



## **Community Empowerment in Strengthening the Sakinah Family: The Strategic Role of KUA in Bandar Lampung City, Indonesia**

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**Abstract:** This study focuses on community empowerment efforts by the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in Bandar Lampung City in strengthening the sakinah family. This research uses a qualitative approach with field research methods, where data is collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The results of the study show that only the capacity building program for couples through premarital courses (Suscatin) has been successfully implemented, while the youth education and economic empowerment program through the Sakinah Family Center (PUSAKA Sakinah) has not continued. The main obstacles identified include limited facilitators, inadequate infrastructure, and regulatory changes and political influence. However, positive responses from participants, professional facilitator competence, and collaboration between government agencies supported the success of the program. This research contributes to the understanding of the unique integration between religious, social, and economic factors in achieving a healthy family structure. Further research can examine the strategic role of KUA in empowering adolescents in the school environment.

**Keywords:** Community empowerment, KUA, *Sakinah* family

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**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini berfokus pada upaya pemberdayaan masyarakat yang dilakukan oleh Kantor Urusan Agama (KUA) Kota Bandar Lampung dalam memperkuat keluarga sakinah. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode penelitian lapangan, di mana data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa hanya program pengembangan kapasitas bagi pasangan melalui kursus pra-nikah (Suscatin) yang berhasil dilaksanakan, sementara program pendidikan pemuda dan pemberdayaan ekonomi melalui Pusat Keluarga Sakinah (PUSAKA Sakinah) tidak dilanjutkan. Hambatan utama yang diidentifikasi meliputi keterbatasan fasilitator, infrastruktur yang tidak memadai, serta perubahan regulasi dan pengaruh politik. Namun, tanggapan positif dari peserta, kompetensi fasilitator yang profesional, dan kolaborasi antar lembaga pemerintah mendukung kesuksesan program. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman integrasi unik antara faktor agama, sosial, dan ekonomi dalam mencapai struktur keluarga yang sehat. Penelitian lebih lanjut dapat mengeksplorasi peran strategis KUA dalam memberdayakan remaja di lingkungan sekolah.

**Kata kunci:** Pemberdayaan Masyarakat, KUA, Keluarga Sakinah

## Introduction

In the midst of the dynamics of modern life, families experience various challenges that affect their stability and harmony.<sup>1</sup> Traditional values of family, built on a foundation of love, compassion, and commitment, are now often eroded by social, economic, and cultural pressures.<sup>2</sup> The Islamic context considers the family sakinah, which is a family based on mawaddah (love) and rahmah (affection).<sup>3</sup> However, the challenges faced by families in Indonesia, especially

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<sup>1</sup> Velia K. Frost, "Tensions of Marriage: Love, Cooperation, Capitulation, Annihilation," *Clinical Social Work Journal* 41, no. 1 (2013), p. 100–111.

<sup>2</sup> A'dawiyah Ismail, Siti Syarah M. Tawil, and Jawiah Dakir, "Measures in Forming a Harmonious Family Based on the Practice of Noble Values among the Participants of Bicara Sakinah (Talk on Harmony) at Pusat Islam (Islamic Centre), Kuala Lumpur," *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Nasa'y Aziz, Riadhus Riadhus, and Miss Nifatimah Somah, "Child Marriage in Kabang, South Yala, Thailand: Islamic Family Law Perspective," *El-Usrah: Journal of Family Law* 1, no. 2 (2023), p. 107–16. Ahmad Arifai YUSDANI, and Januariansyah Arfaizar, "The Jejuluk in Komerling Tribe Weddings in the Globalization from a Siyasa Perspective," *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam Dan Kemanusiaan* 23, no. 2 (2023), p. 211–34.

related to gender gaps, domestic conflicts, and economic difficulties.<sup>4</sup> make the achievement of a sakinah family not always easy to realize.<sup>5</sup>

The high divorce rate in Indonesia is a serious problem that affects family resilience.<sup>6</sup> including in the city of Bandar Lampung. Based on data from the Tanjung Karang Class I Religious Court, Bandar Lampung, in the period from January to August 2023, 1,022 women filed divorce lawsuits, with most cases due to economic problems.<sup>7</sup> Gender role imbalances, domestic violence, and economic pressures are the main factors contributing to the increase in divorce rates.<sup>8</sup>

The sakinah family in the Islamic concept is built on the basis of affection, harmony.<sup>9</sup> and mutual respect for Sakinah in the Qur'an, such as QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 248, QS. At-Taubah (9): 26 and 40, as well as QS. Al-Fath (48): 4, 8, and 16 were presented by Allah SWT into the hearts of the Prophets and believers to give fortitude and strength in facing various trials, challenges, and calamities.<sup>10</sup> Sakinah is a force that helps individuals and families stay strong in life's challenges.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Sojjirat Supanichwatana and Kasetchai Laeheem, "Social Acceptance and Adjustment of Spouses in Multicultural Families to Reduce Violent Behavioral Conflicts in the Mueang District, Yala Province," *Hell* 10, no. 7 (2024), p. e28245.

