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Improving Marital Stability Through Structured Marriage Guidance: A Preventive Approach to Divorce

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the role of Marriage Guidance (Binwin) in improving marital stability in the Kalitidu District community. Although Marriage Guidance has been implemented as a pre-marital education program, its contribution to marital stability at the local level requires further examination, particularly regarding how the program prepares prospective couples to manage marital challenges and strengthen family resilience. Marriage Guidance is a pre-marriage development program aimed at equipping prospective couples with knowledge and readiness to build a harmonious household life. This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data were obtained through interviews with religious counselors and the Head of the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), as well as documentation related to the implementation of the Binwin program in Kalitidu District. The results of the study indicate that Marriage Guidance plays an important role in improving the mental, emotional, and knowledge readiness of prospective couples regarding family communication, household economic management, conflict resolution, and spousal responsibilities. Couples who participate in Binwin tend to be better prepared to face the dynamics of married life and have a better understanding of maintaining family harmony. This program also serves as a preventive effort to reduce potential domestic conflicts and decrease the divorce rate. Thus, Marriage Guidance contributes significantly to improving marital stability and strengthening family resilience in the Kalitidu District community.

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INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a social institution that plays a fundamental role in shaping family resilience and societal stability(Fauziah et al., 2024; Gogu, 2025). In the context of modern life, social, economic, and cultural dynamics also influence the quality of husband-wife relationships. Changes in lifestyle, economic demands, and developments in communication technology often become triggers for conflicts within the household(Servaes, 2022; Waisbord, 2020). This condition shows that marriage not only requires emotional preparedness but also knowledge and skills readiness in building a healthy relationship. Marital stability becomes an important indicator in creating a harmonious and prosperous family(Prismadianto et al., 2025; Rezky et al., 2025). When this stability is disrupted, the impact is felt not only by the couple but also by the children

and the surrounding social environment. Therefore, efforts to strengthen marital stability become very important in the context of social development.

The phenomenon of the increasing divorce rate in various regions indicates a serious challenge in maintaining the integrity of the household(Amin et al., 2025; Uroko & Enobong, 2022). Divorce is not only caused by economic factors, but also by a lack of communication, mental unpreparedness, and a low understanding of roles and responsibilities in marriage(Damota, 2019; Ottakkam Thodukayil et al., 2026; Tavakolian et al., 2023). In many cases, couples enter married life without adequate knowledge of the dynamics of husband-wife relationships. This causes small conflicts to develop into larger problems. Marriage education becomes one of the solutions that can provide comprehensive understanding to couples regarding household life(Halim et al., 2024; Jarkawi et al., 2025; Randles & Avishai, 2018). This educational approach not only serves as a preparation before marriage but also as a continuous learning process in family life. The role of education becomes very important in shaping individuals' readiness to face the realities of marriage.

Specifically, the conditions in the Kalitidu District show that marriage guidance and education still need to be strengthened as a preventive effort against divorce. The people in this area have diverse social and cultural backgrounds, which also influence their views on marriage. In practice, there are still couples who get married without going through adequate preparation processes, whether from psychological, social, or religious aspects. This results in household conflicts that lead to divorce. In addition, access to structured marriage education programs is still limited. This condition indicates a need for a more systematic and contextual marriage education model that aligns with the characteristics of the local community. Strengthening educational programs at the local level is a strategic step in improving family life quality.

Jarkawi et al. (2025) highlight the role of marriage counselors in minimizing marital failure through guidance and support for prospective couples(Jarkawi et al., 2025). Muda and Nasri (2024) emphasize that Islamic premarital education can help prevent divorce by strengthening couples' religious understanding and preparedness for married life(Muda & Nasri, 2024). Syam et al. (2022) demonstrate the importance of effective communication strategies implemented by the Marriage Advisory, Guidance and Preservation Agency (BP4) in supporting divorce prevention(Syam et al., 2022). Meanwhile, Karimi et al. (2019), through a systematic review, identify various protective

factors associated with long-term marital stability, highlighting the importance of interpersonal relationships and factors that sustain marriage over time(Karimi et al., 2019). Taken together, these studies emphasize the importance of counseling, premarital education, effective communication, and protective factors in strengthening marital stability; however, further research is needed to understand how these aspects are implemented through the Marriage Guidance (Binwin) program and perceived to contribute to marital preparedness within the local context of Kalitidu District.

