

INSTITUTIONAL INNOVATION OF THE OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS OF BATANGHARI, EAST LAMPUNG IN FOSTERING THE SAKINAH FAMILY

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Abstract

The high rate of divorce and social challenges in the modern era require the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) to innovate in fostering the sakinah family. This research aims to identify the forms of innovation carried out by KUA, analyze their implementation practices, and their implications for efforts to form a sakinah family. The research method uses a qualitative descriptive approach by collecting data through interviews, observations, and documentation at KUA Batanghari East Lampung. The results of the study show that innovations such as the formation of the Reciprocity Pact, the facilitation of group discussions in bride-to-be courses, and post-marriage counseling services have a significant impact on strengthening the relationship between husband and wife and preparing them for married life. The Mutuality Pact instills the values of equality and cooperation from the beginning of marriage, while group discussions provide a space for couples to share insights and learn to solve problems collaboratively. Post-marriage counseling services are a means to support couples in maintaining a harmonious relationship. In conclusion, the institutional innovations implemented not only improve the quality of services but also create a holistic approach in family development. By strengthening couples' commitments through relevant premarital education and ongoing support, this innovation has great potential to strengthen the development of the sakinah family at the community level.

Keywords: Institutional Innovation; Office of Religious Affairs; The Sakinah Family

Abstrak

Tingginya angka perceraian dan tantangan sosial di era modern menuntut Kantor Urusan Agama (KUA) untuk berinovasi dalam pembinaan keluarga sakinah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi bentuk-bentuk inovasi yang dilakukan KUA, menganalisis praktik penerapannya, serta implikasinya terhadap upaya pembentukan keluarga sakinah. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif

dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi di KUA Batanghari Lampung Timur. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa inovasi seperti pembentukan Pakta Kesalingan, fasilitasi diskusi kelompok dalam kursus calon pengantin, dan layanan konsultasi pasca-pernikahan memberikan dampak signifikan dalam memperkuat hubungan suami istri serta mempersiapkan mereka menghadapi kehidupan pernikahan. Pakta Kesalingan menanamkan nilai-nilai kesetaraan dan kerja sama sejak awal pernikahan, sementara diskusi kelompok memberikan ruang bagi pasangan untuk berbagi wawasan dan belajar menyelesaikan masalah secara kolaboratif. Layanan konsultasi pasca-pernikahan menjadi sarana untuk mendukung pasangan dalam menjaga hubungan yang harmonis. Kesimpulannya, inovasi kelembagaan yang diterapkan tidak hanya meningkatkan kualitas layanan tetapi juga menciptakan pendekatan holistik dalam pembinaan keluarga. Dengan memperkuat komitmen pasangan melalui pendidikan pranikah yang relevan dan dukungan berkelanjutan, inovasi ini memiliki potensi besar untuk memperkuat pembinaan keluarga sakinah di tingkat masyarakat.

Keywords: Inovasi Kelembagaan; Kantor Urusan Agama; Keluarga Sakinah

Introduction

The institutional innovation of the Office of Religious Affairs (hereinafter referred to as KUA) is important in supporting the improvement of services to the community, especially related to marriage and family development. As a government institution tasked with maintaining social integrity in the family context, KUA is required to continue to innovate to face growing social and cultural challenges. KUA has a crucial role in improving religious services, especially in answering the needs of the community and realizing the KUA revitalization program.¹ This program was launched as part of the government's efforts to *upgrade the* quality of public services to become a momentum for KUA to create innovations that are more adaptive to the needs of the community.

KUA as a government institution has a great responsibility in providing guidance to the community to realize the Sakinah family. KUA Batanghari East Lampung, is an example that can be a model for innovative efforts in supporting the development of sakinah families through a more modern and inclusive approach. In line with that, KUA as an institution responsible for religious services at the sub-district level has a strategic role in building and fostering sakinah families. Not only limited to the implementation of marriage, KUA is also expected to be able to become a facilitator of family development through various education, counseling, and mentoring programs. However, some of the challenges faced by KUA, such as limited human resources, lack of innovation in services, and changing community needs, are often obstacles in realizing this role optimally.²

¹ Amsal Qori, Neng Nurcahyati Sinulingga, and Dita Kartika Hasibuan, "Peranan KUA Dalam Meningkatkan Program Layanan," *Community Development Journal* 4, no. 3 (2023).

² Nuh Ahmad Syarodzi Ritonga et al., "Efektivitas Bimbingan Untuk Calon Pengantin Dalam Mewujudkan Keluarga Yang Sakinah Di Kantor KUA Tembung Kecamatan Percut Sei Tuan," *As-Syar'i: Jurnal Bimbingan & Konseling Keluarga* 5, no. 2 (2023).

