

Communication Strategies of Islamic Religious Counselors in Realizing Sakinah, Mawaddah, and Warahmah Families in Siempat Nempu Sub-district, Dairi Regency

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Abstract: This research aims to explore the communication strategies used by Islamic Religious Counselors in realizing sakinah, mawaddah, and warahmah families in Siempat Nempu Sub-district, Dairi Regency. This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with religious counselors, participatory observations, and analysis of related documents. The findings indicate that effective communication strategies include using language that is easily understood by the community, personal and familial approaches, and utilizing local media such as community radio and WhatsApp groups. Counselors also apply participatory methods by involving the community in discussions and religious activities. Supporting factors such as support from community leaders and cooperation with local government institutions also play a significant role in the success of these communication strategies. Thus, appropriate communication strategies can help in achieving harmonious and prosperous families in accordance with the principles of sakinah, mawaddah, and warahmah.

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi strategi komunikasi yang digunakan oleh Penyuluh Agama Islam dalam mewujudkan keluarga sakinah, mawaddah, dan warahmah di Kecamatan Siempat Nempu, Kabupaten Dairi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan penyuluh agama, observasi partisipatif, dan analisis dokumen terkait. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi komunikasi yang efektif meliputi penggunaan bahasa yang mudah dipahami oleh masyarakat, pendekatan personal dan kekeluargaan, serta pemanfaatan media lokal seperti radio komunitas dan grup WhatsApp. Penyuluh juga menerapkan metode partisipatif dengan melibatkan masyarakat dalam diskusi dan kegiatan keagamaan. Faktor-faktor pendukung seperti dukungan dari tokoh masyarakat dan kerjasama dengan lembaga pemerintah setempat juga berperan penting dalam keberhasilan strategi komunikasi ini. Dengan demikian, strategi komunikasi yang tepat dapat membantu dalam mewujudkan keluarga yang harmonis dan sejahtera sesuai dengan prinsip sakinah, mawaddah, dan warahmah.

Keywords: Communication strategy; Religious Counselor; Sakinah; Mawaddah, Warahmah

INTRODUCTION

In Siempat Nempu District, Dairi Regency, many families are still struggling to achieve conditions of *sakinah*, *mawaddah* and *warahmah*. Some of the challenges faced include economic problems, internal conflicts, lack of understanding of Islamic values, as well as the influence of modern culture and technology which sometimes conflict with traditional values. Conflict between family members, whether between husband and wife, parents and children, or between siblings, can damage family harmony. This conflict can be caused by various things, including differences of opinion, communication problems, and disagreements regarding roles and responsibilities in the family.

Then, a lack of in-depth understanding of Islamic teachings and how to apply them in everyday life can be an obstacle in creating a *sakinah*, *mawaddah* and *warahmah* family. Without proper guidance, families may not realize the importance of values such as fairness, compassion, and mutual respect. Communication strategy is essentially the overall planning or management used to facilitate communication in order to achieve a goal. So planning is needed to understand how to communicate with the audience or target. According to Arifin, in order for the message conveyed to the audience to be effective, communication strategy steps need to be determined. The communication strategy steps include:

- a. Knowing the audience, to achieve effective communication, a communicator must first know the target audience. Understanding who the target audience is is very important so that the message conveyed is easy to understand. Apart from that, communicators also need to understand the mindset (frame of reference) and field experience (field of experience) of the audience correctly.
- b. Determining goals, a communicator needs to determine the purpose of the message to be conveyed and determine the information needed by the audience, because the audience will appreciate (respect) information that is relevant to their needs.
- c. Arranging messages, messages or information that will be conveyed to the audience needs to be packaged in an interesting way so that the audience does not feel bored. In addition, messages should be structured in an orderly manner and highlight the audience's personal needs by suggesting ways to meet those needs.
- d. Determine the method and select the media used. Apart from ensuring that the content of the message is appropriate to the audience's circumstances, the methods and media used in communication also influence the effectiveness of the communicator's delivery of the message. Therefore, choosing the right media is very important to create effective communication.

