

## **POLICY INTEGRATION OF POST-MARRIAGE COUNSELLING IN ISLAMIC FAMILY EDUCATION IN THE DISTRICT OF PENUKAL ABAB LEMATANG ILIR**

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**Abstract:** This study evaluates the policy integration of post-marriage counselling within Islamic family education in the District of Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir. The study is motivated by the increasing incidence of domestic conflict and divorce in the region, which highlights the need for preventive and educational family policies. Employing a qualitative research design, this study applies the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model to examine policy implementation and outcomes comprehensively. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis involving key stakeholders, including the Head of the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), married couples participating in post-marital counselling programs, and local policymakers. Data analysis was conducted through thematic analysis, involving data reduction, categorization, and interpretation aligned with the CIPP components. The findings indicate that post-marital counselling contributes positively to enhancing couples' understanding of marital rights and obligations, communication skills, and family conflict management from an Islamic educational perspective. Nevertheless, the program's effectiveness remains limited by short implementation duration, inadequate human and institutional resources, and low participant engagement in follow-up sessions. This study recommends strengthening

interactive counselling methods, enhancing facilitator capacity, and improving inter-institutional policy synergy to reinforce Islamic family resilience and ensure the sustainability of post-marital counselling integration.

**Keywords:** CIPP evaluation model; Family resilience; Islamic family education; Policy integration; Post-marriage counselling.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir (PALI) Regency is an area that has experienced rapid development in economic, social and educational aspects. However, the dynamics of these changes have also given rise to complex family resilience issues, particularly an increase in the number of conflicts and divorces. This phenomenon has become a crucial issue in the context of Islamic family development, as unstable families have the potential to weaken the social structure of society. Recent research shows that domestic conflicts and divorces have continued to increase over the past five years, in line with the weakening of communication skills and the unpreparedness of couples in managing family life (Yakin & Syauqi, 2024). This is in line with the findings of Harjianto & Jannah (2019), who identified economic

factors, communication, and incompatibility as the dominant causes of divorce.

The socio-cultural dynamics in PALI, including early marriage and couples' poor understanding of their rights and obligations in the household, have exacerbated the situation (Alves & Safei, 2024). Data from the PALI District KUA also shows that the reasons for divorce are generally related to incompatibility, economic pressure, and domestic violence (KDRT). Couples' limited knowledge of conflict management often leads to divorce being the first choice, rather than a last resort after constructive problem-solving efforts have been made.

To address this issue, a post-marital counselling programme initiated by the KUA has become a strategic intervention. The programme aims to strengthen couples' understanding of marital rights and obligations, improve communication skills, and strengthen family resilience. A number of recent studies show that post-marital counselling can help reduce family conflicts if it is carried out in a structured and sustainable manner (Kurniawan & Nasution, 2024). However, the effectiveness of the programme is not yet optimal, as there are still various obstacles such as low participant participation, limited counselling time, and limited human resources.

From a theoretical perspective, the policy of integrating post-marital counselling is actually a concrete form of implementing Islamic Family Education, which is education that shapes a sakinah family through spiritual, psychological, social, and economic guidance. However, existing research has focused more on the technical implementation of guidance

rather than on evaluating the integration model policy, especially in the context of regions such as PALI Regency. This is the gap between theory and research that makes this article novel: there is still a lack of comprehensive evaluation of integrative policies that link post-marital guidance with the Islamic family education system as a whole.

The scope of this study is limited to the implementation of the post-marital guidance integration policy in Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir Regency, involving the village head, religious counsellors, and married couples who are participants in the programme. The research does not cover all forms of family education but focuses on post-marital guidance under the authority of the KUA. Another limitation is that the evaluation focuses on policy and implementation aspects, not on analysing the long-term effects on all family resilience indicators.

The urgency of this research is even greater given the high divorce rate in PALI, which is largely due to economic and communication factors (Matondang, 2014). In addition, community participation in post-marital guidance programmes is still low, due to the perception that domestic issues are private matters (Hafidin, Pancasilawati, & Syakur, 2025). On the other hand, the quality of facilitators greatly influences the success of the programme (Nasution, n.d.), while the literature shows that increasing the capacity of facilitators needs to be a priority. In the digital age, the integration of technology such as online counselling applications is also important to expand the reach of the programme (Ediati & Diponegoro, 2020). All these conditions emphasise the importance of

evaluating the integrated model policy currently being implemented.

In this context, this study uses the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model as it is relevant for evaluating the programme comprehensively (Suryadin, Sari, & Nurfitriani, 2022). Through this model, the study will assess the suitability of the policy context, the feasibility of the inputs used, the quality of the implementation process, and the achievements of the post-marital guidance programme in PALI District.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to evaluate the policy of the post-marital guidance integration model in Islamic family education in Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir District using the CIPP model, in order to determine the effectiveness, challenges, and opportunities for program improvement. The research results are expected to provide concrete recommendations for strengthening policies, increasing community involvement, developing facilitator capacity, and utilising technology in post-marital guidance. Thus, this programme can become a strategic instrument to strengthen family resilience and reduce divorce rates in PALI District in a sustainable manner.

## METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a programme evaluation design to assess the policy and implementation of the post-marital guidance integration model in Islamic family education in Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir District. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore data in depth regarding policy implementation,

programme dynamics, and the experiences of participants and field implementers (Waruwu, 2024). With a programme evaluation design, this study not only assesses the success of implementation but also identifies supporting factors, obstacles, and recommendations for programme development. The evaluation model used is CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product), as this model views programme evaluation comprehensively and systematically (Antariksa, Fattah, & Utami, 2022).

### 1. Research Design

This research design focuses on evaluating the policy and implementation of the post-marital guidance integration model through the CIPP model.

- a. Context evaluation is used to assess the suitability of post-marital guidance policies to the needs of the community, especially married couples experiencing domestic challenges. Context analysis includes social conditions, divorce rates, economic issues, family communication, and the urgency of strengthening Islamic family education.
- b. Input evaluation assesses the readiness of programme resources, including facilitator qualifications, support from the KUA and local government, guidance curriculum, implementation guidelines, and institutional synergy.
- c. Process evaluation assesses how post-marital guidance is implemented: delivery methods, stages of integration of Islamic family education material, facilitator-participant interaction, couple involvement, and consistency of implementation with program guidelines.
- d. Product evaluation looks at the impact of the programme on participants, in terms of increased understanding of the rights

and obligations of husbands and wives, conflict resolution skills, communication quality, and the role of the programme in reducing the potential for divorce.

## 2. Participant Characteristics and Sampling Techniques

Research participants are those who are directly or indirectly involved in the implementation of the post-marriage guidance integration policy, namely:

- a. Married couples who have attended post-marital counselling at the KUA in Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir District.
- b. Penghulu and Islamic religious instructors as programme implementers.
- c. Head of KUA and staff of the Islamic Guidance Section of the District Ministry of Religious Affairs as policy makers and programme managers.
- d. Community leaders or family counsellors who assist the community on family resilience issues.

The sampling technique used purposive sampling, as the selection of participants was based on certain considerations, namely their involvement in the programme, experience of following or implementing guidance, and ability to provide information relevant to the programme evaluation. This sampling technique helps researchers obtain rich and in-depth data according to the research objectives.

## 3. Research Background

Penelitian The study was conducted in Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir (PALI) district, specifically at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in the sub-districts that implement the post-marital

guidance programme. This district was chosen because it is an area with quite complex family dynamics, characterised by variations in education levels, economic backgrounds, and the emergence of divorce cases which form the basis for the importance of Islamic family education programmes. The geographical and socio-cultural conditions of the PALI community also influence the implementation of the programme, making it relevant for in-depth evaluation.

## 4. Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods include in-depth interviews, observation, and document analysis.

- a. In-depth interviews were conducted with mentored couples, headmen, extension workers, and KUA officials. The interviews aimed to explore their experiences, perceptions, programme effectiveness, and perceived barriers.
- b. Observation was conducted during the mentoring process to observe the delivery method, interaction between facilitators and participants, and the atmosphere and dynamics of learning.
- c. Document analysis included a review of activity reports, programme guidelines, guidance materials, and supporting data such as marriage and divorce rates at the KUA.

## 5. Data Analysis Technique

Data were analysed descriptively using the CIPP evaluation pattern. Data obtained from interviews, observations and documents were grouped into four evaluation components: context, input, process and product. The researcher then identified important patterns, supporting and inhibiting factors, and related the

findings to applicable theories and policies. This analytical process provides a comprehensive picture of the policy effectiveness of the integrated model of post-marital guidance in Islamic family education in Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir district, as well as a basis for developing recommendations for programme development.

## RESULTS

### 1. Policy Implementation of Post-Marital Guidance Integration Model

The research findings show that the implementation of the Post-Marriage Guidance Integration Model in KUA Abab has been running as part of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of PALI Regency's efforts to improve family resilience and reduce divorce rates. The programme is structured within the framework of an integrated Islamic family education policy, combining educative, consultative, and ongoing mentoring elements.

In an interview with Ayubi, Head of the Bimas Section of the PALI Ministry of Religious Affairs, it was confirmed that the implementation of the integration model has been carried out in several KUAs:

"We have implemented this model in several KUAs by integrating various aspects of guidance, such as religious education, family health, and psychological consultation. We also try to optimise the role of religious instructors in accompanying post-marriage couples." (KSBMI Kemenag PALI. Personal Communication, 2024)

Field data shows that programme implementation includes four forms of activities: material delivery, group discussion, case study, and individual consultation. These stages represent the

integration of religious education, psychosocial guidance, and Islamic family communication practices.