Nevertheless, efforts to overcome these challenges continue. Although KUA has run premarital guidance and religious counseling programs, its effectiveness in building a *sakinah* family is still a question. Existing programs are often less attractive and not entirely relevant to the needs of modern couples facing different social and economic dynamics than previous generations. As a result, the issue of divorce that is still on the rise, especially in rural areas, is often associated with a lack of understanding of the concept of harmonious marriage by couples. In addition, changing gender roles in modern families often create tensions in domestic relationships. KUA Batanghari has developed innovative programs, such as pre-marital counseling and post-marital counseling, which aim to reduce the risk of divorce and improve the quality of family life. However, there has not been much research that has in-depth examined how this innovation can be applied optimally.³

To realize a quality *sakinah* family, a more comprehensive innovation is needed. One example is the KUA Batanghari coaching program which has succeeded in improving the quality of services and having an impact on the community. This innovation can be a model for other KUAs in Indonesia. Efforts such as the establishment of a reciprocal pact institution, the provision of discussion group facilities during the implementation of the bride-to-be course and the provision of post-wedding consultation rooms are believed to be able to answer the needs of prospective bride and groom couples in the modern era. By utilizing technology, KUA services can become more inclusive and efficient.⁴ In addition, collaboration with various parties such as the government, community organizations, and academics is also very important to strengthen family development. Through this synergy, it is hoped that it can provide research-based educational materials, training for religious extension workers, and social intervention programs for families in conflict.⁵ With these innovative approaches, it is hoped that the quality of life of the *Sakinah* family can increase significantly.

Seeing the great potential of KUA institutional innovation in improving the quality of the *sakinah* family, it is necessary to conduct further research to deeply understand the existing innovative practices. Previous studies that looked at institutional innovation focused on the study of the implementation of KUA policies,⁶ Formulation of new policies in service,⁷ and strategies in the implementation of

³ Witrin Noor Justiatini and Muhammad Zainal Mustofa, "Bimbingan Pra Nikah Dalam Mbentukan Keluarga Sakinah," *Iktisyaf: Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah Dan Tasawuf* 2, no. 1 (2020): 13–23.

⁴ Syamsiar Syamsiar, "The Role of Digitalization in Enhancing Public Service Effectiveness in Indonesia," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Administrasi Publik*, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.26858/jiap.v13i1.51026>.

⁵ Nadia Afny Zuraida, Ignatia Martha Hendrati, and Wiryana Wardaya, "Digitalisasi Pelayanan Publik Melalui Program Kalimasada Di Kelurahan Keputih, Kota Surabaya," *JAPI (Jurnal Akses Pengabdian Indonesia)* 8, no. 2 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.33366/japi.v8i2.4909>.

⁶ Ayu Rahadiani and Azis Muslim, "Strategi Dan Dampak Kebijakan KUA Dalam Menekan Angka Pernikahan Dini Di Kecamatan Karangpawitan Kabupaten Garut," *Jurnal Pemerintahan Dan Kebijakan (JPK)* 4, no. 2 (May 28, 2023); Ahmad Tholabi Kharlie, Fathudin, and Windy Triana, "Reforming Islamic Marriage Bureaucracy In Indonesia Approaches and Impacts," *Al-Jami'ah*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2021.592.255-286>; Masnun Tahir, "Efektivitas Kursus Calon Pengantin Dalam Menekan Angka Perceraian Di Wilayah Kerja KUA Kecamatan Batukliang," *Musāwa Jurnal Studi Gender Dan Islam* 17, no. 1 (2018).

⁷ Muhammad Sudartono and Muhammad Sulthon Rachmandhani, "Perumusan Kebijakan Pelayanan Pernikahan Selama Masa Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat (PPKM) Darurat," *Al-Syakhsyiyah: Journal of Law & Family Studies*, 2021,

marriage guidance. Several studies also highlight the policy strategy of the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in emphasizing the prevention of early marriage⁸ as well as the effectiveness of the policy of the bride-to-be course in emphasizing the divorce rate,⁹ The Effectiveness of Marriage Guidance in Maintaining the Integrity of the Household,¹⁰ and in the implementation of the course, the bride-to-be is guided by Islamic religious extension agents at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) who are currently using electronic aids or virtual media used such as during the *Covid-19 pandemic*¹¹ which in delivering the material should not only use the lecture method. However, these studies tend to be partial and have not examined holistically how institutional innovations can be optimally applied to support the formation of the sakinah family. In addition, there is still limited study of innovation models that have been successfully implemented at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) causing gaps in the literature.

The purpose of this paper is to complement previous studies by providing a new perspective on institutional innovation of the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA). In this case, this research mainly focuses on several main aspects, including identifying the forms of innovation carried out by the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), analyzing their implementation practices, and their implications for efforts to form a sakinah family. These innovations play an important role in raising public awareness of the importance of mental and emotional preparation before marriage, as well as encouraging better communication between married couples.

With innovations such as the establishment of the Mutuality Pact, the facilitation of group discussions in bride-to-be courses, and post-wedding consultation services, there is a suspicion that this approach is more effective than previous methods that tend to be conventional. While traditional marriage guidance programs tend to focus on delivering material in a one-way manner without in-depth interactive mechanisms, the institutional innovations implemented by KUA Batanghari provide space for couples to actively participate, share experiences, and receive ongoing guidance. With a more contextual, adaptive, and reciprocal-based approach, this innovation not only improves the bride-to-be's understanding of marriage dynamics, but also strengthens the foundation of the marriage relationship through the involvement of couples in the learning process. With this approach, it is hoped that this paper can make a real contribution in supporting the development of a more harmonious and prosperous sakinah family.

<https://doi.org/10.21154/syakhsiyyah.v3i2.3523>; Nadya Zulfa Imaniar, Rodliyah Khuzai, and Asep Ahmad Siddiq, "Implementasi Kebijakan Kementerian Agama Pada Masa Pandemi COVID-19 Dalam Aktivitas Penyuluh Agama Di Kantor Urusan Agama (KUA) Kecamatan Sukasari Kota Bandung," *Bandung Conference Series: Islamic Broadcast Communication*, 2022.