Riadi Jannah Siregar in his book entitled "*Sakinah Mawaddah Warohmah Marriage Prevents Divorce*," explains that the word *sakinah* comes from the word "*sakana*," which means silence or calm. According to Al-Jurjani, a language expert, *sakinah* is the peace felt in the heart. Based on this understanding, a *sakinah* family is a family that lives in tranquility, peace, happiness and prosperity, both physically and mentally, and remains strong in facing various tests in the household.

To form a harmonious and prosperous family according to the Samara concept as explained in Asman's book, there are several criteria that should be considered, including:

1. Maintain a sincere determination to build a good home life.
2. Follow solid principles in marriage.
3. Carry out the rights and obligations of each partner seriously.
4. Always remind yourself to worship Allah
5. Create a comfortable, peaceful and harmonious living environment.

Marriage is a teaching concept that has existed in Islam for a long time, marriage is a very noble thing. Marriage is considered noble because by getting married a person can protect himself from evil and evil actions, from actions that are disliked and hated by Allah SWT. Therefore, Allah created men and women, then made them into pairs so that they would love, respect, accept each other, and to gain the approval of Allah SWT (Ismatulallah, 2015). Marriage is a form of perfection in worshipping Allah SWT. When a man and woman carry out a marriage contract, everything done within the marriage bond is considered as worship, with the aim of achieving the pleasure and mercy of Allah SWT (Thobroni & Munir, 2010).

Islam is a religion that advocates marriage, when a man and woman are ready to get married, then get married. This is not without reason, but because marriage is a form of worship that makes something haram become halal, guides you to the path of goodness and fosters love for Allah SWT (Atabik & Mudhiiah, 2014). In accordance with the word of Allah contained in surah Ar Rum: 21

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

Meaning: "And among the signs of His power is that He created for you wives of your own kind, so that you may be inclined and feel at ease with them, and He made between you a feeling of love and affection. Verily, in such a person, it is truly there are signs for people who think (Ar-Rum. Verse 21)."

When talking about walimah (marriage), we often imagine a bond that is holy, beautiful, and based on love and affection between a man and a woman. However, in reality, marriage does not always match the dream. Married couples will face various problems, ranging from small ones such as lack of communication in the household, to more serious problems, which may even lead to the decision to divorce. (Putra et al., n.d.)

Every household will definitely be given a test by Allah SWT, the test is given because Allah SWT wants to know if his servant can solve the problems in the marriage, or not. So as a couple we should be able to solve problems with a cool head and find solutions and ways out, so that harmony in the household remains awake. The creation of a harmonious family does not escape the importance of choosing a partner who understands religion, as well as having the will to improve themselves together. By choosing a partner who adheres firmly to religion, life after marriage will always be blessed by Allah SWT.

The sakinah family consists of two main elements, namely "family" and "sakinah". Etymologically, the word "family" comes from the Arabic language أسرة which means family,

family, or relatives. This word can also refer to عشيرة which refers to a tribe, tribe, or close relatives. In addition, family can also be interpreted as أم which means relatives or family (Prasetiawati, 2017).

Al-Jurjani explained that sakinah is the calm felt by the heart when facing a situation in the family, accompanied by a light in the heart that gives peace to those who feel it (Kaltsum, 2021). This is in accordance with the words of Allah SWT in Qs. An-Nahl:72:

وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَنِينَ وَحَفَدَةً وَرَزَقَكُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ أَفَبِالْبَاطِلِ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَبِعِمَّتِ اللَّهُ هُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ

Meaning: "Allah made for you wives from among yourselves and made for you from your wives children and grandchildren, and gave you good fortune. So why do they believe in falsehood and deny Allah's favor?" (An-Nahl: 72)