In addition, the structure of the guidance sessions generally begins with the presentation of marriage theory from the perspective of religion and family psychology, followed by interactive discussions and questions and answers. This approach refers to an experiential learning model, so that couples can relate concepts to real situations in the household.

Facilitators play a central role in the success of this integration model. They are a combination of penghulu, religious extension workers and counsellors. According to Aris Munandar, the head of the KUA Abab:

"I see a positive impact, especially for couples who follow the programme seriously. But there are also those who still experience problems after marriage, especially if they do not get follow-up assistance." (AM. Personal Communication, 2024)

These findings suggest that policy implementation is working, but there are still disparities in the quality of implementation between facilitators. This is due to the absence of a standardised module, so that the approach applied is strongly influenced by the background and experience of each facilitator.

### 2. Effectiveness of Guidance Models in Islamic Family Education

Analyses based on interviews and observations indicate that the integrated model of post-marital guidance provides various benefits for couples, especially in two core aspects of Islamic family

education: sakinah communication and family management.

#### **a. Improved couple communication**

Based on Interpersonal Communication theory (DeVito, 2015), couples who are able to communicate openly and empathically have a better ability to resolve conflicts. The results of the study reinforce this theory.

Prior to the counselling programme, many couples experienced misunderstandings. After the programme, participants reported improved listening and better emotional management. This is in line with Gottman & Silver's (1999) principle of the foundation of communication in the sustainability of marriage.

#### **b. Family financial management**

The programme also had an impact on couples' awareness of family financial management, as per the Household Financial Management Theory (Dew & Xiao). Participants began to implement budget planning, savings, and discussions on financial decisions.

#### **c. Prevention of conflict and divorce**

In the interviews with the facilitators, it was found that there were couples who initially planned to divorce but changed their decision after attending the post-marital counselling sessions. This is in line with Family Resilience Theory (Walsh), that external support such as guidance and counselling strengthens family resilience.

One participant confirmed the benefits of the programme: "I found the programme quite useful, especially in terms

of communication with my partner." (ARKN. Personal Communication, 2024).

#### **d. Evaluation based on Kirkpatrick's Model**

Currently, the programme implementation evaluation is only at Level 1 (participant reaction) and Level 2 (knowledge). There is no long-term evaluation (Level 3-4) that measures behaviour change and impact on family stability. This emphasises the need for a follow-up monitoring system to ensure the long-term effectiveness of the post-marital guidance policy.

### **3. Obstacles and Challenges in Policy Implementation**

The main themes of the analysis show that there are four major challenges in implementing the integration model policy:

#### **a. Limited human resources and facilitator competencies**

Facilitators have not had specific training in marriage counselling, especially in psychology and communication. Some materials are still normative and lack applicability. This resulted in low enthusiasm from the participants in the discussion.

#### **b. Low awareness and motivation of participants**

Some couples attended the guidance only because of obligations from the KUA, not because of an intrinsic need to improve family relations. Based on Self-Determination Theory, extrinsic motivation makes learning less effective.

#### **c. Limited learning facilities and amenities**

Observations showed that some sessions were conducted in cramped rooms, with minimal ventilation, and without learning aids such as printed modules, infographics, or videos.

#### **d. No standardisation of the curriculum**

Field findings show that each facilitator uses a different module. As a result, participants received guidance materials that were not uniform and not quality assured.

In addition, the absence of a long-term evaluation system makes it difficult to measure the programme's real impact on reducing divorce rates.

Ayubi said:

"The main obstacle is limited human resources and time. Not all couples can participate in the programme optimally, mainly due to work and other busy schedules." (KSBMI Kemenag PALI. Personal Communication, 2024)

Overall, this study found that the Post-Marriage Guidance Integration Model policy in PALI district has been implemented but not optimised. The integration model provides significant benefits to couples, especially in communication and family management, but is still hampered by:

- a. lack of module standardisation,
- b. limited human resources and facilities
- c. low motivation of participants,
- d. and the absence of a systematic evaluation mechanism.

Therefore, improving the quality of policy implementation is necessary so that the programme can function as an effective instrument in Islamic family education and strengthening family resilience in Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir District.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **1. Analysis of the Implementation of Post-Marital Guidance Based on the CIPP Evaluation Model**

The results of the research on the policy implementation of the post-marital guidance integration model at KUA Abab show that the programme is running, but still faces various challenges in each aspect of the CIPP evaluation (Context, Input, Process, Product). The following discussion briefly outlines the findings and relates them to the current literature, and explains why the findings of this study have some differences with previous studies.