⁸ Rahadiani and Muslim, "Strategi Dan Dampak Kebijakan KUA Dalam Menekan Angka Pernikahan Dini Di Kecamatan Karangpawitan Kabupaten Garut."

⁹ Tahir, "Efektivitas Kursus Calon Pengantin Dalam Menekan Angka Perceraian Di Wilayah Kerja KUA Kecamatan Batukliang."

¹⁰ Yusuf Firdaus, Kholil Nawawi, and Mukhtar Mukhtar, "Efektivitas Bimbingan Perkawinan Di KUA Citeureup Dalam Menjaga Keutuhan Rumah Tangga," *Mizan: Journal of Islamic Law* 3, no. 1 (2019).

¹¹ Imaniar, Khuzai, and Ahmad Siddiq, "Implementasi Kebijakan Kementerian Agama Pada Masa Pandemi COVID-19 Dalam Aktivitas Penyuluh Agama Di Kantor Urusan Agama (KUA) Kecamatan Sukasari Kota Bandung."

Research Methods

This research is a field research method using a qualitative descriptive approach. This approach was chosen to be able to explore a deep understanding of the institutional innovations carried out by KUA in fostering the sakinah family. The qualitative descriptive approach allows researchers to explore various phenomena that occur in the field, including innovation patterns, implementation strategies, and impacts felt by the community. This research does not focus on collecting quantitative data in the form of numbers, or statistics, but rather on describing the dynamics, challenges, and success of KUA in carrying out its role as an institution for fostering a sakinah family in the community.

The research location was selected purposively, namely based on certain criteria relevant to the focus of the research. The location chosen by KUA Batanghari District, East Lampung, with the consideration of innovations carried out is relatively diverse and impactful. The subject of the study involves various parties directly or indirectly in the sakinah family development program. The main informants include KUA, Islamic Religious Extension Officers, and staff responsible for the implementation of family development programs. In addition, prospective brides and married couples who participate in the sakinah family development program at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) are also key informants to understand the impact of this program on their lives. By involving various types of informants, this research is expected to be able to capture diverse points of view.

Research data collection was carried out through several methods, namely interviews, direct observations, and documentation studies. First, in-depth interviews were conducted to explore detailed information about the history, implementation, and implications of the implementation of the Religious Affairs Office (KUA) innovation in fostering the Sakinah family. This research involved a total of 9 informants consisting of various categories. The Head of KUA Batanghari was the main informant who provided insight into institutional innovation policies. Islamic Religious Extension Officers and KUA staff who are responsible for the implementation of the sakinah family development program participated as informants to provide an understanding of the innovation implementation strategy. In addition, brides-to-be who took the bride-to-be course were also informants in this study. They were selected to gain perspective on their experiences in participating in coaching programs and their impact on wedding preparations.

The informants in this study were selected using *the purposive sampling technique*, which is based on certain criteria that are in accordance with the research objectives. KUA was chosen for its role in planning and implementing institutional innovation. Meanwhile, the bride-to-be was selected from participants who had taken the bride-to-be's course and were willing to share their experiences related to the innovations implemented by KUA. This selection technique allows researchers to obtain more relevant and in-depth data from individuals who have direct experience with KUA institutional innovations.

Second, direct observation is used to directly understand the situation in the field, including the program implementation process, as well as the interaction between the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) and the community. And third, a documentation study is carried out to review official documents, such as photos of activities and innovation product documents (Pledge of Reciprocity) used in fostering relevant sakinah families. Data analysis was carried out thematically by grouping information based on the main themes that emerged during the research, such as program innovation from the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), community response in fostering the sakinah family, and challenges of obstacles in implementation. The results of this analysis will be used to prepare recommendations that can strengthen the institutional role of the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in the future.

The Strategic Role of the Office of Religious Affairs in Community Service and Development

The Office of Religious Affairs is an official government institution that operates under the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. The Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) is responsible for carrying out certain tasks of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs in districts and cities, especially in the field of Islamic religious affairs in the sub-district area.¹² In line with that, according to the provisions of PMA Number 34 of 2016 concerning the Organization and Work Procedures of the District Religious Affairs Office, the Religious Affairs Office is a technical implementer under the Ministry of Religion. KUA is responsible to the Director General of Islamic Community Guidance and is operationally supervised by the Head of the Regency/City Ministry of Religion Office.¹³ The existence of KUA is a local government institution that is responsible for providing services to the community.

As an institution that serves the community, KUA has an important role in various aspects of religious life. One of its main tasks is to provide religious services, which include registration and registration of legal marriages according to religion and state, as well as providing education related to the rights and obligations of married couples in having a family. In addition, KUA also handles the registration of talaq and referrals, as well as providing guidance related to funeral procedures for bereaved families.

On the other hand, KUA has a big responsibility in fostering Muslims. This coaching includes the development of religious education, either through religious counseling, courses, or coaching for brides-to-be. In addition, KUA plays a role in strengthening the faith and piety of the people through various activities such as taklim councils, Islamic studies, and training for religious leaders. KUA also provides religious assistance and counseling for people in need, both related to family problems and other religious matters. In addition, KUA also carries out administrative functions related to religion, such as recording important religious events, such as births, marriages, and deaths, which are legally valid evidence. This institution also issues certificates needed by the community, such as marriage licenses or divorce certificates.

