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Understanding the Role of Spiritual Resilience in Maintaining Marital Stability: Preventing Divorce

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Divorce is a complex challenge in the institution of marriage that affects individuals and society at large. This study examines the idea of spiritual resilience to comprehend the internal elements that contribute to keeping marriages stable. We conducted in-depth interviews and observations with married couples in Cirebon using pertinent case studies. A qualitative analysis was performed to seek a deeper understanding of the role of spiritual values, beliefs, and practices in strengthening the marriage relationship. This study uses Talcott Parson's theory of structural functionalism to explore how marital resilience affects marital stability and reduces the risk of divorce. Through an analytical approach, this article highlights the contribution of spiritual resilience in preventing divorce and provides insights into how to integrate this concept into marriage counseling intervention programs and practices. As such, this article contributes to a better understanding of the important role of spiritual resilience in strengthening marital relationships and preventing divorce in contemporary society.

Keywords: Divorce; Marriage; Husband and Wife; Spiritual Resilience

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INTRODUCTION

Spremo in Ramadhani & Nurwati (2021) stated that the most mentally shocking life event for all family members is divorce. The divorce rate in all work units of the religious courts throughout West Java Province is increasing yearly, as shown by the soaring number of divorce lawsuits from 2,734 in May 2021 to 12,617 in June. At the end of July, it reached 11,797 lawsuits (Maulana n.d.). Women filed the majority of the 1,675 claims, due to economic reasons (Gunawan 2021) (Abdullah Al-Bahrani 2021). Furthermore, the highest rate of divorce cases in the West Java area was in the Indramayu area, with a total of 8,026 cases in 2021, followed by Bandung Regency with 7,888 divorce cases, and Cirebon with 7,112 cases.

Several causes contribute to divorce, including moral crisis, the type of work, the economic level of the family, the level of education, the occurrence of domestic violence and forced marriage (Badrudin 2012). Among all these factors, economic factors are frequently what leads to divorce (Saitou 2002). Marriage is continually tested with economic challenges frequently serving as a catalyst for divorce. Under Law Number 1 of 1974, divorce is recognized as a legitimate cause for dissolving a marriage, although the law upholds principles aimed at making divorce difficult to obtain.

Various efforts to prevent divorce have been carried out both individually, and familially, through Islamic law and legislation in Indonesia (Awaliyah and Darmalaksana 2021) unable to mitigate or perhaps diminish the annual divorce rate. Research conducted by Nursyifa and Hayati (2020) on the misuse of social media that leads to divorce, states that divorce can be prevented if there is cooperation between the two couples to avoid divorce, support from both families, court-facilitated mediation, and community education on family resilience provided by local

government. However, the study's results do not explicitly state whether these efforts offer favorable outcomes.

According to Fachrina and Rinaldi Eka Putra (2013), even after the Advisory Board for Marriage Development and Preservation (BP4) started to enforce the Regulation of the Directorate General of Islamic Community Guidance No. DJ.II/491 of 2009 on the course of prospective brides, which then underwent the renewal of the Directorate General of Islamic Community Guidance No. DJ.II/542 of 2013 on the guidelines for the implementation of premarital, the effort is considered ineffective and unfit to properly address the divorce issue.

It is reaffirmed by Fachrina, Sri Meyenti (2017) That the existence and function of BP4 which is supposed to provide pre-marriage advice or courses for potential brides on how to live married life to avoid divorce, is not properly utilized to prevent divorce. Oftentimes, the course program, which is claimed as a debriefing for potential brides on how to live married life in order to avoid divorce, is sometimes regarded as just a formal necessity for the marriage process to be carried out.

Likewise, mediation efforts as regulated in the Supreme Court Regulation (PERMA) Number 1 of 2016 concerning Mediation Procedures in Court (Anindito and Safriani 2021) failed to reduce the number of divorces in Indonesia through mediation.

Based on these studies, it is clear that preventive efforts through legal, religious, and psychological approaches have been carried out, but often fail because, in essence, the decision to stay together or end the marriage again falls on the individual. Divorce is the outcome when the two parties are unable to reach an agreement. The sacredness of marriage today is at stake, given how simple it is for couples who consider they are no longer compatible to

file for divorce. Today, however, divorce has become a more accepted phenomenon in society and is no longer viewed as taboo (Islam et al. 2022).

However, researchers see an interesting phenomenon in the Cirebon Regency area. Despite living in less-than-ideal economic circumstances, many married couples who originate from low-income families manage to keep their marriages stable. Even though the life pressure experienced by the married couple is certainly very heavy because the husband has an odd job and his wife is only a housewife. However, the fact is that they were able to maintain their marriage bond for many years. This is important to study. Due to its broad implications, divorce affects women's mental, physical, and financial well-being as well as children's custody, education, and social welfare (Setiamanah 2021). In addition, children with divorced parents experience psychological problems (Uswatun Hasanah 2020). The government must thus take particular action to address societal problems that impact children's and the community's well-being.