A happy family is a family that actively forms the habit of giving each other advice, improving and correcting each other with honesty and patience. This is due to their closeness, so they understand each other's daily activities. When KUA Siempat Nempu conducts outreach to the community, they often face obstacles such as limited time and lack of interest from the community. As a result, criticism, corrections and advice given are not always accepted or implemented. A family deserves to feel happy if it is a role model for other families, because this shows that each member of the family benefits from the positive changes they inspire. Let's compete to bring goodness to the family. (Warsah, I., Putra, R., & Morganna, 2021)

Based on the explanation that has been given, this research is in line with several previous studies, one of which is research by Rahmani Alinsa Pitri entitled "Communication Strategies for Religious Instructors in Building Sakinah Families in the Sakinah Workshop Program in KUA, Ciputat District." The aim of this research is to identify the communication strategies used by religious counselors in strengthening Sakinah families in the Sakinah Bengkel program, as well as to understand the factors that influence religious counselors in forming Sakinah families in the Ciputat District Religious Affairs Office (KUA).

Research conducted by Muhammad Ramadhan Nur Hakiki entitled "The Role of Islamic Religious Counselors in Creating Sakinah Families in Gambiran District, Banyuwangi Regency". This research aims to explore the role of Islamic religious instructors in forming Sakinah families, as well as to identify the various methods used by counselors. Islam in achieving this goal.

The description of previous research that has been presented above certainly has differences with the research conducted by researchers. Researchers focus on the Communication Strategy of Islamic Religious Instructors in Creating Samara Families in Siempat Nempu District, Dairi Regency. This research aims to analyze the communication strategies used by Islamic religious counselors in implementing the Samara family concept. Apart from that, this research is also intended to identify communication barriers faced by Islamic religious counselors in realizing the Samara family concept.

This research was planned to analyze the communication strategies implemented by the Siempat Nempu Religious Affairs Office in encouraging the formation of the Samara family concept in Siempat Nempu District, Dairi Regency. Apart from that, this research will also

identify communication barriers faced by KUA Siempat Nempu in its efforts to realize the Samara family concept in the region.

This research uses a qualitative approach by conducting direct observations at the KUA of Siempat Nempu District. The focus of this research is to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects, including behavior, perception, action and motivation, by using verbal descriptions or language in natural contexts and utilizing various natural methods. Suharsimi Arikunto explained that research subjects include people, actions and responses. This research is field research, where data and information are collected directly from sources at the research location. The data collection instruments used consisted of interview techniques and documentation studies. The main data source is primary data collected from Islamic religious instructors in Siempat Nempu District, Dairi Regency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Islamic religious instructor is a profession that has an important role in the spread of Islamic teachings. Apart from carrying out their main duties as religious instructors, they are also responsible for various other religious activities. Recently, the task of Islamic religious instructors has experienced increasing challenges in line with rapid advances in information and communication media. Individuals who are not wise in using the media can be trapped in news that contains intolerance or radicalism in Indonesia.

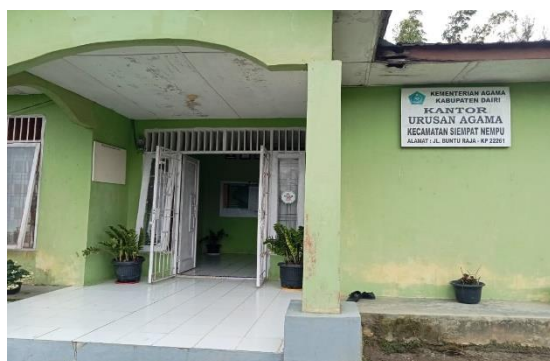


Figure 1.

District KUA Office. Siempat Nempu



Figure 2.