¹² Rizadian Mayangsari, "Efektivitas Penerapan Sistem Informasi Manajemen Nikah (SIMKAH) Di KUA Kecamatan Sawahan Kota Surabaya" 1204067424, no. June (2016): 9.

¹³ Kemenag, "Peraturan Menteri Agama Nomor 34 Tahun 2016 Tentang Organisasi Dan Tata Kerja Kantor Urusan Agama Kecamatan," 2016.

The functions of KUA that have been mentioned can be categorized into several main aspects, namely administrative, educational, social, mediation and conflict resolution, and religion. The administrative function is one of the functions of the KUA, namely registering marriages officially. This includes document verification, marriage registration, and issuance of marriage books. This function is important to maintain orderly population administration, ensuring that any changes in marital status are recorded accurately. Educational function¹⁴ at KUA also plays a role in providing education to couples who are about to get married. The premarital guidance program provided by KUA is designed to educate couples about their rights and responsibilities as husband and wife, as well as provide mental and spiritual preparation to build a sakinah family. And in its social role, KUA plays an active role in the sakinah family development program, which includes various educational, counseling, and training activities for the community¹⁵. KUA also acts as a mediator in resolving family conflicts.

However, behind its strategic role, KUA faces several challenges. One of them is technological developments that encourage KUA to innovate in services, such as the implementation of an online marriage registration system. This requires KUA to continue to adapt to the changing times. Social and economic problems of the community, such as poverty or problems in the family, are also a challenge for KUA. In this case, KUA needs to develop a more holistic approach and work with various parties to provide the best solutions for the community. In addition, limited human resources and funds are a challenge for KUA in providing maximum services to the community. Therefore, strengthening the capacity of KUA and utilizing technology is very important to increase the effectiveness of the services provided.

Sakinah Family in Institutional Innovation of the Office of Religious Affairs

The sakinah family is an ideal concept in Islam that is rooted in the principles of calm, compassion, and mercy as mentioned in the Qur'an Surah Ar-Rum: 21.¹⁶ In the perspective of Quraish Shihab, sakinah refers not only to emotional calm but also to dynamic stability that includes the family's ability to constructively cope with life's conflicts and challenges.¹⁷ This reflects the importance of spiritual, emotional, and social elements in creating a harmonious family.

According to As-Subki, there are three main elements that support the formation of the sakinah family:¹⁸

1. Spiritual Dimension (*Ruhiyah*): Involves a strong relationship with Allah SWT as the main foundation in building a household. Piety is a guideline in decision-making and conflict resolution.

¹⁴ Safruddin, "Eksistensi Penyuluh Agama Dalam Memakmurkan Masjid Di Kecamatan Jaya Baru Kota Banda Aceh," *Kalam: Jurnal Agama Dan Sosial Humaniora* 9, no. 2ru (2021).

¹⁵ Iin Handayani, "Strategi Penyuluh Agama Islam Dalam Pembinaan Keagamaan Masyarakat Di Desa Salemba Kecamatan Ujung Loe Kabupaten Bulukumba," *Facultas Dakwah Dan Komunikasi* (2018).

¹⁶ Dian Sandi Utama and Waharjani Waharjani, "Profil Keluarga Ideal (Analisis Surat Ar-Rum Ayat 21)," *Imtiyaz: Jurnal Ilmu Keislaman*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.46773/imtiyaz.v6i2.264>.

¹⁷ M. Quraishy Shihab, *Membumikan Al-Qur'an* (Bandung: Mizan, 2018), 25-27, ISBN: 979-433-567-8.

¹⁸ Ali Yusuf As-Subki, *Fiqh Keluarga: Pedoman Berkeluarga Dalam Islam* (Jakarta: Amzah, 2010), 37-42, ISBN: 979-823-456-2.

2. Psychological Dimension (*Nafsiyah*): Emphasizing the importance of individual mental and emotional health in the family. These elements include emotional management, effective communication, and the ability to resolve conflicts wisely.
3. Social Dimension (*Ijtima'iyah*): Refers to supportive social interactions, both within the nuclear family and the community. This dimension includes cooperation, tolerance, and community support.

Within the framework of institutional innovation, the concept of the *sakinah* family can be contextualized through a structured approach based on Islamic values. Hasan Basri added that the success of the *sakinah* family also depends heavily on effective communication patterns, fair division of roles, and collective spiritual growth.¹⁹ This theory is relevant to programs developed by the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), such as the establishment of the Mutuality Pact and the facilitation of group discussions in the bride-to-be course.

The Mutual Pact, as an innovation implemented by KUA Batanghari, can be seen as an implementation of the principles of the *Sakinah* family. The commitment outlined in this pact reflects the element of equality (*mubadalah*) that emphasizes cooperation between married couples. In the theory of family interaction, these values support the creation of harmonious relationships based on affection and justice. Overall, the application of the *mubis* concept in KUA institutional innovation not only functions as an educational strategy, but also as a conflict prevention model that can be replicated in various regions. By instilling the values of reciprocity from the beginning of marriage, this program contributes to the formation of a more harmonious and sustainable *sakinah* family.