<sup>5</sup> Sitti Marwah, "Gender Progressive Teaching In Premarital Course : Study on Islamic Marriage Guidance Books for Prospective Muslim Couples," *Al-Ahwal* 15, no. 1 (2022), p. 103–26.

<sup>6</sup> Erie Hariyanto et al., "Sakinah Family Empowerment by Optimizing the Role of BP4 and Parents Mental Revolution Perspective," *Squirt* 5, No. 2 (2021), p. 619–47. Mursyid Djawas et al., "Creating Family Resilience in Indonesia: A Study of 'Marriage Guidance' Program in Aceh and South Sumatera Mursyid Djawas Hedhri Nadhiran Sri Astuti A. Samad, *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pranata Sosial* 17, no. 1 (2022).

<sup>7</sup> Tommy Saputra, "Hundreds of Husbands in Bandar Lampung Sued for Divorce Every Month," detikSumbagsel, 2023.

<sup>8</sup> Emma Fulu et al., "Pathways Between Childhood Trauma , Intimate Partner Violence , and Harsh Parenting : Findings From The UN Multi-Country Study on Men and Violence in Asia and the Pacific," *Lancet Glob Health* 5 (2017), p. 512–22.

<sup>9</sup> Supanichwatana and Laeheem; Ahmad Zuhri et al., "Evaluation of the Role of Islamic Lifestyle in Communication Skills of Muslim Couples," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 79, No. 1 (2023), p. 1–6. Yusdani, Arifai, and Arfaizar, "The Jejuluk in Komerang Tribe Weddings in the Globalization from a Siyasa Perspective."

<sup>10</sup> Miftahus Sholehudin, "The Contextualization of the Sakinah Family Concept: The Struggle for Family Law Ideas in the Interpretation of the Qur'an," *De Jure: Journal of Law and Sharia* 12, no. 2 (2020), p. 201–13.

<sup>11</sup> Fauzi, "'Urf and Its Role in The Development of Fiqh: Comparative Study of Family Law Between Egypt and Indonesia," *El-Usrah: Journal of Family Law* 7, No. 1 (2024), p. 346–71.

The main element in creating a sakinah family is good communication<sup>12</sup>. Various problems, such as inequality in the family, domestic violence, and even divorce, are proof that this concept is not always easy to implement<sup>13</sup>. Minimizing disparities in households requires the collaboration of various parties, both the government and the community<sup>14</sup>. Empowerment creates harmony in family life based on Islamic values, so that poverty in the household can be minimized. The community empowerment process consists of several stages, such as building awareness, organizing potential, and empowerment.<sup>15</sup> To achieve maximum impact and be felt by the entire community, empowerment must be carried out in an integrated and sustainable manner.

The effectiveness of the community empowerment process is not only determined by the systematics of these stages, but must also be supported by approaches and methods that are in accordance with community problems.<sup>16</sup> Basic concepts that inspire and strengthen, as well as become the starting point for thinking about something, are implemented based on theory.<sup>17</sup> The process of approach, and the method of community empowerment in the research pays attention to the goals and field of work of government institutions (bureaucracy), namely the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA)<sup>18</sup> as the *leading sector* of the Ministry of Religion at the sub-district level which oversees Human Resources (HR), Religious Extension Workers and assisted by Marriage Registration Officers (PPN) at the village level who are misguided in carrying out pre-marriage

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<sup>12</sup> Mugy Ansyori Fauzyan, Suryana, and Aas Nurasyiah, "Effect of Religiosity on the Sakinah Finance Implementation and Its Impact on Family Welfare (Survey on Muslim Women Reciting Daarut Tauhid Mosque in Bandung)," *KnE Social Sciences* 2019, p. 16–31.

<sup>13</sup> Marli Candra and Umi Asmaul Fauziah Adha Athifatul Wafirah, "Maintaining Family Harmony Through Ruqyah from the Perspective of Maqashid Sharia," *El-Usrah* 4, No. 2 (2021), p. 430–48.

<sup>14</sup> Marwah, "Gender Progressive Teaching In Premarital Course : Study on Islamic Marriage Guidance Books for Prospective Muslim Couples.": Candra and Wafirah, "Maintaining Family Harmony Through Ruqyah from a Sharia Maqashid Perspective."

<sup>15</sup> Totok Mardikanto and Poerwoko Soebianto, *Community Empowerment in the Perspective of Public Policy*, Cet.2 (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2012).

<sup>16</sup> Sidiq Aulia, "Eksistensi Kaum (Penghulu Adat) Dalam Perkawinan: Studi Kasus Pada Masyarakat Pekal, Kecamatan Ketahun, Kabupaten Bengkulu Utara," *JIL: Journal of Islamic Law* 1, no. 2 (2020).

<sup>17</sup> Tammy Allen, Alan Crouch, and Stephanie M Topp, "Community Participation and Empowerment Approaches to Aedes Mosquito Management in High-Income Countries: A Scoping Review," *Health Promotion International*, 2020, p. 1–19.