Photo with Head of KUA and Extension Officer Siempat Nempu

Communication is a crucial element in human life. In the context of this modern era, the role of communication has become very significant in ensuring the success of relationships between individuals. Through communication, people who previously did not know each other can become familiar, and those who already know can strengthen their relationships. This also applies in marriage relationships. Good communication can make a marriage close, intimate and harmonious (Ismatulallah, 2015). Marriage is a manifestation of worship to Allah SWT. Marriage is a ceremony of worship where a man and a woman sign a contract with the aim of achieving a life filled with peace, love and blessings from Allah SWT (Thobroni & Munir, 2010). Therefore, marriage is highly recommended in religious teachings, because marriage is part of the worship carried out by a servant to Allah SWT, with the marriage of a couple and walking hand in hand, cheering each other on, encouraging each other, and reminding each other on the path of goodness (Atabik & Mudhiiah, 2014).

Even though marriage is recognized simply, the marriage contract has a high sacred value and cannot be taken lightly. KUA can facilitate education regarding marriage to the community as an effort to create a Samara family. However, achieving this goal also requires the willingness and readiness of each married couple, both physically and mentally. KUA usually provides guidance to couples who want to get married. They receive guidance from counselors who specialize in assisting in strengthening family structures, as well as instilling and upholding religious values in the family context, and other related aspects. Through this outreach activity, KUA is trying to reduce the divorce rate and encourage the formation of Samara families.

Bp4 is a socio-religious association entity that collaborates with the Ministry of Religion and other related agencies. Bp4's main goal is to improve the quality of Muslim marriages in Indonesia through direction, guidance and protection for Muslim families throughout Indonesia. Islamic Religious Counselors in Siempat Nempu District have collaborated with Bp4 in holding marriage guidance sessions for prospective husbands and wives before getting married.

Siempat Nempu District is an area located in Sidikalang, Dairi Regency, North Sumatra Province. This sub-district consists of 10 villages, including Sinampang Village, Soban Village, Gomit Village, Juma Teguh Village, Jumantuang Village, Adiannangka Village, Sibanban Village, Juma Siulok Village, Sosorlontung Village, and Kutaantuang Village.

Communication Strategy

Communication strategies are important in ensuring the effectiveness of conveying each message from the instructor or communicator to the participants or communicants. This strategy can be realized when the communicator understands effective communication methods towards the audience so that the message can be understood and practiced by the audience (Suryadi, 2018). Based on this, it is concluded that communication really requires a strategy, and in extension it is a plan or action carried out by the instructor to ensure that the message conveyed can be understood effectively by the public or audience. With the existence of an extension communication strategy that is supported by appropriate communication methods, it is also necessary to consider various extension communication techniques so that the objectives of extension can be met. These techniques include:

a) **Informative Communication Techniques**

Informative communication refers to outreach communication techniques that aim to convey information or explanations to other people. This technique can be done either verbally or in writing with an informative nature and tends to use one-way communication. According to Onong U. Effendy (Putra, Erawan, & Arsyad, 2018). Informative communication refers to a process when someone conveys something, such as ideas, ideas, input, and opinions about new knowledge (information) that is not yet known to the audience. The aim is to communicate all forms of information that are considered important to society. In the process of conveying messages, ideas and opinions to recipients regarding new information received, without any intention to change the recipient's attitudes or opinions. The aim of this method is to communicate information that is considered important to the group being coached.

b) Persuasive Communication Techniques

Persuasive communication refers to extension techniques that use persuasive efforts to persuade and convince the public, with the aim of influencing thinking and changing attitudes and behavior in accordance with the instructor's wishes. This technique is generally implemented through direct interaction, because it aims to obtain a direct response from the audience.

c) Coercive Communication Techniques

In some situations, people ignore the information conveyed, using informative and persuasive techniques. So extension workers must create new techniques, namely coercive communication. To ensure that the objectives of extension guidance are achieved, it is important to have support from the authorities, community leaders and other stakeholders in conveying the message. This aims to add an element of encouragement so that people take certain actions or activities (Zulman, 2020).