In addition, group discussions in Bride-to-be Course provide a platform to strengthen the psychological and social dimensions of the bride-to-be. According to Bandura's social learning theory, interactions in groups can encourage observational learning, where individuals learn from the experiences and perspectives of others.²⁰ In this context, group discussions allow the bride-to-be to understand the dynamics of the marriage in more depth through sharing experiences and simulated problem-solving. Post-marriage follow-up counseling services are also relevant to the *sakinah* family theory. This service provides a space to support couples who are facing emotional challenges or domestic conflicts, which is in line with the psychological dimension of the *sakinah* family. With a holistic approach, this program helps couples to maintain a harmonious relationship through spiritual and emotional strengthening.

In the context of institutional innovation, KUA also plays a strategic role to support the formation of *sakinah* families through various programs and services. Institutional innovation includes not only the modernization of administrative processes, but also the provision of educational and consultative services relevant to the needs of modern society. Some significant forms of innovation are:

1. Digitization of Services: The use of technology to facilitate access to information and marriage services, such as online registration and digital-based pre-

¹⁹ Hasan Basri, *Keluarga Sakinah: Tinjauan Psikologi Dan Agama* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2019), 89-93, ISBN: 979-549-876-1.

²⁰ Bakhrudin All Habsy et al., "Penerapan Teori Belajar Behaviorisme Dan Teori Belajar Sosial Bandura Dalam Pembelajaran," *Tsaqofah*, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.58578/tsaqofah.v4i1.2211>.

- marriage courses, which allows prospective couples to get a family education flexibly.
2. Reciprocity Pact: An institution that instills the value of equality and cooperation, which is expressed in the form of a formal commitment by the bride-to-be to build a harmonious and fair relationship.
3. Post-Marriage Advanced Consultation: A guidance service for couples facing domestic challenges, aimed at maintaining the integrity of the relationship and strengthening their commitment to the principle of the sakinah family.
4. Increasing the Role of Religious Extension Workers: With training and empowerment, religious extension workers become the main facilitators in conveying the values of the sakinah family through courses, lectures, and direct interaction with the community.

These innovations reflect the role of KUA as an institution that is not only oriented to marriage administration, but also serves as a pillar of family development. With a comprehensive approach, KUA helps the bride and groom and their families to understand and apply the principles of the sakinah family. The principles of the sakinah family are: 1. Sincere intentions (Islah al-Niyyah) and a strong relationship with Allah (Quwwatu shilah billah), 2. Compassion; 3. Open to each other (Musharohah), politeness and wisdom (Mu'asyarah bil Ma'rûf); 4. Communication and deliberation, 5. Tolerance (Tasamuh) and Forgiveness; 6. Fair and equitable; 7. Patience and gratitude.²¹

In line with that, the sakinah family can be interpreted by fulfilling the mission of worship in life, obeying religious teachings, loving and cherishing each other, taking care of and strengthening each other, and can be deliberated or can also be contextualized by the sakinah family in terms of spiritual, social, emotional, and economic. By understanding and applying these principles, families can achieve peace, happiness, and well-being holistically. These principles are interrelated and support each other in creating a family that is sakinah, mawaddah, and rahmah.

The success of institutional innovation in supporting the concept of the sakinah family not only has an impact on individuals and families, but also on society at large.²² By building strong, harmonious, and prosperous families, social stability can be created, and various social problems, such as divorce and domestic conflicts, can be minimized.

Innovation in the Establishment of the Mutual Pact Institution at the Batanghari Religious Affairs Office, East Lampung in the Development of the Sakinah Family

Since the beginning of 2021, the KUA Batanghari, East Lampung, has begun to enforce a policy of reading the reciprocity pact pledge for all prospective brides in the marriage contract process. This policy was initiated by Em Sapri Ende as the head of KUA Batanghari. Em Sapri was inspired by the ideas that emerged in the training and mentoring of the heads of the Religious Affairs Offices in East Lampung and

²¹ Siti Chadijah, "Karakteristik Keluarga Sakinah Dalam Islam," *Rausyan Fikr: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pencerahan* 14, no. 1 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.31000/rf.v14i1.676>.

²² S Raharso, "Peran Knowledge Sharing Sebagai Mediator Perceived Organizational Politics Dengan Innovative Work Behavior," *Inovbiz: Jurnal Inovasi Bisnis*, 2020.

Tanggamus with the Rahima Association (a non-governmental organization that deals with the main issue of upholding women's rights with an Islamic perspective). The content of the Mutuality Pact pledge is sourced from the five pillars of building a sakinah family in the perspective of mubadalah. The introduction of the values enshrined in the Reciprocity Pact begins when the bride-to-be couples take part in marriage guidance or bride-to-be courses, which are then read and signed during the marriage contract.

The policy of the Reciprocity Pact is intended to encourage fair and equal relations in marriage. Through marriage guidance, couples gain new knowledge and perspectives in building family relationships with a mutual perspective. Brides-to-be are encouraged to understand the importance of supporting each other and respecting each other's roles in the family. The reading of the Reciprocity Pact in the marriage contract procession is intended to provide positive motivation for married couples. The points of the reciprocity pact read emphasized togetherness and reciprocal relations from the beginning of the marriage contract. Each couple is seen as a subject that contributes to determining happiness and the formation of a family of sakinah, mawaddah, and rahmah. The procession of signing and reading of this pledge is not only symbolic, but also affirms the couple's commitment to live a marriage with the principles of equality and mutual support, creating a strong foundation for their married life in the future. The document of the reciprocity pact and the procession of the marriage contract as attached.