<sup>18</sup> Justang Fariel Maulana, "Analysis of the Implementation of the Family Planning Village Program in Improving Family Welfare in Air Dingin Village, Bukit Raya District, Pekanbaru City (Study on the Family Development Activity Group of Toddlers)," *PUBLIKA : Journal of Public Administration Science* 7, no. 1 (2021), p. 64–73. Muhammad Lutfi Hakim et al., "Implementasi, Kendala Dan Efektifitas Kursus Pranikah Di KUA Kecamatan Pontianak Tenggara," *Al-Istinbath : Jurnal Hukum Islam* 5, no. 2 (2020), p. 311.

guidance as an effort to prepare provisions for prospective new families who will carry out the marriage in order to build a Sakinah family.<sup>19</sup>

Various previous studies have highlighted community empowerment in the context of realizing the Sakinah family, for example, the BP4 empowerment program to build the resilience of the Sakinah family<sup>20</sup>, the role of the Religious Affairs Office (KUA) extension workers to expand insights related to the meaning of the Sakinah family through psychological and economic aspects during the Covid-19 pandemic.<sup>21</sup> the hope of increasing gender equality and the role of husband and wife,<sup>22</sup> the eradication of Quranic<sup>23</sup> Sufism, and Premarital Guidance assistance to Realize *Sakinah, Mawaddah* and *Warahmah*<sup>24</sup> Families. However, there has been no integrated research on the strategic role of KUA in Bandar Lampung in empowering the community to strengthen the sakinah family. This research aims to fill this gap by exploring the strategic role of KUA in Bandar Lampung City in empowering the community to strengthen the sakinah family.

This research offers a new perspective by integrating the role of religious extension workers not only as missionaries, but also as agents of economic and social empowerment, and expanding the indicators of the sakinah family by including variables to improve people's living standards. In addition, this study explores how KUA can play a role in community-based empowerment, thereby enriching the approach in achieving the sakinah family.provision for prospective new families who will carry out marriages in order to build a sakinah family.

The research method used in this study is qualitative methodology and conducting field research. Meanwhile, primary and secondary data obtained through field observations, documentation, and direct interviews are incorporated into the information collected.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs of Bandar Lampung City carries out various strategic programs to realize the sakinah family, including pre-school guidance (suscatin) which is divided into classical and independent guidance, as

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<sup>19</sup> Citra Ningsih, "Interpersonal Communication in Shaping the Family Concept Sakinah, Mawaddah, Warahmah," *Wasilatuna: Journal of Islamic Communication and Broadcasting* 5, no. 1 (2022), p. 64–69.

<sup>20</sup> Hariyanto et al., "Sakinah Family Empowerment by Optimizing the Role of BP4 and Parents Mental Revolution Perspective."

<sup>21</sup> Andi Yaqub, Iswandi, and Jabal Nur, "Reconstruction of the Sakinah Family Criteria During the Covid-19 Period," *Al-Ahkam* 31, No. 1 (2021), p. 1–24,.

<sup>22</sup> Marwah, "Gender Progressive Teaching In Premarital Course : Study on Islamic Marriage Guidance Books for Prospective Muslim Couples."

<sup>23</sup> Rivo Alfarizi Kurniawan et al., "Empowerment of the Sakinah Community in an Effort to Eradicate Qur'an Illiteracy in Sakinah Village," *Title: Journal of Dedication Based on Local Wisdom* 2, no. 1 (2022), p. 19–30.

<sup>24</sup> Ade Risma and Elfi Yanti Ritonga, "Penghulu's Assistance in Providing Premarital Guidance to Realize a Sakinah Mawaddah Warahmah (Samara) Family at KUA Tanjung Morawa," *Amalee: Indonesian Journal of Community Research and Engagement* 5, no. 2 (2024), p. 601–18.

well as guidance for school-age adolescents. However, until now it has only been pre-marital guidance (suscatin). Meanwhile, the guidance of school-age adolescents did not continue, because in the last two years the program funds were not listed in the DIPA of the Ministry of Religion.<sup>25</sup> The results of the intreroverview by the facilitator of Bimwin KUA in the Lampung region that:<sup>26</sup>

*"The Ministry of Religion has many programs to create a sakinah family, namely; (1) Religious Education in the Family; (2) Religious Education in the Community; (3) Improvement of Religious Education through Formal Education Institutions; (4) Bride-to-be Course; (5) Family Counseling; (6) Family Economic Empowerment; (7) Fostering Adolescents of Marriage Age; (8) Efforts to Improve Family Nutrition; (9) Healthy Reproduction; (10) Family motivation and guidance; (11) Immunization of brides-to-be; (11) Environmental health."*

Marriage Guidance (Bimwin) for brides-to-be aims to provide education on family health and welfare.<sup>27</sup> Hamam mentions that:<sup>28</sup>

*"Religious education is the responsibility of the head of the family, religious education in the community is the responsibility of the da'i da'iyah, religious education in formal institutions is the responsibility of the Director General of Pendid of the Ministry of Religion and the Ministry of Education and Culture, family economic empowerment is the responsibility of the Ministry of MSMEs, improving family nutrition and immunizing brides-to-be is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health"*.