This research is crucial to be carried out as an effort to prevent divorce during rampant divorce cases and can be a solution for couples who are experiencing a crisis in their household. Therefore, this study aims to understand the role of spiritual resilience in maintaining marital stability as a solution to preventing divorce.

By understanding the role of spiritual resilience in divorce prevention, people can be more aware of the importance of developing spiritual aspects in married life. This can inspire individuals to maintain and strengthen their spiritual values, thereby increasing stability in the marriage relationship. In addition, this research can also be a concept in the development of intervention programs and marriage counseling clinics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Marriage is a deeply complex relationship shaped by both internal and external influences. While much attention has been given to factors such as communication, conflict resolution, and financial stability, this research highlights the significant role of spirituality in sustaining marital stability. Among the concepts emerging in this subject matter, spiritual resilience stands out as a key internal factor that may help couples maintain a strong and enduring bond.

Spiritual resilience refers to the ability of individuals or couples to find strength and support through their spiritual beliefs, practices, and sense of meaning, especially during times of hardship. It underscores how couples can lean on these internal resources to navigate the inevitable challenges that come with long-term relationships (Manning 2019). Spirituality embraces a beneficial influence on resilience, hope, optimism, tranquillity, and comfort, indicating that it is an important dimension. Spirituality promotes inner strength, purpose, and hope, allowing couples to cope with pressure during crises (Roberto et al. 2020).

The researchers believe that there is a significant correlation between marital stability, spiritual beliefs, and religion. They also believe that spiritual beliefs influence the way couples interact in their household. High spiritual beliefs make them always seek solutions to overcome problems in the household (Larson and Olson 2004) (Call and Heaton 1997) (Fincham et al. 2008) (Walsh 2013).

Moreover, religion had a significant impact on the quality of the relationship between husband and wife and an impact on couples' attitudes; higher levels were linked to more conservative views on divorce, higher levels of marital commitment, and a greater readiness to seek assistance when facing marital challenges. Family dynamics

combined with spiritual issues and disagreements might lead to issues in relationships and the separation of loved ones (Walsh 2013).

Annete Mahoney (2010) stated that couples who regularly attend religious studies may avoid divorce from happening. However, when one of the partners is obsessive about religion, it may lead to a divorce. Additionally, divorce risk may increase when a less religious partner is spiritually opposed to their spouse or spiritual community.

According to Islamic teaching, the principles of marriage conveyed are *mitsaqan ghalizan* (An-Nisa 21). It means a powerful and amazing covenant that exists between Allah SWT and a couple, as well as between them and their families. It is improper to break a commitment because the marriage contract is a strict covenant. (Norcahyono, Wahdini, and Suriansyah 2023)

In addition, this study tries to highlight aspects of spiritual resilience, which is a topic that may not have been widely explored in the context of marital stability. Spiritual resilience as a key variable in preventing divorce provides a new perspective that differs from common factors such as finances, communication, or compatibility. This study specifically examines how spiritual resilience can help prevent divorce from happening. It focuses on divorce prevention as a proactive approach rather than a reactive one.

The phenomenon of increasing divorce rates from year to year makes understanding the role of spiritual resilience in maintaining the integrity of marriages very relevant. The research offers a beneficial contribution to marriage counselors, religious community leaders, and couples themselves. Therefore, this research can provide new perspectives and practical solutions in the context of divorce prevention.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In various contexts, spiritual resilience has proven to be a means of defending against pressure or stress as well as maintaining the stability of an individual's mental well-being. The researcher attempts to evaluate it from a sociological perspective in the context of married life.

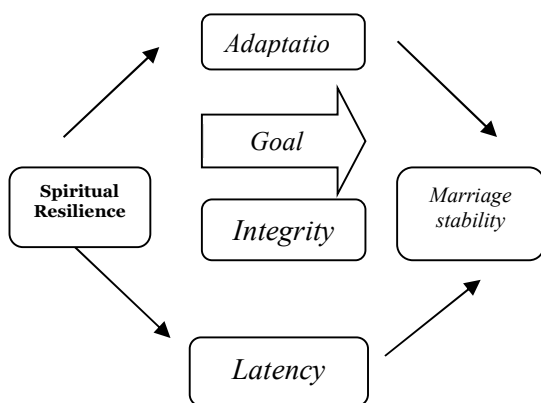
Family is the basic institution in the social system (Goody 1983). The rising divorce rate indicates weakening marriage stability (desacralization) and diminishing the importance of marriage. To examine the role of spiritual resilience in maintaining marital stability, we apply Talcott Parson's theory of Structural Functionalism.

This theory states that a system should run well if actors can internalize the values and norms produced by the system so that the system can be preserved. Therefore, actors play an essential role as a functional part or instrument in a social system. Parson analogizes married life and the relationship between husband and wife as organs that are interdependent and interconnected to each other (Turama 2018).