Picture 1 Text of the Reciprocity Pact and the Signing of the Reciprocity Pact in the Marriage Contract Process

In Picture 1, the text of the Reciprocity Pact is shown which is an important document (pledge) in the procession of the marriage contract. The text of the Reciprocity Pact was printed and signed by the husband and wife and the Head of KUA Batanghari in three copies for each and the KUA archive. This document is not only signed by the bride and groom, but also witnessed by the head of KUA as a form of formal commitment. This signing provides a visual symbol of the bond of equality and cooperation that we want to build from the beginning of the marriage.

The values enshrined in the reciprocal pact are conveyed as material in the bride-to-be's course activities. In addition to discussing matters about marriage, the

Bride-to-be course also delivers material on family and reproductive health, conflict management in the household, and family financial management. This course is guided by a facilitator, namely a supervisor (Islamic religious extension worker) or an instructor from the Office of Religious Affairs and involves additional resource persons from community health centers (puskesmas), marriage counselors, or religious leaders. At the time of the reading of the reciprocal pact, present in this process are family members or relatives and invited guests who come down to witness, provide moral support, and ensure the validity of the marriage contract procession. This moment provides a strong foundation for couples to start their married life with the values of reciprocity and solid cooperation. This process is as documented in the following image.



Picture 2 Introduction of the Reciprocity Pact in the Bride-to-be's Course Session

Until December 2023, this policy has been implemented for more than 3 years. In the documentation at KUA Batanghari, there are more than 1,299 Reciprocity Pacts that were read and signed by the bride and groom.

This innovation is very powerful in its educational role. KUA plays the role of an educational institution that provides understanding to the bride-to-be about the importance of equality, mutual respect, and cooperation in building a household. Through the Reciprocity Pact, KUA equips couples with the knowledge and skills needed to live a harmonious married life.

In addition, this policy is not only a symbolic moment, but also provides a strong foundation for couples to live a marriage with the values of justice and cooperation. Through this procession, the bride and groom are positioned as active subjects in shaping their marital happiness. This commitment that was affirmed from the beginning of marriage helped strengthen the moral support of the family and community. In addition, systematic premarital courses are an educational tool that expands the understanding of prospective couples on the importance of a respectful relationship. Although this policy has been successfully implemented at KUA Batanghari, the challenges faced include limited resources such as facilitators and additional resource persons. In addition, this policy has not been widely adopted by KUA in other regions, so the impact is not evenly distributed. However, this success opens up opportunities for policy replication in other KUA with adjustments according to local needs. Further evaluation is also needed to measure the long-term impact of these policies on marriage sustainability and the reduction of conflict within households.

Innovation in Providing Group Discussion Facilities in Marriage Guidance Sessions

The second innovation of the KUA service is the group discussion facility during the implementation of marriage guidance. The group discussions that are part of the bride-to-be's course are intended to gain a comprehensive understanding of married life. Problem solving simulation equips the bride-to-be not only with normative concepts of marital relations but also with problem-solving practices. The Office of Religious Affairs sees that group discussions can be an effective means of sharing experiences, knowledge, and strategies in overcoming various marital challenges. With the interaction between couples from different backgrounds, marriage guidance participants can learn from other perspectives and gain broader insights. This facility is designed to improve the quality of pre-marital guidance and prepare couples more holistically to face married life.

The issues that are discussed are usually related to how to communicate in marriage when experiencing miscommunication, family financial management, how to divide household roles, parenting styles, and how to build and maintain trust between couples. These problems are solved by discussing and then expressing each other in their respective perspectives, so that participants can learn to unite the opinions of each to clarify the picture of the household to be built. Some brides-to-be have explained that this form of facilitation of activities like this can help to be better prepared in marriage because it has united two different mindsets between couples and has found a bright spot from the problem if faced with such a problem later.

Social institutions that provide group discussion facilities at the time of marriage guidance are used by brides-to-be who are preparing to enter married life. These facilities are usually attended by couples who want to gain a deeper understanding of marital dynamics, as well as effective communication and conflict resolution skills. In addition, couples who want to learn from other people's experiences and share their views on marriage also take advantage of these group discussions. This activity provides an opportunity for brides-to-be to listen to perspectives and suggestions from fellow participants and facilitators, which can help them deal with various challenges and changes that may occur in their married life. Thus, these social institutions play an important role in equipping couples with the knowledge and skills necessary to build healthy and harmonious relationships, shown in detail in table 1.

No.	Informant	Statement	Information
1.	Informant 1	This facility helps us to know more about the couple through discussions and can also understand the issues of each partner	Can find out more about your partner.
2.	Informant 2	With this activity, I can be helped about the opinions of couples on how to solve problems when married so that they are prepared to understand the actions that must be taken when they are in trouble	It can help prepare for how to solve problems in the family.

3.	Informant 3	With this program, we can discuss to prepare for later marriage, besides that we also exchange ideas with other couples to increase their insight	It is very helpful as a discussion to exchange ideas to increase insights.
4.	Informant 4	It is very comfortable to have this activity because you can share it with other couples as well. Learn to resolve conflicts.	It is very helpful as a means of sharing problem solving.
5.	Informant 5	In my opinion, this discussion facility is very good because it can share experiences with each other and learn to overcome conflicts so that they are better prepared to face family life and become a harmonious family.	It is very helpful as a means of sharing experiences and a means to learn to build a harmonious family.