Communication Strategy for Islamic Religious Counselors in Creating a Sakinah Mawaddah Warahmah Family

According to Ahmad S. Adnan Putra, strategy is an element of a planning framework, where the plan itself is the product of the planning process, which is essentially one of the main functions of management. According to David Hunger and Thomas L. Wheelen, strategy is a series of decisions and managerial steps that determine a company's performance in the long term. In the context of this research, strategy refers to the communication method or process applied by Islamic religious counselors in planning an activity aimed at realizing the Samara family in Siempat Nempu District, Dairi Regency.

The Samara family is a family that meets the criteria for Islamic principles. In this family there is love, a sense of peace, calm, and is blessed by the grace of Allah SWT. There are steps that must be taken to form a Samara family, namely as follows:

1) Carrying out outreach to the community, socialization is a communication process carried out by individuals or groups to manage information with the aim of changing the attitudes and behavior of the target audience. In this context, the Siempat Nempu District KUA provides education to the community regarding religion, marriage and domestic life.

"The Islamic Religious Instructors in Siempat Nempu provide direct outreach to the community door to door, from house to house to invite the community to attend the seminar activities being held. Residents were invited to attend the seminar to discuss all matters relating to marriage, such as the rights and obligations of a husband and wife, how to manage a household, manage the economy and so on. "When the seminar has finished, the counselor will also open a discussion forum with several residents regarding marriage and problems in the household." (Interview with Mr. Takdir Sagala, S.Ag, February 20 2024)

2) Conducting outreach at the village level, where outreach is carried out through direct interaction with the community. For example, the KUA visits villages to provide education through seminars which are attended by village residents. In general, this seminar discusses topics such as the responsibilities and obligations of husband and wife, household and financial management, strategies for resolving conflicts in the household, as well as efforts to form a harmonious family. Apart from seminars, KUA Siempat Nempu often initiates informal dialogue with a number of residents regarding aspects of marriage and the dynamics of domestic life. The active involvement of the community in attending seminars and informal dialogue with the KUA of Siempat Nempu District illustrates the effectiveness of counseling as one of the strategic efforts in realizing the Samara family concept. During the counseling process, KUA Siempat Nempu acted as a resource person, using auxiliary equipment such as laptops, projectors, microphones, loudspeakers and other devices. The aim of this extension is aimed at local communities, namely local village residents. It is hoped that the result of this activity will be an increase in people's understanding of managing household dynamics effectively and living a harmonious marriage.

3) Every prospective bride and groom who is going to get married must first be given guidance and guidance. Marriage is a formal agreement between a man and a woman in accordance with religious teachings. Couples must have the ability to maintain commitment and adhere to Islamic teachings. With careful planning, the household can become an environment filled with peace, tranquility, and love. Therefore, prospective bride and groom couples need marriage guidance before tying the knot.

Guidance is a series of directing, mentoring and management activities that involve assistance provided by an expert to an individual or group. KUA organizes a guidance program for prospective brides and grooms. The guidance given to prospective brides and grooms is regarding basic religious principles, such as the concept of monotheism, procedures for thaharah, procedures for reading the Koran, and other fundamental principles.

"Prospective brides and grooms will receive pre-wedding guidance twice a week, they will be directly guided by an Islamic Religious Counselor, the guidance lasts for approximately five hours, and each session consists of two prospective bride and groom couples. This guidance process begins by inviting every prospective bride and groom to come to KUA Siempat Nempu to receive guidance. There is a lot of guidance material provided, starting from basic knowledge about the basic aspects of marriage, marriage requirements, marriage jurisprudence, monotheism, thaharah, as well as Al-Quran reading tests. So far, there are still many prospective brides and grooms who are not proficient in reading the Al-Quran well, both men and women. Not only that, the prospective bride and groom are also taught daily prayers, such as prayers for entering the house, eating and sleeping and other prayers. Apart from that, this emphasis is also given to increasing understanding of religion to add to good things." (Interview with Mr. Takdir Sagala, February 20 2024)