The concept of Adaptation, Goals, Integration, and Latency (AGIL) initiated by Parson explained how each couple must adapt to each other's values. Among the values that have been proven to be able to unite differences are spiritual values. The spiritual journey of each couple in their marriage will be the coping mechanism for maintaining marriage stability (Manning 2019). During adaptation process, each couple tries to understand each other, accept, and set the same goals in marriage. It is very important to do this to create integration and harmony between the couple. After the integration process is achieved, the maintenance of these values needs to be carried out so that the stability of marriage can be maintained.

Annete Mahoney's (2010) study showed that couples with higher levels of spiritual independence are less likely to divorce. In addition, success in maintaining relationship stability can be achieved through searching for meaning in difficult life experiences, gaining social and spiritual support from a partner, and experiencing a process of personal growth during a marital crisis. The framework for this investigation is as follows;

Figure 1. Spiritual Resilience Framework



Source: Authors' conceptualization

RESEARCH METHOD

This study applies qualitative methodology using the case study approach (Creswell and Creswell 2018). Using semi-structured interviews, the researcher took a sample of nine couples in the Cirebon Regency Area, namely Kedawung, Kemlaka Gede, Panembahan, and Greged Villages. Those villages were selected for this study because they offer a diverse range of socioeconomic, educational, and religious populations, which makes them perfect for investigating how spiritual resilience functions in various contexts.

To obtain data in the field, researchers observed how husband and wife interact daily and how they apply spiritual values in their daily lives so that marriage can be kept stable for many years. The in-depth interview technique is used to ask about

something personal so that data is obtained according to the research objectives.

Participants were selected through a purposive sampling technique. Several criteria were determined, focusing on 1) couples who identified spiritual practices as a key factor in their marital resilience, 2) couples who have been married for at least 7 years, 3) couples from a low-income household, and 4) those who were willing to be interviewed. Thus, the data was analyzed using thematic analysis, which revealed trends and themes on the contribution of spirituality to marital stability.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Spiritual Resilience of Couples in Cirebon Regency

Based on the results of observations during the study, the author discovered that couples in Cirebon had excellent spiritual resilience. This is demonstrated by daily family interactions, as they are continually loving and praying for their spouses. Despite the imperfections in their partner's condition, they are patient in their marriage. In the expectation of being reunited with each other in heaven during their afterward.

According to another study, the main factors that enhance the spiritual resilience of housewives are their belief in death (94.4%) and their recognition of God's presence in their lives (77.8%) (Fauziah and Octavia 2023). Those have an impact on their wedding orientation.

Mr. P stated, *"If one marries to worship, then serving one's spouse, raising and educating children, and survive in a marriage are all aspects of worship."* (Interview results of P, July 13, 2022).

When someone worships God, his attention is diverted from his daily issues to introspection and spiritual connection. Everyday life is filled with motivation, resentment, and a sense of fulfillment. Worship can ease tension and bring serenity. This lessens any tension, anxiety, or worry that might be experienced. Because worship reinforces the idea that there is a higher power outside of oneself that cares and supports one's achievement in overcoming life's obstacles, hope and optimism might arise after worship.

Maintaining Marital Stability

Getting married is a big decision in life. Dare to take responsibility as husband-and-wife means being ready to commit; and being ready to accept spouse's strengths and weaknesses throughout married life. Likewise with the life of married couples in the Cirebon Regency area, even under challenging financial circumstances, they can maintain the stability of their marriage.

Fikry Fadhlillah, and Firdaus Hadi (2021) mentioned that one of the efforts to minimize and prevent the occurrence of divorce cases is to increase family resilience. Family resilience can be realized if there is social support from both the spouses and the social system. Understanding and strengthening the spiritual aspects of a relationship can help couples overcome conflicts and difficulties more constructively. Through worship and prayer in the congregation, it will further strengthen the relationship between husband and wife. The factors mentioned above, show that spiritual resilience greatly affects the relationship between husband and wife.

Researchers have shown a link between spirituality and resilience, as well as its impact on healing, emotional and mental well-being (Roberto et al. 2020). Spiritual Resilience is universally

understood as a form of adaptation and the ability to develop in the face of adversity (Manning 2019). In other words, spiritual resilience is the ability of a person to remain steadfast in his or her spiritual values and beliefs in facing the pressures and challenges of life, including in the context of marriage. While spirituality is associated with one's experience of functioning and reflecting one's efforts in acquiring meaning and purpose in life (Wolf and Stevens 2001).

Couples who make spirituality the foundation for navigating the household will have a broader goal. No matter how big the storm that comes into their household, especially those caused by economic factors, they can pass it with complete assurance. Masten in Foy, Drescher, and Watson (2011) said that a person will have resilience if they can adapt to difficulties, trauma, tragedy, threats, and even other sources of stress. It is considered a basic human ability to adapt to new situations.

Mrs. N, a 42-year-old woman with three children and 16 years of marriage, stated:

"So far, what has made our marriage maintained is the belief that my devotion to my husband is worth worshipping. The condition of the house was not suitable and my husband's mediocre income did not make me turn away and choose to leave my husband. Despite the difficulty of the path, I think God's decision is the best. If I only perceive my husband's flaws, I won't be thankful, despite his numerous inadequacies, he never yells at me or acts rudely when he's upset. For me, it matters that my husband be accountable. I make an effort to regard my husband's financial limits positively, and I think they are a necessary part of life. However, I always think things will get better in the future."