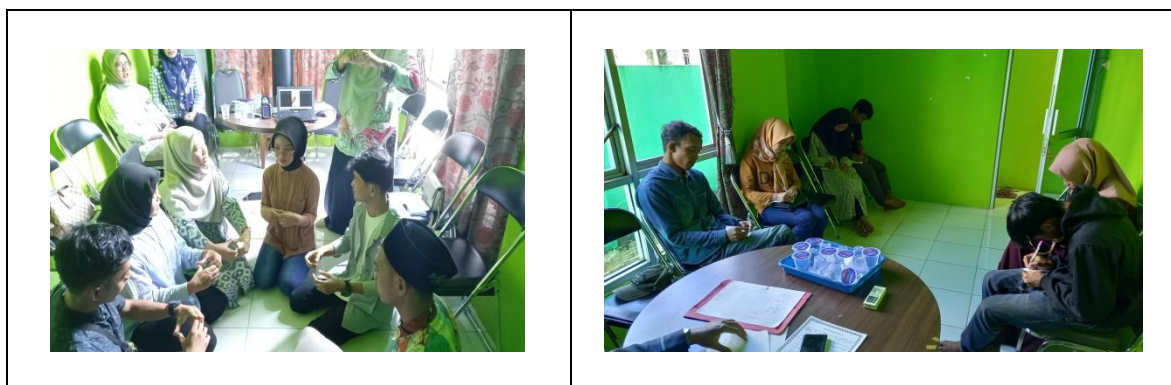
Table 1 Interview Response of Brides-to-be About Problem Solving Methods

This table summarizes the responses from the participants of the bride-to-be course regarding the effectiveness of the group discussion method:

No.	Informant	Date	Statement
1.	Informant 1	June 26, 2024	"This facility helps us understand the couple more deeply."
2.	Informant 2	June 26, 2024	"This discussion provides insight into conflict resolution in marriage."
3.	Informant 3	June 26, 2024	"We learned from the experiences of other couples, this is very beneficial."

Table 2 Interview Response of Brides-to-be About Group Discussion Method

This table helps show the concrete impact of group discussion innovations on participants' understanding and readiness.



Picture 3 Problem Solving Simulation

Picture 3, shows the group discussion process carried out during the bride-to-be's course. In this session, participants shared their views on the dynamics of

marriage and simulated conflict resolution. This interaction strengthens the couple's learning and readiness to face challenges in the household.

The views of the participants of the bride-to-be course regarding the problem-solving methods carried out during marriage guidance activities are a good facility to be applied as a view of preparing for problem solving when building a married life and with the hope that every bride-to-be course activity will continue to be carried out.

In other words, the group discussion facility in Marriage Guidance at KUA has proven to be an effective innovation in helping brides-to-be prepare holistically for married life. With an interactive and problem-solving-based approach, the program provides practical insights, communication skills, and much-needed conflict resolution strategies. This innovation not only helps couples understand their partner better, but also prepares them to build a harmonious and cooperative family. With continuous evaluation and development, the facility has the potential to become a broader model of pre-marital guidance in various regions.

Innovation in the Provision of Post-Marriage Advanced Consultation Rooms

The second innovation of KUA services is the post-marriage follow-up consultation room. This service is designed to meet the needs of families facing domestic problems to get professional guidance in maintaining and improving relationships within the household. This service innovation is growing along with the increasing awareness of the importance of mental and emotional health in home life. Problems that usually arise are generally related to communication problems, continuous conflicts (*syiqaq*), or economic problems that trigger quarrels. This consultation media is a kind of forum for venting that helps families to unravel the problems they face. With the help of a trained counselor, people who are facing problems at least get strengthened and motivated to improve their family relationships and re-strengthen emotional bonds in the family, in detail as shown in Picture 4.



Picture 4 Advanced Consultation

Picture 4 shows the post-marriage counseling services provided by KUA. This session helps couples facing conflict to find solutions with the guidance of a counselor. This consultation media is also available online to improve accessibility.

Until now, advanced consultation facilities have been well utilized by the community. The surrounding community who use this facility by coming to the office from any group can access the facility, but this is also often used through electronic channels such as *WhatsApp* because people are reluctant to come to the office.

To access the post-marriage advanced consultation room service at the Office of Religious Affairs, couples must follow a few simple steps. First, they need to visit the KUA Batanghari and go to the consultation service section. There, they will be asked to fill out a guestbook according to their interests that includes personal information of their needs. After that, KUA Batanghari officers will help direct you to a special room to meet with the counselor. Then the counselor will listen to the problems faced by discussing openly, giving suggestions, and offering the right solutions. If needed, follow-up or follow-up sessions can be scheduled to ensure the issue is resolved and couples receive ongoing support. In addition, there are other ways provided to be able to continue to innovate the follow-up consultation by means of online communication which is usually done by individuals who may be embarrassed to come to the Office of Religious Affairs.