In terms of context, the study revealed that the high divorce rate and complexity of family problems in Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir Regency are the main reasons for the need for policies to strengthen post-marital guidance. Data from the Abab KUA for 2022–2023 shows that 60% of divorces are triggered by economic factors (40%), domestic violence (25%), and gambling (10%). These findings are in line with the research by Nurhayati (2021) and Wahyudi (2022), which shows that economic instability and poor communication are the dominant causes of domestic conflict in rural areas. Furthermore, interviews with the head of the Abab KUA confirmed that many couples marry without adequate economic preparedness and communication skills. 'We often encounter couples who come to the KUA to file for divorce, most of whom admit that they do not understand how to deal with challenges in marriage.' This condition highlights the urgent need for the integration of Islamic family education into post-marriage guidance policies in line with the ideas of family life education and family resilience theory (Walsh, 2016),

which emphasise strengthening communication skills, conflict management, and economic responsibility.

In terms of input, the study found several major obstacles, namely limited professional staff, a lack of family counsellors, and the unavailability of standardised guidance modules. This contrasts with the findings of Sari (2020), who reported that several KUA in urban areas have implemented the Ministry of Religious Affairs' standard modules more consistently and collaborated with psychologists or family counsellors. The conditions at the Abab KUA show a gap in policy implementation due to limited human and material resources. One religious counsellor stated, 'Sometimes I discuss more about household communication, while other facilitators emphasise religious aspects.' This shows that without a clear curriculum standard, participants' experiences become inconsistent—contrary to the principle of Islamic family guidance services, which should be systematic and focused (Bungin, 2021).

In terms of process, the study found that lectures still dominate, while participatory methods such as discussions and case studies are minimal. Observations showed that participants understood the material better when they were actively involved in discussions. One participant said, 'When someone shared their experience of dealing with domestic conflict, I felt more connected.' This finding is in line with adult education literature (Knowles, 2015), which emphasises that learning is more effective when it is based on experience (experiential learning). However, these results differ from a study in West Java (Hidayat, 2021),

which found that the discussion method was already dominant in post-marital counselling. This difference can be explained by the fact that the Abab KUA has not received optimal training in adult learning methodology, so facilitators tend to revert to traditional lecture patterns.

In terms of outcomes (Product), the study shows that post-marital counselling has a positive impact, particularly in improving communication skills, understanding of roles, and conflict management. Several participants stated that they became more patient, open, and able to understand their partners after participating in the programme. However, long-term evaluations are not yet available, so the sustainability of the policy's effectiveness cannot be ascertained. This condition differs from Fitria's (2022) findings, which show continuous monitoring through follow-up counselling at several KUA in major cities. This discrepancy can be explained by differences in institutional capacity and the suboptimal integration of the post-marriage guidance policy with the sakinah family development programme, which should run continuously.

## 2. Implications of Research Results and Recommendations for Programme Development

The results show that the integrated model policy of post-marital guidance at KUA Abab has great potential to strengthen Islamic family education, but still needs strengthening in several strategic aspects. First, standardisation of the guidance curriculum needs to be developed based on national guidelines, Islamic family

education literature, and local evaluation results so that implementation is uniform and suits the needs of the PALI community. In line with the recommendations of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (2021), the guidance module should contain materials on strengthening communication, economic management, Islamic parenting and domestic violence prevention.

Secondly, capacity building of facilitators is crucial. Some facilitators admitted that they had never received training on family psychology, conflict mediation, or Islamic counselling approaches. Continuous training is important, as recommended by family counselling theory that emphasises counsellor competence in understanding couple dynamics (Corey, 2017).

Third, there needs to be a long-term evaluation mechanism through monitoring at least 3-6 months after the programme is completed. This is in line with previous research showing that post-marital follow-up has a significant impact in reducing divorce rates.

Thus, the post-marital guidance integration model policy will be more effective if it is designed as part of a comprehensive Islamic family education ecosystem involving standardised modules, competent facilitators, interactive methods, and continuous monitoring. The findings of this study provide an empirical basis for the KUA Abab and the Ministry of Religious Affairs of PALI district to evaluate and reconstruct the policy to better suit the needs of the community and the dynamics of Muslim families in the modern era.

## CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation results show that the policy model of integrating post-marital

guidance in Islamic family education in Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir District has had a positive impact on couples, particularly in improving understanding of rights and obligations, communication skills and the ability to manage family conflict. The programme also supports the formation of more harmonious families in accordance with Islamic values. However, the effectiveness of the policy is still hampered by limited implementation time, low participation in follow-up sessions, and the lack of facilitators with multidisciplinary competence. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the capacity of facilitators and use more interactive and technology-based guidance methods. Overall, this policy has great potential in strengthening family resilience, but still requires strategic improvements so that the benefits are more optimal and sustainable for the people of Penukal Abab Lematang Ilir District.

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