With the current educational resources at their disposal, we can only hope that our children will elevate us." (Interview results of N, July 14, 2022)

Belief in God's destiny gives you the strength to accept and be grateful regardless of your partner's circumstances. This attitude of acceptance makes household conditions calm and reduces anxiety in the household. As said by I Gusti Agung et al, The higher a person's spiritual level, the lower the likelihood of experiencing anxiety (Arwati, Manangkot, and Yanti 2020).

The couples involved in the study were mostly poorly educated. However, their spiritual values of belief in God and acceptance of destiny provided a solid foundation for the couple to maintain the integrity of their household.

Mrs. UM said, *"My husband is currently not working; to cover my daily needs I opened a small shop in front of the house. I have to be thankful for whatever sustenance I receive. Considering my husband's present state."* (Interview results of UM, July 15, 2022)

To maintain the integrity of the household, every couple needs to train themselves to accept all each other's shortcomings in the household, always be grateful, and increase worship of God. Gratitude and worship are factors of spirituality, which give strength to a person. So that faith will be able to be maintained, like a lantern in a house, faith will fade if it is not maintained (Lace, Haeberlein, and Handal 2017).

Ibu T said, *"Although my husband is materially poor, he constantly makes an effort to provide for us, thank God. I discovered how to*

honestly accept the earnings, even though they were just average." (Interview results of T, July 21, 2021)

The couples interviewed agreed that married life is often full of tests. Therefore, housewives stated that to maintain mental sanity, housewives need a support system from their partners. Wives are like clothes for their husbands, covering each other's shortcomings. A wife can stand steady in the face of life's adversities if her husband treats her with affection. Love and attention from a husband can be an immune booster for a wife and can help her be strong in undergoing life's trials (Deborah Cassia Sanu, 2020).

The husband is the main and first support system for wives and children. The husband's attachment to spiritual values will be able to become a lantern during quite heavy life pressure.

Ibu H said, *"Alhamdulillah, my husband always guides me and my children to pray in congregation during Maghrib."* (Interview Results of H, July 20, 2022).

When we asked Madam Sa'ani about the secret recipe for 53 years of marriage, her answer was very simple.

"Life doesn't need to be complicated; what's important is being able to eat, pray, and having a faithful husband is a blessing in life." (Interview Results of S, July 10, 2022)

By Marliani (2023), the results of this study show that the age of marriage and spiritual understanding have a significant impact on family resilience. The only thing that life and family life require as we age is peace. All of the husband's flaws have been

considered as the spice of marriage. The couple's sincere love allows them to tolerate and face the many challenges of marriage, including accepting sadness and disappointment, as well as developing empathy and affection. This is an important aspect of spiritual resilience.

The ability to do self-reflection helps individuals recognize their strengths and weaknesses. This process is important in understanding spiritual experiences and how they relate to the world around them. In Mead's perspective, the self is the product of social interaction.

A person will better understand his or her essence when he succeeds in teaching himself that the source of strength, tranquility, and happiness comes from his mind, not from his partner or the environment around him but from his mind. The mind is shaped via interaction with values, norms, beliefs, and life goals that are formed through interaction with the surrounding environment. A husband's emotional support to his partner or vice versa can help individuals develop a solid sense of self in terms of spiritual resilience.

Interaction within a married couple is no longer just a transactional relationship when the orientation is a devotion to God. Interaction with his/her partner has given a new meaning to a person living a married life. If the couple both make spirituality the basis for interaction, it will be easier to accept the couple's shortcomings and make all activities in marriage a means of worship.

The spiritual pinnacle is that everyone is aware of their essence as a human being and recognizes the purpose of their life. Previous research has stated that the main factor of spirituality is the remembrance of death (Fauziah and Octavia 2023). One of the necessary efforts to reduce stress and to prevent depression is to increase spiritual resilience (Lace et al. 2017). This is in line with the results of the study of Annete

Mahoney (2010) that spiritual beliefs can prevent divorce.

The Importance of Developing the Concept of Spiritual Resilience in Marriage

The concept of spiritual resilience is important for every couple who will get married and spouses who have been married. Religious factors and a couple's religious awareness of the sacred values of marriage also play an important role in decision-making on the condition of the household, the reason why couples decide to divorce and the key to maintaining their relationship (Marliani, 2023).

"Whenever there is a problem in the household, I always involve God so that until now I have been able to survive." (Interview results of S, on July 12, 2022)

The journey of marriage will always be colored by many challenges, whether internal or external. Spiritual resilience helps couples to realize a harmonious family. In his research, Sofyan (2018) emphasized that material values are not a measure of forming a happy family. A *sakinah* family is realized when the following criteria are met: choosing the right qualities for a prospective husband/wife, attempting to create a *mawaddah warahmah* family, as well as striving for mutual understanding, acceptance, respect, and both carrying out their respective obligations.

