not balanced by the representation of relational skills such as communication, negotiation, conflict, emotions, and problem-solving, which are crucial in daily married life. The weak link between the themes of husband-wife relations and family dynamics and the learning methods exacerbates this condition. Thus, relational issues are presented as normative concepts rather than as learned through a dialogical and contextual pedagogical approach. As a result, the predominantly lecture-based learning method fails to operationalize these normative values into adaptive practical competencies.

Critically, this condition reflects a strong procedural orientation in marriage guidance. The marriage guidance process functions more as a formal administrative and educational stage that must be completed before the marriage ceremony, rather than as a process of transforming the personal and relational capacities of prospective couples. Behind this procedural orientation, there is a structural relationship between the logic of state bureaucracy, within the framework of Max Weber's rational-legal bureaucracy theory in Abdul Kadir, which states that the structure of public bureaucracy is built based on formal rules, legal authority, clear hierarchy, and written procedures as the foundation for decision-making by prioritizing procedural compliance for efficiency where the bureaucracy acts impersonally based on competence rather than personal preference.

In the context of the Indonesian Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), particularly in Palu City, this procedural orientation follows Max Weber's rational-legal bureaucratic model, in which programs serve as mandatory administrative requirements to ensure complete documentation for the performance of a marriage contract. Consequently, this procedural orientation has implications for simplifying the purpose of marriage guidance, from building family resilience to merely fulfilling formal marriage requirements. Consequently, research by previous scholars (e.g., Bagarozzi & Rauen, 1981; Trainer, 1979) suggests that the implementation of premarital guidance focuses on measuring administrative success (e.g., certifications) rather than on substantive outcomes, such as reducing divorce. This explanation aligns with another research, which states that the success of premarital guidance can be measured by the implementation of activities and the delivery of materials, rather than by changes in couples' abilities to manage conflict, build participatory communication, and make joint decisions.

From a substantive perspective, a formalistic approach to marriage guidance tends to ignore the fact that family resilience is not solely determined by couples' compliance with normative rules, but rather by their adaptive capacity to respond to the complex and changing dynamics of household life. Family resilience does not arise automatically from mastering normative knowledge about the rights and obligations of husband and wife, but rather is formed through a relational learning process that enables couples to develop communication skills, conflict management, and contextual role negotiation. When marriage guidance is reduced to a one-way transmission of norms and information, it risks failing to address the practical dimension that ultimately determines the sustainability of family relationships.

Furthermore, the lack of space for conflict simulations, reflective dialogue, and problem-solving exercises in the marriage guidance process results in a superficial internalization of family values. These values remain at the cognitive and normative levels, meaning they are understood as knowledge to be memorized or adhered to, without being transformed into a communicative framework

or interaction patterns lived out in the couples' daily lives. As a result, when prospective couples face real post-marital conflict, they lack the adaptive capacity to translate the values of sakinah (love), mawaddah (love), and rahmah (compassionate relationship) into constructive communicative action. This situation demonstrates that the primary problem with marriage guidance lies not merely in the technical implementation aspect but in its underlying paradigm, which still prioritizes normative compliance over the development of sustainable relational capacity.

A further implication of this formalistic, procedural construction is the gap between the normative goals of marriage guidance and the relational realities of couples after marriage. Couples are equipped with an understanding of "what should be," but are not prepared to face the "what ifs" when values, interests, and emotions collide. In this context, the weak link between the theme of family relations and learning methods, as shown in the cluster diagram above, is a structural indicator that marriage guidance has not fully functioned as a space for forming the family's adaptive capacity.

This phenomenon is reflected in various cases of young couples. For example, each young couple is familiar with the husband's financial obligations, understands the concept of deliberation, and even memorizes the prohibition against violence or open conflict. However, when faced with income instability, role changes when the wife starts working, or external pressures from the extended family, they demonstrate deficiencies in the skills to convey complaints without confrontation, an inability to renegotiate roles collaboratively, and difficulty managing emotions when conflict arises. This condition clearly reflects the gap between normative understanding and the adaptive capacity required in practical life in a couple.

C. The Relevance of Marriage Guidance to Family Resilience

The phenomenon of post-marriage couples demonstrates that family resilience is not built solely through a normative understanding of the rights and obligations of husband and wife, but is largely determined by each partner's relational and adaptive capacities in dealing with economic dynamics, changing roles, and social pressures within the family. Meanwhile, an analysis of marriage counseling materials and methods reveals that issues of communication, conflict management, and emotional dynamics are still presented in a general and normative manner, without the support of dialogic and practice-based learning methods. Consequently, family values have not been functionally internalized in the form of sustainable interaction patterns and problem-solving mechanisms. From the perspective of Islamic family law, this situation demonstrates that family resilience is a dynamic process that requires participatory communication skills, joint decision-making, and continuous adaptation. Walsh's theory on organizational patterns emphasizes that family decisions must be made jointly, involving all stakeholders, rather than unilaterally.

Therefore, the indicators of the relevance of marriage guidance to family resilience, from this perspective, state that family resilience is not always determined by adherence to legal norms and structures, but rather by each partner's psychological capacity to manage emotions and stress, their relational capacity to build participatory communication and conflict resolution, and their structural capacity to manage family roles and economic resources. From the explanation above, what is the meaning of family for each married couple? Is it solely biological or does the word "family" have a deeper meaning? In the sociological tradition, Talcott Parsons explains that the family is a social institution that stabilizes individual personalities and sustains the social system through primary socialization and emotional support. However, this function is not static; it demands the family's adaptive capacity to respond to social pressures and changes, sometimes rapid and sometimes slow.

One example is the response to economic pressure and the flexibility of family roles. For example, the loss of a family's primary source of income automatically changes the family's role structure. In other words, all family members begin to adapt to their roles. For example, a child assumes a role in maintaining the family's economic stability. Another example is emotional conflict as part of family functioning, such as a wife who has just given birth and experiences caring for the child in the middle of the night. This situation can cause symptoms of the baby blues in the wife, requiring family members to be flexible in their roles. Adaptive families can reorganize the division of roles between husband and wife through negotiation and mutual agreement. Thus, changes in role structure do not necessarily indicate family dysfunction but can instead serve as a functional mechanism for maintaining psychosocial stability and sustaining family relationships.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Normatively, the marriage guidance program has met the maqāṣid al-syarīʿah (obligatory principles of Islamic law). Still, its implementation remains constrained by limited resources, the dominance of a normative-textual approach, and a weak post-marital evaluation and mentoring system. This situation demands reconstruction at the operational level by strengthening

facilitators' capacity, providing proportional budget support, and establishing ongoing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure that the goal of family protection does not stop at the conceptual level. Research findings indicate a gap between the program's goal of building family resilience and its on-the-ground implementation, resulting in a limited contribution to strengthening family relationships.

Therefore, reconstruction needs to focus on adapting the program design to the real needs of the Palu City community, particularly by integrating the local socio-cultural context and post-disaster family dynamics into the marriage guidance service structure. The proposed reconstruction emphasizes strengthening implementing actors, developing contextual and applicable materials, and implementing participatory and sustainable learning methods that encompass the premarital and post-marital phases. With this systemic approach, marriage guidance is directed not merely as an administrative procedure, but as a preventive and transformative instrument that plays a real role in building sustainable family resilience.

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