The facilitator program (Religious Extension) at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in collaboration with related parties. The results of the interview with Elsi and stated that:<sup>29</sup>

*"Facilitators need to collaborate with the nearest Pukesmas to immunize brides-to-be, nutrition coaching materials, and environmental health"*

Meanwhile, Solhani in his interview mentioned that:<sup>30</sup>

*"Three excellent programs that have existed in realizing the sakinah family, (1) the development of marriage-age adolescents which are carried out in*

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<sup>25</sup> Interview with Muslihin, Islamic Guidance Staff for Marriage, Divorce, Referral, Ministry of Religion of Bandar Lampung City, Interview, Tuesday, August 20, 2024

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Miftahuddin, Head of KUA/Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Panjang, FGD, Friday 23 August 2024

<sup>27</sup> Ahmad Fadhil Husaini, Darmawan Tia Indrajaya, and Henrizal Hadi, "The Role of Islamic Religious Extension Workers in Realizing the Sakinah Family through the Central Program," *Journal of Sharia and Law* 3, No. 3 (2024), p. 886–99.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Hamam Syafe'I, Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Kedaton, FGD, Friday, August 23, 2024.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with Elsiyana, Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Langkapura, FGD, Friday, August 23, 2024.

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Solhani, Head of KUA/Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Bumi Waras, FGD, Friday, August 23, 2024.

*schools, (2) marriage guidance as a condition for marriage, and (3) post-marriage guidance."*

In line with the interview mentioned by Miftah that:<sup>31</sup>

*"The Ministry of Religion's flagship program to realize the Sakinah family is divided into two categories. First, marriage guidance, which consists of three main programs: (1) youth training program, (2) pre-marriage training program which is part of classical guidance or marriage guidance (Bim-Win) as well as independent marriage guidance or bride-to-be course (Suscatin), and (3) post-marriage guidance known as Pusaka Sakinah (Sakinah Family Service Center). Second, divorce guidance or mediation is an important part of maintaining family integrity."*

The implementation of marriage guidance for prospective brides and divorce-referral mediation, Zainal in his interview mentioned that:<sup>32</sup>

*"Facilitator (Extension Officer) and or Divorce Advisory, Coaching, and Preservation Board (BP4), prospective bride, family materials, methods, and approaches."*

The role of the Marriage Advisory, Development, and Preservation Board (BP4) is very important. BP4, as a strategic partner of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, has the task of providing marriage advice and guidance to ensure family resilience and as a mediator institution in handling divorce cases, especially efforts to refer back couples who have experienced domestic<sup>33</sup> conflicts. Extension services at KUA Bandar Lampung City provide guidance, advice, and assistance to the community in various aspects of life, especially those related to the development of the Sakinah family. Solihani mentioned in his interview that:<sup>34</sup>

*"Identify problems in advance to identify problems or needs faced by the individuals or groups served through direct observation, interviews, or data collection from various sources. After identifying the problem, the extension worker at KUA Bandar Lampung prepares a service plan that involves determining the most appropriate activities, methods, approaches, and techniques to deal with the problem. And KUA Bandar Lampung was seen carrying out services in accordance with the plan that had been made, using the chosen methods and techniques. After the service, KUA Bandar Lampung conducts an evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the service"*

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<sup>31</sup> Interview with Miftahuddin, Head of KUA/Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Panjang, FGD, Friday, August 23, 2024.

<sup>32</sup> Interview with Zainal Hakim, Head of Islamic Guidance of Bandar Lampung City, Interview, Tuesday, August 20, 2024

<sup>33</sup> Hariyanto et al., "Sakinah Family Empowerment by Optimizing the Role of BP4 and Parents' Mental Revolution Perspective."

<sup>34</sup> Interview with Solihani, Head of KUA/Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Bumi Waras, FGD, Friday, 23 August 2024

*and, if necessary, provides follow-up to ensure that the problems faced related to the development of the sekinah family have been resolved."*

### **Marriage Guidance Materials**

The results of the interview of members of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Lampung region regarding the marriage fostered by elsi and Miftah,<sup>35</sup>

*"The material presented is about the position of the caliph on earth, the family of sakinah, the 5 pillars of marriage (Couples/Zawaj), Firm Promises (Mitsaqan ghalizhan), treating each other well (Mu'asyaroh bil-Ma'ruf), household management, husband and wife believe that Allah's pleasure in them depends on the pleasure of their husband/wife)".*

*"Various obstacles in the implementation of Bimwin with the classical guidance model, so the material presented in Bimwin is limited to 5 main materials that are commonly used in the suscatin program".*

Subject matter of philosophy and the nature of marriage, pre-marriage (marriage, pre-marriage debriefing, formation of a sakinah family),<sup>36</sup> pregnancy information (preparation and maintenance of pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum delivery, breastfeeding and immunization, family planning<sup>37</sup>.