At the most basic level, spiritual resilience provides a solid foundation for couples to overcome difficulties that arise in marriage. Couples who have a high spiritual level tend to have a more optimistic attitude in dealing with conflicts and marital crises.

In addition, if the foundation built in marriage is only limited to material things

such as wealth, appearance, and social status, then the foundation structure is not strong enough. Because everything material is transient. Likewise, the passionate love that existed at the start of the marriage may fade when faced with unimaginable situations.

Mental and Emotional Balance

The concept of spiritual resilience helps individuals to maintain emotional and mental balance in the midst of life's stresses. By having a strong spiritual foundation, individuals can find inner peace and strength to face difficult situations.

"It feels like yelling when the kids beg for pocket money while the hubby is off from work. However, I never forget that I still have a God who never abandons me. I can overcome every challenge in life because of that belief." (Interview results of E, on July 12, 2022)

This balance is obtained through a spiritual approach. Previous research has shown that there is a correlation between spirituality and resilience, as well as its impact on healing, emotional and mental well-being (Crawford, Wright, and Masten 2006). It is then important to develop spiritual resilience in a house to help individuals better cope with life's challenges and crises, which in turn can improve mental and emotional well-being. The first step that must be taken by the person to maintain balance in his life is to be able to adapt to himself and his environment (Turama 2018).

Based on the study result, spiritual factors have an important role in shaping family resilience. People who have resilience can heal themselves from any trauma or other difficulties, they can overcome every problem and suffering experienced. They are confident that they

can take control of their lives and can restore their lives (K.Reivich 2002).

Resilience to Challenges

Essentially, if we have faith in God, we acknowledge that not all problems in life can be solved by reason. The more a person tries to think hard to find answers to the problems they face, it will only cause anxiety, tension (stress), and feeling stuck. To surrender means to let God solve problems in His way.

Improved Relationship Quality

Understanding of spiritual values by couples makes the marriage relationship more qualified. The results of the research highlight the role of prayer in managing conflict. Married people suggest that praying to God (Butler, Stout, and Gardner 2002) about their conflicts increases their sense of responsibility for self-change, reduces emotional negativity, and facilitates perspective, empathy, gentle confrontation, and problem-solving.

Naturally, like an ordinary person, I have been irritated at my husband and children. However, curses won't solve the problem. I therefore learn to use nice words when I'm angry. I understand that a mother's words are prayers. (Interview results of E, on July 15, 2022)

These statements align with the research findings that better communication dynamics were associated with college students' prayers for the well-being of couples (Fincham et al. 2008). It also correlates with joint spiritual activities and the sanctification of marriage of couples at the national level (Lichter and Carmalt 2009) and community samples (Mahoney et al., 1999). However, qualitative

interviews with Catholic couples showed that private prayer could go wrong if couples divert their partner's anger toward God as an unadapted avoidance strategy (Marsh and Dallos 2000). Early studies have also shown that attempts by one or both parties to unite with God against each other to win verbal disputes can be destructive (Gardner, Butler, and Seedall 2008).

Overall, their spirituality tends to have more harmonious relationships and resolve conflicts collaboratively. High spirituality reduces the risk of domestic violence, although substantial disagreements between partners about spiritual matters may increase the risk. Researchers try to discover certain religious beliefs and practices that can help young adults maintain the traditional or non-traditional family relationships they created (Annete Mahoney 2010).

Personal Growth and the Meaning of Life

Having spiritual resilience has given housewives hope and encouragement to live, as well as strength (resilience) to rise from the downturn (Manning 2019). Because when things get tough, they maintain their confidence and know where their life goals are headed.

"It is like swimming in the sea, to live without conviction. The waves can easily toss it. As a result, both my husband and I learn to accept whatever God decides." (Interview results of S, on July 16, 2022)

The concept of spiritual resilience encourages each couple to engage in deep reflection on their values, goals, and meanings in life. It can be the foundation for significant personal growth, helping individuals find a clearer direction and a

deeper meaning in life. The individual's ego makes it challenging to balance emotion with reason. Life balance is one of the gifts that come from having patience and faith in God. (Lace et al. 2017).

Holistic Welfare

The development of spiritual resilience is critical for the overall health of people, not only their mental and emotional health. This covers things like happiness, bodily well-being, and general life satisfaction. By having strong spiritual resilience, every couple will be able to weather the storms in their married life. Couples will find more meaning in challenging circumstances by applying spiritual values as guidance to solve problems.

Adaptation of Spiritual Resilience in Marriage

Marriage is more than just uniting two individuals from two different family backgrounds, cultures, and education together, but also harmonizes two hearts, feelings, thoughts, and souls, adapting their needs to minimize the effects of these differences. Adaptation is part of human efforts to adjust himself to the various changes that occur in life. Given that humans tend to be "inert", feel content with the current situation, and resists change, adapting requires a lot of energy.