The strategic alternative implemented by the Siempat Nempu Islamic Religious Counselor to achieve the Samara family's goals is to provide guidance and guidance twice, every month at the Siempat Nempu Religious Affairs Office for prospective brides and grooms. Every month, usually two prospective bride and groom couples take part in this guidance, which lasts about five hours. In the guidance session, the prospective bride and groom will receive guidance from the Religious Counselor regarding various basic aspects such as, what are the requirements for marriage, then tawhid and thaharah (procedures for purification), monotheism, and so on. Apart from that, the prospective bride and groom will also be tested on their ability to recite the Koran or read the Koran, considering that there are still many individuals, both men and women, who are not yet fluent in reading the holy book. The prospective bride and groom will also be asked about daily prayers such as prayers before eating and before sleeping. This guidance also emphasizes the importance of instilling Islamic values in married life, including the role of the husband as a good leader and a wife who obeys her husband in terms of goodness. In marriage, husband and wife must be able to fulfill their respective obligations, guide the family in accordance with religious teachings, and respect the strengths and weaknesses of each partner. Nurliasniati Lingga, Sakinah Family Counselor from KUA Siempat Nempu, explained this as follows:

"We also discussed guidance regarding the importance of the obligations of both husband and wife, how a husband educates his family to become a family that is obedient and obedient to the rules of Allah SWT, and stays away from evil things. Not only that, guidance about mutual respect for each other's partners, as well as accepting the partner's family is also important, because after marriage they will unite the two families, becoming a big family. We also instill gratitude in every bride and groom, because no matter how much good fortune we get, gratitude must remain. Without gratitude, economic problems will arise." (Interview with Mrs. Nurliasniati Lingga, S.Ag, 20 February 2024)

Masdani Padang, a resident of Siempat Nempu District who has attended marriage guidance, stated that each couple is given guidance by two Religious Counselors. Counseling is carried out through two methods: first, generally to all couples regarding the Marriage Law, marriage conditions, marriage laws and marriage contracts; secondly, individually to each couple regarding how to take a big bath, prayers that must be applied in daily life, advice, and other matters of a more individual nature.

"Two religious counselors gave me guidance, the first counselor guided me along with other prospective brides and grooms about basic aspects, for example, the Marriage Law, laws, conditions, contracts in marriage, and other general matters. Not only that, other religious instructors also taught us other things that were more individual in nature, such as procedures for taking a big bath, prayers in daily life, as well as advice for ourselves." (Interview with Mrs. Masdani Padang, S.Pd, February 21 2024)

Sadariah Angkat, a resident of Siempat Nempu District, stated that when they attended marriage guidance at the Siempat Nempu District Religious Affairs Office, they underwent a test to read the Koran and received various guidance regarding marriage. This guidance includes marriage requirements, the concept of monotheism such as the pillars of faith and the pillars of

Islam, procedures for purification including ablution and bathing, as well as daily prayers such as prayers before eating and sleeping. This marriage guidance has proven successful in efforts to create a family that is harmonious, full of love and full of grace, considering the various lessons learned during the guidance sessions.

"The guidance carried out by KUA Siempat Nempu has proven to be effective, because from the guidance process carried out, the prospective bride and groom also get a lot of information about marriage. A variety of information was obtained, starting from how married life goes, as well as what we should do when marriage is faced with problems, ways to manage (financial management) because the problems that families almost often face are economic problems and for husbands it is a way to educate the family to always follow every teaching/rule set by the Islamic religion." (Interview with Mrs. Sadariah Appointed on February 22 2024)

In this marriage guidance, KUA Siempat Nempu plays the role of communicator. The information presented includes legal aspects and requirements for marriage, harmony in the household, jurisprudence, evaluation of the ability to read the Koran, daily prayers, and other preparations for married life.