### **Marriage Guidance Methods**

As a result of the Focus Group Discussion (FGD), there are several methods of marriage guidance to form a sakinah family, including questions and answers, lectures, group discussions, counseling, games, role-playing, presence, and counseling. *The question and answer method* is specifically used to understand the mediation process in resolving marital disputes<sup>38</sup>. The results of the interview with Miftah stated that:

*"The lecture and counseling method is one of the favorite methods when Religious Extension to fostered groups or congregations with the aim of providing information, guidance, or motivation related to religious*

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<sup>35</sup> Interview with Elsiyana, Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Langkapura, FGD, Jaum'at 23 August 2024. Also, in Elsiyana Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Langkapura, Fower Points for Preparing the Sakinah Family, *Documentation*, recorded on August 26, 2024 and Miftahuddin, Head of KUA/Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Panjang, FGD, Friday August 23, 2024.

<sup>36</sup> Rasyidin and Putri Indah Lestari, "The Concept of a Sakinah Family of Couples Without Descendants in the City of Langsa Aceh," *El-Ahli : Journal of Islamic Family Law* 3, no. 2 (2022), p. 143–60.

<sup>37</sup> Ali Akbarjono and Ellyana, *Marriage Guidance Module for Brides-to-be* (Bengkulu, CV. Zigie Utama: 2019), p. 1-73.

<sup>38</sup> Interview with Hamam Syafe'I, Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Kedaton, FGD, Friday, August 23, 2024.



*teachings and certain issues that develop. Also, in delivering material on suscatin activities, both in classical and independent guidance".<sup>39</sup>*

Hamam mentioned in his interview that:

*"The lecture method is usually used in Friday sermons even though the style is different, there are specificities".<sup>40</sup>*

Solhani mentioned in his interview that:

*"Role-playing and/or role-playing are used by the facilitator in delivering marriage guidance material for the khalsical model, because the bride-to-be is from various KUAs. It aims to make it a habit between the groom-to-be and the bride-to-be to express beautiful and romantic words to the husband towards the wife or vice versa". Nunung: "Also for boredom and drowsiness"<sup>41</sup>.*

The group discussion and presentation method is another way to deliver marriage guidance material. This material provides for a household life that is expected to last a lifetime and will certainly face various obstacles and obstacles in realizing a sakinah family. Interview Safe'i stated in his interview as follows:

*"The habit of discussion, deliberation, and cooperation between husband and wife in carrying out their respective duties and functions, supporting each other, and reminding each other".<sup>42</sup>*

Domestic problems are expected to be solved through deliberation and consultation with trusted people. Counseling is used for individuals or households who are facing problems, even when they are on the verge of divorce. The results of the interview by Zainal stated that:

*"Married couples who file for divorce are mediated by the Marriage Advisory, Development and Preservation Agency (BP4) which is domiciled at the Ministry of Religion of the Regency and City."<sup>43</sup>*

In line with the decision of the XVI BP4 National Congress of 2019 Article 6 paragraph 1 which reads:

*"Providing guidance, counseling, advice, and marriage consultation/counseling regarding marriage, talaq, divorce, referral and inheritance to the community, both individuals and groups, directly or through mass media and electronic media".<sup>44</sup>*

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<sup>39</sup> Interview with Miftahuddin, Head of KUA/Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Panjang, *FGD*, Friday, August 23, 2024.

<sup>40</sup> Interview with Hamam Syafe'I, Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Kedaton, *FGD*, Friday, August 23, 2024.

<sup>41</sup> Interview with Nunung Syafnur Syah, Religious Extension Officer/Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Sukarame, *FGD*, Friday, August 23, 2024.

<sup>42</sup> Interview with Hamam Syafe'I, Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Kedaton, *FGD*, Friday, 23 August 2024

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Zainal Hakim, Head of Islamic Guidance for Bandar Lampung City, *Interview*, Tuesday, August 20, 2024

<sup>44</sup> Decree of the XVI BP4 National Congress of 2019 concerning the Articles of Association and Bylaws of BP4, *Documentation*, recorded on August 25, 2024.

BP4's decision is in line with Hamam's opinion in his interview that:

*"Facilitators or Religious Extension Workers wherever they are placed should master counseling methods. If there is a community that files for divorce through KUA, the facilitator can help individuals or groups overcome personal, emotional, or social problems. Counseling can be individual or group, and involves an in-depth dialogue to help clients find solutions to their problems."*<sup>45</sup>

### **Factors Inhibiting and Supporting the Strengthening of the Sakinah Family in the Empowerment Process**

Based on the results of the group discussion forum (FGD) of the researcher with the Marriage Guidance Facilitator, five main factors were found that hindered the implementation of the marriage guidance program with the aim of strengthening the sakinah family in Bandar Lampung City. 1) Obstacles to implementation include the difficulty of getting a work permit to participate in the program, resulting in low program participation;<sup>46</sup> 2) Geographical for couples who live far from the location of guidance;<sup>47</sup> 3) Couple's tendency to seek help when marital problems have worsened;<sup>48</sup> 4) The absence of regulations that require guidance;<sup>49</sup> and 5) The lack of understanding among stakeholders regarding the importance of family resilience<sup>50</sup>. In an effort to overcome obstacles collaboratively and increase awareness and support of participants' enthusiasm, the quality of facilitators, and agency cooperation, marriage guidance programs become more effective in empowering communities and strengthening family institutions, contributing to the creation of a stable and prosperous society.