After marriage, couples should strive to fit in, as they are independent and unique individuals. They became interdependent, bonded, and influenced by each other because they were married. A husband has a lot of expectations of his wife, and a wife also has a lot of expectations of her spouse as well.

Adaptability is one of the determining factors for marital happiness. If each party quickly adapts, it will also accelerate the

emergence of harmony and permanence in domestic relationships. However, if both parties or one of the parties is reluctant to adapt, and tend to retain their individuality, without wanting to try to adjust to the pair's expectations, it will cause the couple's delay in reaching ~~the point of~~ harmony and marital happiness.

Adapting to marriage involves more than just adjusting to life during the initial period after the wedding, it also takes continuous effort. Some experts state that marriage adaptation is a change and adjustment in a relationship to commit throughout the marriage (Atwater and Duffy 1999). Marriage adaptation is also a long process of getting common ground by trying to live together (Landis and Day 1945). There are four components of adaptation, namely: 1) Consensus or agreement in marriage (dyadic consensus) between husband and wife on various issues in married life, such as religious understanding, family vision, finance, recreation, philosophy of life, division of roles in the household, and so on; 2) Relationship satisfaction in marriage (dyadic satisfaction) can be seen in how often the couple performs romantic acts, such as kissing, hugging, naked, etc. It can also be seen from how the couple experiences conflicts, quarrels, and violence, whether or not they have ever considered separation, and how strong the commitment is to the continuation of the relationship; 3) Cohesion or closeness in a relationship (dyadic cohesion) can be seen from the frequency with which couples discuss each other, chat, exchange ideas, do activities together, spend time together, and share interests and hobbies; and 4) An expression of affection or affection is a couple's agreement on ways to show affection and meet sexual needs. Everyone has different preferences when it comes to the language of affection expected of a partner (Wilson & Filsinger in Rumondor 2011).

Married couples are considered to have a good quality of adaptation or marriage adjustment if they have very few degrees of disparity that may cause tension between them. Both of them are capable of handling disagreements or inconsistencies.

Islam et al. (2022) Illustrates that during the adaptation process, couples try to communicate with themselves to be able to digest all of the events and experiences that occurs. Until they reach their lowest moment, they learn to understand and accept, even though it is heavy, and make peace with the heart and logic so that the difficulties and pressures of life can be conquered.

Furthermore, spiritual resilience provides the depth and resilience necessary to face changes and adaptations in a marriage. Couples who have strong spiritual resilience will be better prepared to deal with changes in their lives, such as changes in career, health, or finances, without sacrificing the quality of their marital relationship.

Couples can make adaptation efforts by valuing loyalty, empathy, understanding, forgiveness, shared spiritual engagement, worshiping in the congregation, acceptance (patience), embracing the pair's strength, as well as having mutual progress, openness, and communication. The process of absorbing every event through rational thought and based on belief in something transcendent is what is called a spiritual journey (Foy et al. 2011). The outcome of the spiritual journey ultimately resulted in a strong internal commitment to marriage.

Building Marriage Goals Based on Spiritual Values

Purpose provides encouragement and strength in individuals to overcome life's obstacles (McKnight & Kashdan in Lantz 2011). Meanwhile, goals represent a future designed based on current activities.

Therefore, when a couple has achieved this goal, they are one step closer to a meaningful life.

The spiritual dimension of marriage has a significant influence on how these couples view their lives, their behavior, and their choices. They consider it their responsibility to set an example to other couples about the institution and sacrament of marriage. In short, spirituality adds a different dimension to their perception of purpose (Lantz 2011).

Spiritual values lead marriage toward a life of universal meaning. Setting a long-term life goal, namely worshiping God, the creator of the universe, will provide a person with direction and optimism in life. In achieving the goal of marriage, husband and wife need to cooperate. Each must understand their obligations and responsibilities. The husband must carry out his role as the head of the family. It is the husband's responsibility to provide for her essential needs. Second, a husband is obliged to fulfill his wife's inner sustenance needs, such as getting along well with her, and educating her with affection (Darmawijaya and Hasanah 2020).

All efforts must be made to achieve the ultimate goal of marriage, namely as a means of worshipping God. On the way, no matter how severe the storm that comes in domestic life, it will not erode confidence nor erase the hope of continuing to sail together to the dock of happiness. So that the resilience and integrity of the family can be maintained.

Katherine's study (2002) on people with disabilities shows that having faith, purpose, and a sense of being a whole human being are the basis of spirituality. Spiritual resilience gives people with disabilities the ability to achieve peace within themselves so that they can live normally. The condition is almost similar to the situation experienced by couples in

Cirebon Regency who are struggling to stay married under various tests.

Marriage according to Article 1 of Law Number 1 of 1974 is an innate bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife to form a happy and eternal family (household) based on the One Godhead. Marriage is an act of worship, to get closer to Allah the Almighty. To attain spiritual and material well-being, a husband and wife must support and encourage one another as they grow spiritually.