Communication Barriers for Islamic Religious Instructors in Creating a Sakinah Mawaddah Warahmah Family in Siempat Nempu District, Dairi Regency

In the communication process, it is not uncommon for obstacles to occur that prevent the message from being conveyed effectively to the recipient. These various obstacles can interfere with smooth communication and affect the way the message is received by the recipient. Anything that disrupts the flow of messages is called a communication barrier. In the context of direct outreach to the community, whether the outreach is carried out face to face or through media such as cellphones (social media) to create a Samara family, there are definitely obstacles that must be faced. Such as the obstacles felt by Siempat Nempu Religious Counselors in carrying out their counseling duties.

1) Barriers to providing outreach to the community

In providing outreach to the community, several communication obstacles faced include limited time, lack of interest, limited funds, and low public awareness. When the Siempat Nempu Religious Affairs Office conducts direct outreach to the community, the obstacles that often arise are limited time and lack of interest from the community. This opinion was also expressed by Mr. Takdir Sagala.

"When conducting outreach through holding seminars in the community, time inefficiencies often occur because most residents are not there or at home when the seminar is held. When counseling was given and socialized to the community, it turned out that not all people were enthusiastic about the counseling provided. There are even some people who don't seem to care when counseling about marriage is given. "This also has an impact on the outreach carried out by the Siempat Nempu Religious Affairs Office in Siempat Nempu District." (Interview with Mr. Takdir Sagala, S.Ag, February 20 2024)

In the process of building teamwork in the Village to reach the Sakinah family, one of the

challenges faced was limited financial support from the Government. Lack of funds causes teamwork in the Village to not run efficiently due to lack of resources. Apart from that, people also tend to be reluctant to discuss their problems at an early stage, so that when the problem gets bigger, they only seek counseling from the village. Finally, this problem must be handled directly by the Siempat Nempu KUA Office.

"The obstacles that often occur come from the community itself, namely their inability to open up to the KUA. When they experience problems since childhood, these problems are often kept under wraps and only discussed when they have reached a serious level, before they seek counseling. After the problem has become a big problem, and they feel it can no longer be resolved, then they tell the problem to the KUA, and it is resolved at the KUA. (Interview with Mr. Takdir Sagala, S.Ag, February 20 2024)

According to Extension Officer Mrs. Nurliasniati Lingga, S.Ag, there are several obstacles faced in broadcasting on radio. Even though many people are enthusiastic about listening to counseling on the radio, with increasingly advanced developments, there are also a number of residents in Stabat District who show less interest in listening to counseling via radio.

Obstacles in Carrying out Marriage Guidance for Prospective Brides Based on the results of interviews with Counselor Takdir Sagala, S.Ag from KUA Siempat Nempu, there are challenges faced by prospective brides and grooms when participating in the marriage guidance process at this institution. Challenges that often arise are caused by personal conditions and limited knowledge possessed by candidate pairs, as well as time constraints. For example, one couple may not be able to attend marriage counseling because they have a job that makes it impossible to leave (not getting permission) because the couple does not live in Siempat Nempu District. One of the other challenges in providing marriage guidance to prospective brides and grooms is their lack of understanding of the basic concepts of religion and marriage. So, evaluation is needed to verify their understanding. Nurliasniati Lingga, S.Ag also mentioned another obstacle related to time, where marriage counseling usually takes around five hours.

"Not only that, there are also other obstacles, namely that the prospective bride and groom who are getting married have minimal knowledge about religious knowledge. Even though religious knowledge is really needed in marriage, before getting married they are told about the knowledge they must know, such as reading the Koran, taharah, prayers that must be practiced in everyday life. The instructor will provide evaluation notes for prospective applicants who still have minimal religious knowledge." (Interview with Mrs. Nurliasniati Lingga, S.Ag, 20 February 2024)

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that effective communication strategies include using language that is easily understood by the community, personal and familial approaches, and utilizing local media such as community radio and WhatsApp groups. Counselors also apply participatory methods by involving the community in discussions and religious activities. Supporting factors such as support from community leaders and cooperation with local government institutions also play a significant role in the success of these communication strategies. Thus, appropriate communication strategies can help in achieving harmonious and prosperous families in accordance with the principles of *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *warahmah*.

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