Community empowerment as a process of increasing capacity or strength that affects daily life includes social, economic, and environmental aspects.<sup>51</sup> The main principles of empowerment are active participation, capacity building, social justice, sustainability, and independence<sup>52</sup> with the hope that the community will be more independent and able to face various challenges without relying on external parties.

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<sup>45</sup> Interview with Hamam Syafe'I, Facilitator of Bimwin KUA Kedaton, FGD, Friday, August 23, 2024.

<sup>46</sup> Interview with Nunung Syafnursyah, Bimwin Facilitator, FGD on August 23, 2024.

<sup>47</sup> Interview with Solhani, Bimwin Facilitator, FGD on August 23, 2024.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with Hamam Syafi'I, Bimwin Facilitator, FGD on August 23, 2024.

<sup>49</sup> Interview with Luthi, Bimwin Facilitator, FGD on August 23, 2024.

<sup>50</sup> Interview with Miftahuddin, Bimwin Facilitator, FGD on August 23, 2024.

<sup>51</sup> Miral Abbas et al., "Correction: Addressing Food Insecurity Through Community Empowerment in a Staten Island (Richmond County) Neighborhood in New York City," *Journal of Community Health* 49, No. 5 (2024), p. 913.

<sup>52</sup> Diana Dushkova and Olga Ivlieva, "Empowering Communities to Act for a Change: A Review of the Community Empowerment Programs towards Sustainability and Resilience," *Sustainability* 16, No. 8700 (2024), p. 1–15.

Community empowerment plays an important role in realizing a sakinah family<sup>53</sup> which is characterized by a harmonious, prosperous, and blessed family of Allah SWT.<sup>54</sup> Economic, educational, or environmental aspects as the main pillars of empowerment.<sup>55</sup> Community empowerment carried out at the KUA (Office of Religious Affairs) focuses on strengthening the sakinah family, with an emphasis on the integration of religious and spiritual values.<sup>56</sup> KUA provides spiritual education and counseling guidance to families to live a harmonious life.<sup>57</sup> Empowerment programs carried out by KUA usually include marriage education, family counseling, and religious coaching that focuses on family welfare from a spiritual perspective.<sup>58</sup>

The Ministry of Religious Affairs of the city of Bandar Lampung implements several programs in strengthening the sakinah family, especially pre-marriage guidance, or better known as suscatin (Bride-to-be Course), which is held in two forms of activities: classical guidance and independent guidance. There is a guidance program for school-age teenagers that should support the formation of a sakinah family,<sup>59</sup> although currently the program has been stopped because the last two years have not allocated funds to the DIPA of the Ministry of Religion.<sup>60</sup> The Ministry of Religion carries out various empowerment measures through capacity *building* for religious extension workers, improving

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<sup>53</sup> Ismail A'dawiyah, Tawil Siti Syarah M, and Dakir Jawiah, "Measures In Forming A Harmonious Family Based On The Practice Of Noble Values Among The Participants Of Bicara Sakinah (Talk on Harmony) at Pusat Islam (Islamic Centre), Kuala Lumpur," *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 2017, p. 482–488.

<sup>54</sup> Sholehudin, "The Contextualization of the Sakinah Family Concept: The Struggle for Family Law Ideas in the Interpretation of the Qur'an."

<sup>55</sup> Ambreen Khursheed, "Exploring the Role of Microfinance in Women's Empowerment and Entrepreneurial Development: A Qualitative Study," *Future Business Journal* 8, no. 1 (2022), p. 1–13.

<sup>56</sup> Mohammad Nasir, Zainal Abidin, and Lukman S. Thahir, "Pre-Marital Counseling Effectiveness In Building Happy Muslim Families," *International Journal of Contemporary Islamic Law and Society* 3, No. 1 (2021), p. 55–68.

<sup>57</sup> Rahmat Yudhi Septian and Zepri Hiptraspa, "The Role Of Islamic Religious Education In Forming Sakinah Families," *Journal of Religious Counseling (JPA)* 10, no. 2 (2023), p. 187–96.

<sup>58</sup> Nurul Hafizhah, Nur Falikhah, and Muhammad Mabruur, "The Role of Religious Counsellor in KUA, North Tapin District, Tapin Regency in Preventing Early Marriage," *Al-Hiwar* 11, no. 1 (2023), p. 57–69. Rezky Munirah et al., "Spiritual Communication in Achieving the Marital Harmony: The Rapo-Rapoang Tradition in Bugis Community," *JURIS (Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah)* 24, no. 1 (2025).