In a kinship customary law society, marriage is carried out to maintain and pass on offspring according to the paternal or maternal line for the happiness of the family or relatives. The main purposes of marriage are to acquire cultural values and peace, and to maintain inheritance. Meanwhile, the goals of marriage according to Islamic law are to create a safe and peaceful family, full of affection, as well as to be a part of society (Amelia 2020).

Every married couple certainly wishes to build a happy family and have peace of mind. To achieve the purpose of marriage requires cooperation between husband and wife. Realizing internal commitment has a significant impact on the realization of external commitment. Internal commitment can be realized when a person can adapt to the environment and surroundings (Charteris-Black and Charteris-Black 2019).

The commitment will be solid by making God the reason behind marriage's foundation. Regardless of how wonderful a relationship is, every couple will encounter drawbacks. When a pair can endure it, the two will get to know each other more deeply. Acceptance creates familiarity and fosters a harmonious marriage atmosphere (Parpiev and Pardaeva 2022).

The Concept of Integration of Spiritual Values in Marriage

The process of integrating spiritual values is carried out first through the unification of the vision and mission of marriage. Integrating beliefs and goals in marriage will bring hope and optimism for a better life in the future. Faith in God needs to be included in dealing with any challenges within the household (Deborah Cassia Sanu 2020).

The orientation of marriage shall not only be creating happiness in life, but also in the hereafter (Foy et al. 2011). Marriage must be carried out to get closer to God and follow His commands. As the head of the family, a husband should educate his wife and children about religious values to improve the harmony of the marriage. The husband set an example for his family by implementing spiritual values (Happy 2019).

Additionally, fostering spiritual virtues is similar to thankfulness. A person will be better able to handle unpleasant emotions if they consistently think positively about themselves and their surroundings. Accepting the reality of life will lower one's emotional load.

The Concept of Maintaining Marriage Stability Through Spiritual Resilience

Maintaining moral principles and culture is one of the things that every spouse must undertake after realizing that a marriage's stability can be preserved by enhancing spiritual resilience. Based on several research results (Aman et al. 2019) (Manning 2019) (K.Reivich 2002) the stability of marriage can be maintained by:

Establishing communication

Communication is an important aspect of the long-term relationship between husband and wife. In addition, communication within the family is very important because the family is the main agent of socialization where communication skills are acquired (Lani et al. 2022). Communication is used to develop trust, set rules, and make agreements about what to do or what not to do, and what to like or dislike so that each spouse can understand their partner's wishes or needs.

Communication not only conveys the message, but also determines the level of relationships. Because the more open communication between couples, the closer the relationship between husband and wife. If the couple feels that the need to be listened to and cared for is met, then the marriage will be healthy. In essence, speaking takes up the majority of a couple's time in a marriage.

The form of communication between couples is not only verbal, but also body language, eye contact, and love language, which is usually only understood by each partner. A pair with a high level of spiritual resilience will have empathy for his partner, he will be able to feel what his partner feels. Spiritually-based communication becomes more meaningful because each of them is committed to communicating gently and affectionately. Communication between married couples is necessary for maintaining family harmony.

A harmonious family does not mean those without problems. By accepting each other, being understanding, and developing cooperation, spouses will foster affection and familiarity (Amelia 2020). The results of previous research stated that the attitude of 1) understanding each other's background and knowing oneself, 2) accepting each other; partner's traits and drawbacks, 3) having mutual respect; for each other's spoken words, feelings, and

desires, as well as family, 4) building trust on each other; ~~trust~~ in terms of personality and ability, and 5) being affectionate to each other in socializing and having a conversation, by showing concern for husband/wife, be wise in relationships, stay away from selfish attitudes, not be easily offended and show love will make a harmonious household (Happy 2019).

Performing religious practices

Scientists have illustrated that the practice of religiosity has a significant impact on marital satisfaction and also strengthens the marriage bond. Religion is described as "a search for significance in ways related to the sacred," and spirituality is seen as one of its unique functions (Pargament and Mahoney 2005). In some societies, marriage is considered a religious sacrament because married couples usually promise to spend their lives together in the thoughts of God and marriage has been closely linked to religion. Religion emphasizes marriage and couples who believe in religion make stronger marital commitments, which strengthens their marital relationship (Aman et al. 2019).

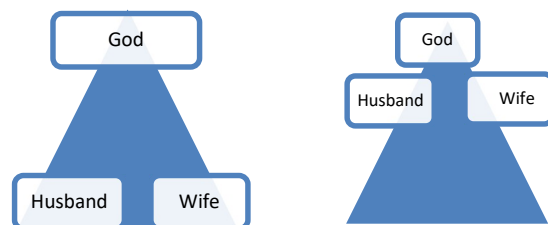
Previous research investigated the idea that the relationship between religious level and marital satisfaction is positively related. A more spiritual couple have a happier and more stable married life compared to other couples (Annete Mahoney 2010). (Walsh 2010) emphasized that one partner's differing spirituality and beliefs will cause instability and ultimately lead to a divorce. Meanwhile, interfaith relationships can be especially difficult and call for a great deal of understanding and tolerance. To thrive in their marriage, spouses must be balanced and supportive of one another's spirituality (Larson and Olson 2004).