Previous research shows that marriage education has a significant impact on the quality of husband-wife relationships. Several studies reveal that couples who participate in premarital education programs tend to have better communication levels and the ability to resolve conflicts constructively. In addition, marriage education also contributes to increasing understanding of roles and responsibilities within the family. Other research emphasizes that education based on religious values can strengthen commitment in maintaining household integrity. The results of these studies show that an educational approach can be an effective strategy in preventing divorce. These findings reinforce the importance of integrating educational and developmental aspects in marital life. These studies provide an empirical foundation for the development of marriage education models.

Other research also highlights the importance of a structured approach in marriage education. Programs that are systematically designed with comprehensive material have been proven to be more effective in improving couples' readiness compared to sporadic approaches. In addition, the involvement of religious institutions and the government in organizing marriage education programs is a supporting factor for successful implementation. Some studies also emphasize the importance of the sustainability of educational programs, not only in the premarital stage but also post-marriage. This indicates that marriage guidance is an ongoing process. These findings suggest that structure and system in marriage education play an important role in achieving the desired goals. This approach provides a new direction in the development of family guidance programs.

Although various studies have examined marriage education, there is still a gap in the development of models that are contextual and based on the needs of local communities. Most studies focus on general approaches without considering specific socio-cultural characteristics. Additionally, there have not been many studies that

specifically examine the implementation of structured marriage education as a preventive effort against divorce at the sub-district level. This condition indicates an opportunity to develop an educational model that is more practical and relevant to the needs of the community in Kalitidu Sub-district. This study offers novelty in the form of a structured, integrative approach that is based on the social realities of the local community. Focusing on preventive aspects also adds value to this study. This approach is expected to provide a tangible contribution to strengthening family resilience.

Based on the above description, this study aims to analyze the role of structured marriage education in enhancing marital stability as well as serving as a preventive measure against divorce in Kalitidu District. This study also aims to identify forms of implementing effective marriage education according to the needs of the community. In addition, this study seeks to explore the factors that influence the success of educational programs in the local context. The results of the study are expected to provide strategic recommendations for the development of more systematic marriage guidance programs. This study is also expected to serve as a reference for relevant institutions in formulating policies that support family resilience. Thus, this study has theoretical and practical contributions to the development of family law studies and marriage education.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with field research conducted directly at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in the Kalitidu District(Safarudin et al., 2023). This approach was chosen to obtain a real and contextual picture of the implementation of structured marriage education at the local level. The researcher is directly involved in observing marriage guidance activities, including premarital counseling programs organized by the KUA. In addition, this study also relies on direct interaction with relevant parties to understand the practices taking place in the field(Nartin et al., 2024). The research was conducted from February 15 to May 17, 2026 at the KUA in Kalitidu District, Bojonegoro Regency, East Java, Indonesia. This period covered the processes of field observation, interviews, and documentation collection. The focus of the research is directed at how these education programs are implemented and their impact on couples' readiness to take on married life. The data obtained is descriptive and reflects real conditions in the community.

Data collection was carried out through several practical techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation(WIjaya, 2019). Observation was conducted

by directly following the marriage counseling activities at the Kalitidu District KUA to see the education process that took place. Interviews were conducted with the marriage registrar, religious counselors, and prospective couples participating in the program. In addition, the researcher also gathered information from couples who were already married to understand the impact of marriage education on the stability of their households. Documentation was used to collect supporting data such as counseling modules, activity schedules, and program implementation reports. This technique aimed to obtain complete data that complement each other between one source and another. All data were collected systematically to facilitate the analysis process.

Data analysis was carried out gradually by grouping, simplifying, and interpreting the data obtained from the field. The researcher first performed data reduction to select information relevant to the research focus. Next, the data were presented in the form of descriptive narratives to facilitate understanding of the emerging patterns. The final stage was drawing conclusions based on the findings obtained in the field. To maintain the validity of the data, the researcher used triangulation techniques by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. This process was repeated to ensure data consistency. With this method, the research results are expected to provide an accurate picture of the effectiveness of structured marriage education in preventing divorce in Kalitidu District.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Marital Guidance (Binwin) has a strategic role in preparing prospective husbands and wives before entering married life. This program aims to provide understanding regarding the rights and obligations of husband and wife, conflict management, family health, as well as the importance of building harmonious communication in the household. Through Binwin, prospective brides and grooms are equipped with basic knowledge to be able to face various challenges of family life in a more mature and responsible manner. In the community of Kalitidu District, the existence of Binwin serves as a preventive measure to reduce domestic disputes that could potentially lead to divorce. The material presented in this activity also helps couples understand the importance of religious values as the foundation of family life. With this preparation, couples are not only administratively ready to marry but also

mentally and emotionally ready. This shows that Binwin contributes to building a more stable and quality family.