<sup>59</sup> Citra Tectona Suryawati et al., "Utilizing Digital Media for Guidance and Counseling in Education," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 13, no. 1 (2025), p. 599–624. Nurhasanah Nurhasanah and Qathrin Nida, "Character Building Of Students By Guidance And Counseling Teachers Through Guidance And Counseling Services," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 4, no. 1 (2016), p. 65.

<sup>60</sup> Aqib Zarnuji, "Premarital Counseling: The Influence of Islamic Religious Counselors in Kua Kenjeran District to Educate the Culture of Early Marriage," *Journal International Da'wah and Communication* 3, No. 2 (2023), p. 83–89.

service quality, and institutional development.<sup>61</sup> These steps illustrate the application of the concept of community empowerment.

In the city of Bandar Lampung, there are 17 facilitators in 10 KUAs, 5 of which are revitalized KUA that focuses on services according to the needs of the community, such as guidance and consultation for family and religious issues. Based on the riveiw of the Head of Islamic Guidance and the Head of KUA who also act as facilitators, the programs of the Ministry of Religion of Bandar Lampung City related to realizing a sakinah family are in line with the policies of the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia. These programs are divided into three main stages, namely the awareness, organization, and empowerment stages (capacity building and mentoring). The awareness stage is carried out through guidance activities for adolescents and school students as media targets. The stage of organizing and strengthening capacity is manifested in pre-marriage guidance activities, or better known as Suscatin (Bride-to-be Course), which is held in two formats, namely classical guidance and independent guidance. At the empowerment stage, there is a program called the Sakinah Family Center (Pusaka Sakinah), which is a program that not only provides religious guidance and consultation services, but also includes economic empowerment for underprivileged families. In line with Miftahuddin's riveiw: the Ministry of Religion's program in building a sakinah family includes several aspects, namely: (1) Religious Education in the Family; (2) Religious Education in the Community; (3) Improvement of Religious Education through Formal Education Institutions; (4) Bride-to-be Course; (5) Family Counseling; (6) Fostering Adolescents of Marriage Age; (7) Family Economic Empowerment; (8) Improvement of Family Nutrition; (9) Healthy Reproduction; (10) Family motivation and guidance; (11) Immunization of Brides-to-be; and (12) Environmental Health. The implementation of these programs involves cross-sectoral cooperation between ministries in accordance with their respective fields.<sup>62</sup>

The implementation of the Ministry of Religion's program, guidance for sakinah families in Bandar Lampung City, there is an imbalance between theoretical plans and implementation in the field. Based on the results of interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with the Head of Islamic Guidance of the Ministry of Religion of Bandar Lampung City and the facilitator of Marriage Guidance (Binwin), it was found that the program that should include the awareness stage for adolescents and the stage of empowerment through the Sakinah Family Center (Pusaka Sakinah) could not be realized<sup>63</sup>. In line with this

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<sup>61</sup> Zarnuji.

<sup>62</sup> Michelle Amri, Ali Chatur, and Patricia O Campo, "Intersectoral and Multisectoral Approaches to Health Policy: An Umbrella Review Protocol," *Health Research Policy and Systems* 1 (2022).

<sup>63</sup> Hariyanto et al., "Sakinah Family Empowerment by Optimizing the Role of BP4 and Parents Mental Revolution Perspective."

research conducted at KUA in Bandar Lampung city, it focuses on strengthening the sakinah family through pre-marriage guidance and other empowerment programs. Although the guidance of school-age teenagers was stopped due to funding constraints, KUA still held a pre-marriage guidance program (suscatin), which aims to prepare brides-to-be to build a harmonious family based on teachings. Religious counselors at KUA not only provide religious guidance, but also play a role as facilitators in divorce mediation, as well as economic and social empowerment. Challenges faced include limited resources, changing regulations, and a lack of policies that guarantee brides to follow prospective guidance. However, collaboration with other agencies and the enthusiasm of participants are factors that support the success of the program. This comparison shows that empowerment in KUA and strengthening the sakinah family have a holistic approach that better integrates religious and spiritual values in achieving welfare.

### Community Empowerment Materials

Community empowerment facilitators at KUA Bandar Lampung City have comprehensive competence in teaching material about the sakinah family and Islamic teachings. The material presented included the position of humans as caliphs on earth, the concept of the sakinah family, and the five pillars of marriage, namely pairing (*zawaj*),<sup>64</sup> firm promises (*mitsaqan ghalizhan*), treating couples well (*mu'asyaroh bil-ma'ruf*), household management, and husband and wife's belief that Allah's pleasure in them depends on each other's pleasure. In particular, the Ministry of Religious Affairs through the Decree of the Director General of Islamic Community Guidance No. 379 of 2018 Chapter II point B number 3, includes policies related to marriage guidance which include preparing the Sakinah family, building relationships in the family, fulfilling family needs, maintaining reproductive health, preparing a quality generation, as well as reflection, evaluation, and post-test. Practical limitations limit the delivery of material, so it focuses only on five main subject matter and adjusts to routine religious activities in the community. This study has similarities with research<sup>65</sup> emphasizing marriage conservation as an effort to empower the Sakinah family, but different in the approach used, it emphasizes more on the BP4 approach<sup>66</sup>, this study uses a more flexible method and adjusts to the socio-religious conditions of the community.