Most of the researchers who have examined the relationship between

religiosity and marital satisfaction are from the United States, Canada, and other developed countries; however, several studies conducted in the countries of Turkey and Iran have revealed that religiosity is an important predictor of marital satisfaction (Call and Heaton 1997).

Previous research has shown that a person's spiritual relationship with God is an indirectly critical factor for the quality of marriage and seems to manifest itself among married couples in religious communication, which is directly related to the quality of marriage (David and Stafford 2015). Religious practices such as praying, going to mosque, meditating, and singing have proven to be a means of developing a closer bond with a spouse (Fauziah and Octavia 2023). The more often couples engage in religious practices together, the closer and the more harmonious the marriage relationship will be. It can be described in the following figure;

Figure 2. Relationship between husband, wife, and God



Source: Authors' conceptualization

The above figure illustrates how a couple's connection will be more intimate as they grow closer to God and vice versa. By practicing religion, couples have time to reflect together on the problems that exist in the married relationship (K.Reivich 2002).

The results of this study show that religious practices are proven to be an effective instrument of pairs in Cirebon Regency in maintaining the stability of marriage as they implement spiritual values

in their married life. Although the couple's level of education is low, the enthusiasm to learn and try to practice religious practices consistently has an impact on the permanence and harmony of their marital relationship.

Providing religious guidance

According to functionalism in the structural context, social behavior is shaped by the system; hence, to grow spiritually, a person will always require other people or security institutions to support his performance. Participating in religious studies such as recitations held by the Taklim council in the village or through social media. This will make the wife or husband more able to reconcile and overcome conflicts in his marriage.

Mrs. S (52 years old) said, *"I participated in the recitation as a means of entertainment and added knowledge, after listening to the lectures, my heart felt lighter, especially if there was a problem with my husband."* (Interview Results of S, July 26, 2022)

Mr. N (54 years old) said his wife became more patient and understanding after returning from *pengajian*. (Interview results of N, July 27, 2022)

Social connections that provide emotional and spiritual support play an important role in building and maintaining spiritual resilience.

Mrs. UM (65 years old) said, "Abah always guides patiently and is a role model for her in undergoing this marriage. So far, we have both accepted each other's shortcomings. So that this marriage is maintained."

(Interview results of UM, July 15, 2022)

Thus, guidance from the closest people and religious institutions can help married couples understand and appreciate religious values as a strong foundation in married life. Through religious guidance, couples can develop character such as patience, understanding, honesty, and loyalty which are very important in maintaining marital harmony.

A positive attitude of a partner is very influential on the stability of the marriage to create a solid foundation for a strong and sustainable relationship. This provides valuable insights into how internal factors, such as spiritual resilience, can contribute positively to success and happiness in a marriage. Spiritual resilience strengthens the emotional bond between couples. When both couples share the same spiritual values or at least respect each other's beliefs, this can create a deeper and more meaningful relationship. When couples are spiritually connected, they are better able to work together to overcome obstacles and maintain intimacy in the marriage resulting in a happy family (Lantz 2011).

The characteristics of a happy family are: 1) the presence of love, affection, and a sense of belonging to each other, 2) the calmness and peace that is maintained, 3) the sincerity of the role given by each family member 4) The husband's duty as the family's leader and the wife's function as the mother both oversee the husband's trust and ensure that God-entrusted children receive the greatest education possible, 5) free from suspicion, mistrust, and anxiety amongst spouses, and 6) the satisfaction of family needs, beginning with the desire for sexual support, nutrition, and a sense of belonging (Heron and Leheup 1984).

This research highlights that spiritual resilience plays a significant role in

maintaining marital stability and can prevent divorce. In addition, couples feel that their married life is more harmonious. Religiosity creates marital satisfaction and intimacy among married couples and supports the importance of marriage, which fosters marital commitment among couples (Larson and Olson 2004). The research results also indicate that spirituality and its components, religious commitment, and religious practices, along with influential factors, are related to the marital satisfaction of married couples.

Spirituality is a subjective concept and can vary between individuals and cultures. This makes it difficult to define and measure spiritual resilience universally, which may affect the generalization of research findings.

CONCLUSION

A key factor in preserving marital stability and averting divorce is developing spiritual resilience. Couples can be better equipped to handle the challenges and conflicts that arise in everyday life by applying spiritual principles such as patience, forgiveness, gratitude, and adherence to the sacred marital vows. Spiritual resilience enhances communication skills, fortifies emotional and spiritual ties, and provides couples with a broader perspective while coping with challenges. A shared sense of obligation to preserve the integrity of the marriage can also be fostered by spiritual principles, which help to prevent divorce. Therefore, enhancing spiritual resilience is not only crucial for establishing a happy marriage but also turns out to be one of the best strategies for establishing a meaningful and long-lasting partnership.

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