The implementation of Marriage Guidance in the Kalitidu District has had a positive impact on increasing prospective brides and grooms' awareness of the importance of preparation before marriage. Many couples who previously considered marriage merely as a ceremonial process have come to understand that marriage is a bond of body and soul that requires thorough readiness. In the Binwin activities, participants are provided with material on family economic management, effective communication, and how to resolve household conflicts wisely. This material is highly relevant to the current conditions of society, where many household conflicts arise due to a lack of communication and poor family financial management. With this guidance, prospective couples become more prepared to carry out their respective roles in the household. The awareness developed through this learning process affects the improvement of the quality of husband and wife relationships. Indirectly, Binwin helps create a more harmonious family that is resilient in facing household problems. Thus, the stability of marriage in society can be better maintained through guided mentoring that begins before the marriage takes place.



Figure 1 Marriage Guidance

Based on the results of an interview with one of the religious counselors in Kalitidu District, Marriage Guidance is very helpful for prospective brides and grooms to understand the real reality of married life. The counselor stated, “Through Marriage Guidance, prospective brides and grooms are given an understanding that marriage is not just about happiness, but also about responsibility, communication, and mental readiness in facing various household problems.” He explained that many young

couples initially did not understand the importance of communication, role distribution, and psychological readiness in building a family. In addition, he also added, “After participating in Marriage Guidance, prospective brides and grooms are usually more open in understanding each other's roles and more prepared to resolve problems through deliberation.” According to the counselor, this change in mindset is very important for building a harmonious household. He assesses that couples who participate in Binwin tend to have better readiness compared to couples who have not received guidance. The training provided in Binwin serves as an initial provision so that couples can face the dynamics of household life more maturely. From the results of the interviews, it can be understood that the role of counselors in Binwin is very important in building awareness and readiness of couples towards a stable family.

The results of an interview with the Head of the Kalitidu District KUA indicate that Marriage Guidance is one of the government's concrete efforts to improve the quality of families in the community. The Head of KUA stated, "Marriage Guidance aims to equip prospective brides and grooms with basic knowledge about household life so that they are ready to build a harmonious family and able to face various challenges after marriage." According to him, many household problems that end in divorce can actually be minimized if couples are provided with adequate understanding from the beginning. He also added, "Materials on family communication, household financial management, and conflict resolution are very important for maintaining marital stability." The head of the KUA explained that the implementation of Binwin in Kalitidu District received a positive response from the community and quite helped prospective brides and grooms in understanding married life. According to his observations, couples who participated in Binwin are better prepared to face the dynamics of household life because they already have an idea of the challenges that may arise. He also emphasized that the success of this program greatly depends on the seriousness of the participants in attending the guidance. Thus, the head of the KUA assessed that Binwin has a significant contribution in strengthening family resilience and reducing potential household conflicts.

Binwin's role in improving marital stability is also seen from his efforts to instill values of responsibility in prospective husband and wife couples. In this activity, participants are invited to understand that the success of a household does not only depend on love, but also on commitment, patience, and cooperation between husband

and wife. This understanding is important because many households experience problems due to a lack of awareness of each party's responsibilities. Through the materials and discussions provided, prospective brides and grooms can learn to build a shared commitment to maintain household harmony. These values of responsibility become the foundation for facing family issues maturely. With better preparedness for responsibility, couples will be more capable of maintaining a harmonious relationship. This, of course, impacts the reduction of the risk of prolonged arguments within the household. Therefore, Binwin plays an important role in shaping couples who are more responsible and ready to build a stable family.

In addition to building mental readiness, Binwin also plays a role in strengthening family resilience through education on healthy communication. Communication is a fundamental aspect of household life, because many family conflicts arise due to misunderstandings between partners. In Binwin activities, prospective brides and grooms are given an understanding of the importance of openness, mutual respect, and problem-solving through dialogue. This knowledge helps couples to avoid poor communication patterns that can trigger prolonged conflicts. With good communication skills, couples can build a supportive and more harmonious relationship. Healthy communication also serves as a means to strengthen trust and a sense of security within the family. This is very important for maintaining marital stability in the long term.