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<sup>64</sup> Fauzi Fauzi, "Urf and Its Role in The Development of Fiqh: Comparative Study of Family Law Between Egypt and Indonesia," *El-Ussrah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 7, no. 1 (June 30, 2024), p. 346.

<sup>65</sup> Imroatul Azizah and Farida Isroani, "Forming a Sakinah Family through Marriage Guidance for Brides-to-Be during the Pandemic," *Indonesian Journal of Law and Economics Review* 14 (2022), p. 6–14.

<sup>66</sup> Yaqub, Iswandi, and Nur, "Reconstruction of the Sakinah Family Criteria During the Covid-19 Period."

## Community Empowerment Methods

Empowerment to realize a sakinah family requires various methods that are adapted to the functions and materials taught. There is no one effective method for all situations, as each method has advantages based on a specific context<sup>67</sup>. Lecture and counseling methods are often used in general guidance, while question-and-answer, group discussion, and role-playing methods are more suitable for specific situations, such as marriage counseling and mediation.<sup>68</sup> In the context of family mediation facing divorce, counseling methods have become dominant, with approaches involving relationship building, assessment, intervention, and evaluation. This is in line with research<sup>69</sup> that discusses that counseling guidance is essential for forming a balanced and harmonious family, by helping couples overcome marital challenges, strengthen emotional relationships, and increase marital satisfaction.

## Community Empowerment Approach

Based on the interview of the Bandar Lampung City Islamic Guidance and FGD with the Bandar Lampung City facilitator, empowerment to realize a sakinah family uses three approaches: personal, group, and community. A personal approach is used for household mediation, groups for discussion with individuals with similar issues, and communities for broader counseling. Obstacles in empowerment are limited facilitators and changing regulations. It is agreed that the role of facilitators and the implementation of regulations affect the effectiveness of community empowerment programs that can improve harmonious family welfare and independence<sup>70</sup>.

Community empowerment strengthening the sakinah family, a capacity building program through a pre-marriage course (Suscatin) that focuses on community economic empowerment carried out by the Bandar Lampung City Religious Affairs Office (KUA). This research has several advantages and limitations. The advantage of this research lies in its high social relevance, as it directly contributes to community empowerment efforts by increasing the capacity of individuals and groups to improve their social, economic, and

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<sup>67</sup> Muhammad Arief Rizka, Mujiburrahman, and Muhammad Faqih, "Posdaya Based Families as an Effort to Realize the Golden Generation of NTB (Gene)," *Journal of Community Service IKIP Mataram* 2, no. 4 (2017), p. 7–22.

<sup>68</sup> Shendy Maftalia Fifadhilni, "Combination Techniques: Lecture Methods, Discussion and Question and Answer," *Education* 1, no. 1 (2022), p. 1–7.

<sup>69</sup> Jill Duba Sauerheber et al., "The Relationship Among and Between Marital Satisfaction, Religious Faith, and Political Orientation," *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families* 29, no. 1 (2020), p. 41–49.

<sup>70</sup> Tomshon Manapar Purba, R. Hamdani Harahap, and Heri Kusmanto, "The Role of Local Village Facilitators in Empowerment in Medan Estate Village, Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency," *International Journal of Research and Review* 8, no. 12 (2021), p. 548–56.

environmental conditions. An inclusive approach that involves the improvement of knowledge and skills allows research results to be applied in a variety of societal contexts. In addition, the focus on strengthening community independence and active participation shows the potential for positive impacts in improving community welfare.

However, there are some limitations. Challenges in the implementation of community empowerment, such as lack of resource support or resistance from certain parties in the community, are often barriers. In addition, the results of the study may be difficult to generalize to other communities facing different social and economic conditions. Finally, although this study measures capacity building, the long-term impact of empowerment on improving social and economic conditions may take longer to be comprehensively evaluated.

## **Conclusion**

The process of community empowerment in strengthening the sakinah family in KUA Bandar Lampung City has experienced obstacles in its implementation. Of the three stages of empowerment planned by the Ministry of Religion in the 2020-2024 RPJM, only the capacity building program through Suscatin (bride-to-be course) has been successfully implemented. The adolescent guidance program in schools and the Sakinah Family Center (PUSAKA Sakinah) program, which focuses on community economic empowerment, did not go as planned, so the success of this program cannot be fully analyzed. The inhibiting factors of empowerment are divided into two: internal and external. Internal factors include lack of facilitator human resources and lack of supporting infrastructure, while external factors include less supportive regulations and politics. On the other hand, the supporting factors of the program include the existence of professional facilitators, positive responses from the bride-to-be, and collaboration between government agencies.

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