This counseling service was responded to by many people. Although it is not always available every month, some members of the community use this service to just tell stories to release the burden they face. From various circles, people have taken advantage of the services provided by KUA Batanghari by coming to the office and accessing the service. But on the other hand, there are also some people who take advantage of this service through electronic media or what we usually use every day, namely through the WhatsApp (WA) application. Through electronic media, it is more widely used to access this service because there are several people who are more comfortable consulting without looking at each other with the assumption that they are more free when telling stories related to their problems.

Discussion

The results of research at KUA Batanghari show that innovations such as the Mutuality Pact and group discussions have had a significant impact in strengthening the foundation of marriage. The value of equality outlined in the Reciprocity Pact is in line with the theory of the *sakinah* family which emphasizes cooperation and mutual respect. The values of equality that animate the text of the reciprocal pact are such as positive energy in the procession of a sacred marriage contract.²³ This is relevant to the analysis of As-Subki²⁴, who states that the social dimension in the *Sakinah* family includes justice in the relationship between husband and wife.

The group discussions in the bride-to-be's course also reflect the direct application of Bandura's social learning theory,²⁵ The process of sharing experiences and perspectives among participants not only provides new insights but also forms *problem-solving* skills that are needed in married life. This supports Hasan Basri's theory²⁶ about regarding the importance of effective communication in creating a harmonious family. Post-marriage counseling services are a strategic step to overcome

²³ Mufliha Wijayati et al., "The New Men: The Rahima's Experiences in the Gender Sensitivity Construction among Marriage Registrar in Lampung Indonesia," *Samarah* 7, no. 3 (2023): 1489–1513, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v7i3.17666>.

²⁴ As-Subki, *Fiqh Keluarga: Pedoman Berkeluarga Dalam Islam*.

²⁵ Habsy et al., "Penerapan Teori Belajar Behaviorisme Dan Teori Belajar Sosial Bandura Dalam Pembelajaran."

²⁶ Basri, *Keluarga Sakinah: Tinjauan Psikologi Dan Agama*.

domestic conflicts. Based on Walsh's theory,²⁷ Families who have access to ongoing support are better able to cope with crises and maintain relationship stability. This innovation creates a safety net that helps couples to continue to strengthen their relationship after marriage.

In addition, the findings of the study show that more than 1,299 couples have read the Reciprocity Pact in their marriage contract procession since 2021. This confirms the relevance of this innovation in creating a new culture in society that emphasizes the value of equality and mutual support in the household. The group discussion that was integrated in the bride-to-be's course also received a positive response from participants who considered this program very helpful in preparing for domestic life as conveyed by the informant in the interview. As a new program, the challenge of this innovation concerns the limitation of human resources and facilities. Human resources related to gender-sensitive KUA employees, lack of professional facilitators, and low participation of spouses in mentoring programs are the main obstacles. In addition, budget limitations for the procurement of learning materials and digitization of services are also obstacles in the dissemination of this innovation to other regions. Therefore, a collaborative strategy is needed between KUA, local governments, and community organizations in expanding the scope of this program more effectively.

However, as a pioneer of this innovation, it can be a model that is worthy of replication in other regions with adjustments according to local needs. In addition, a long-term evaluation of the impact of this policy needs to be carried out to ensure the sustainability of its benefits and become a national policy to improve the effectiveness of premarital services. With a more structured approach and stronger policy support, this innovation has the potential to be used as a national model in fostering the sakinah family.

Conclusion

This paper provides a significant scientific contribution with a comprehensive overview of KUA institutional innovation in Sakinah Family Development to improve services to the community. This study reveals that innovations in fostering the sakinah family by KUA Batanghari East Lampung, especially through the establishment of the Mutuality Pact, have a significant impact in strengthening the relationship between husband and wife and preparing them to face married life better. This institution is not just symbolic, but contains values that promote equality, mutual support, and effective communication between couples. By including the pledge of the Mutuality Pact in the wedding procession, KUA Batanghari creates a solid foundation for couples

²⁷ Indah Meitasari, Fentiny Nugroho, and Triyanti Anugrahini, "Fostering Low-Income Family Resilience: Findings from Walsh Family Resilience Framework in Tapos Depok, Indonesia," *International Journal of Social Science Research and Review*, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.47814/ijssrr.v6i6.1154>.

to build a harmonious family based on the principles of *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*.

In addition, other institutional innovations, such as group discussions in bride-to-be courses and post-marriage follow-up counseling services, demonstrate a holistic approach in supporting the formation of the *sakinah* family. Group discussions provide a space for couples to learn and understand each other, not only from their own partners but also from the experiences of other participants, thus broadening their horizons about home life. Post-marriage follow-up counseling services allow couples to get ongoing support in resolving issues that arise after marriage. This approach emphasizes that the development of the *sakinah* family does not only end at the premarital stage, but continues in family life as a whole.

With the renewal of policies and service strategies, KUA Batanghari has succeeded in creating an innovative institutional model, improving the quality of services, and supporting the development of a more harmonious and prosperous family. This holistic approach ensures that all innovations support each other to create a sustainable impact on strengthening family values in society. This research is limited to one perspective in the local context of KUA Batanghari East Lampung, so there is a need for more comprehensive research and further evaluation of the long-term impact of this policy as well as replication efforts in other KUA by adjusting local needs. With consistent policy support and cross-sectoral collaboration, KUA institutional innovation can be a sustainable model to support the development of *sakinah* families in Indonesia.

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