Marriage Guidance has a significant contribution in increasing marital stability in the Kalitidu District community. This program not only provides theoretical knowledge but also builds the mental, emotional, and spiritual readiness of prospective husband and wife. Through training on communication, responsibility, conflict management, and family values, couples become more prepared to face household life. The results of interviews with counselors and the Head of the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) also reinforce that Binwin provides tangible benefits in forming more harmonious and resilient families. With this program, the potential for domestic conflicts can be minimized from the start through targeted education. The marital stability that results from the readiness of couples will impact family resilience and the welfare of the community at large. Therefore, the implementation of Binwin needs to continue to be improved so that its benefits can be increasingly felt by the community.

Discussion

Based on interviews with religious counselors and the Head of the KUA (Religious Affairs Office) of Kalitidu District, it can be analyzed that Marriage Guidance (Binwin) plays an important role in increasing the preparedness of prospective spouses in building a stable household. Statements from religious counselors indicate that Binwin provides initial understanding to prospective brides and grooms about marital responsibilities, the importance of communication, and mental readiness in facing household dynamics. This shows that the Binwin program functions not only as an administrative formality before marriage, but as an educational tool that shapes couples' awareness of the essence of family life. Good mental readiness and understanding of each person's role in the household will help couples reduce potential conflicts that arise from emotional unpreparedness. Thus, Binwin serves as a preventive effort in maintaining family harmony from the beginning of marriage.

The results of interviews with the Head of the KUA Kalitidu District also reinforce that Binwin becomes a strategic instrument in building family resilience. The material provided, such as family communication, household economic management, and conflict resolution, are fundamental factors that greatly determine marital stability. Many household problems that end in divorce are caused by weak communication, lack of economic readiness, and the couple's inability to manage conflict. Therefore, training through Binwin becomes an important step in providing basic skills to prospective couples so that they are able to face various challenges in domestic life. In this context, the role of Binwin can be understood as a form of social and religious intervention aimed at strengthening the family foundation.

If analyzed further, the effectiveness of Binwin in increasing marital stability is evident from the changes in the mindset of prospective brides and grooms after attending the guidance. Before participating in Binwin, many prospective couples viewed marriage merely as a formal or ceremonial bond. However, after receiving the training material, they began to understand that marriage requires commitment, responsibility, as well as the ability to cooperate between husband and wife. This change in understanding becomes an indicator that Binwin has successfully instilled family readiness values in the participants. The awareness formed from the guidance process is very important for building a harmonious relationship and preventing prolonged conflict. Thus, the success

of Binwin is not only measured by its implementation but also by the change in attitude and readiness of the couples after participating in the guidance.

Binwin also plays a role in shaping healthy communication patterns within the family, which is one of the main factors in maintaining marital stability. Based on the results of interviews, prospective brides and grooms are provided with an understanding of the importance of openness, deliberation, and mutual respect in resolving household issues. Healthy communication patterns will help couples avoid misunderstandings that often trigger conflicts in the household. When partners are able to communicate well, the relationship they build will be more harmonious and supportive of each other. This shows that Binwin has a real contribution in shaping the interpersonal skills of couples before entering family life. Therefore, the presence of Binwin is very relevant in efforts to build a strong family that can withstand various problems.

From the perspective of family resilience, the Binwin program provides a strong foundation for couples to carry out family functions optimally. Family resilience is not only determined by economic conditions, but also by the psychological, emotional, and spiritual readiness of couples in facing the challenges of household life. The material provided in Binwin helps couples understand the importance of cooperation, patience, and shared responsibility in maintaining family integrity. With this foundation, couples are better prepared to face household problems without resulting in prolonged conflict. This shows that Binwin has both an educational and preventive function in building a resilient family. Therefore, the implementation of Binwin becomes an important part of the strategy for strengthening family resilience in the community.

The results of the interview indicate that the role of Marriage Guidance is very significant in enhancing marital stability in the Kalitidu District community. This program provides guidance that helps prospective spouses understand the realities of household life, build mental preparedness, and improve their abilities to manage conflicts and family communication. These findings show that Marriage Guidance contributes to the formation of families that are better prepared, harmonious, and resilient in facing the dynamics of household life. Thus, Marriage Guidance is not only a pre-marriage counseling program but also serves as a strategic means to reduce divorce rates and strengthen family resilience. Therefore, improving the quality of Marriage Guidance implementation needs to be continuously carried out so that its benefits are increasingly optimal in building community marital stability.

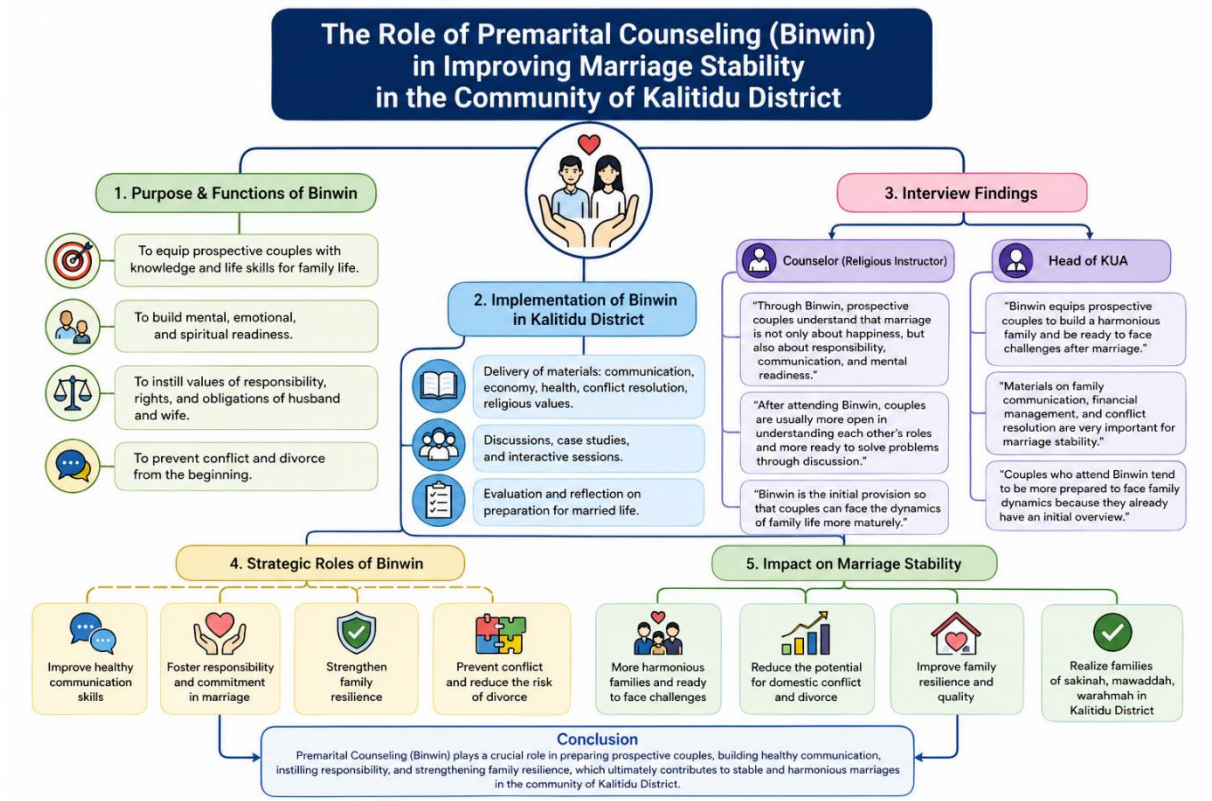


Figure 2 The Role of Premarital Counseling

CONCLUSION

Marriage Guidance (Binwin) plays an important role in enhancing marital stability in the Kalitidu District community by providing knowledge, mental preparation, and understanding to prospective couples regarding household life, such as family communication, economic management, conflict resolution, and husband-wife responsibilities. Interviews with religious counselors and the Head of the KUA show that couples who participate in Binwin tend to be better prepared to face household dynamics, more capable of building healthy communication, and wiser in solving family problems. This proves that Binwin not only functions as premarital training but also as a preventive effort to reduce potential conflicts and the risk of divorce. Thus, the implementation of Binwin makes a tangible contribution to strengthening family resilience and realizing harmonious, sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah families in the Kalitidu District community.

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