

MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSES IN INDONESIA: Comparative Study of Muslims and Christians

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Abstract: This paper aims to prove that after attending the marriage preparation course, the prospective wives and husbands of the course participants feel the extraordinary benefits of attending the marriage preparation course. Because the material presented is very relevant and vital as a provision in living household life. This paper reports the research results on implementing marriage preparation course among Muslims in Riau and Christians in Yogyakarta. These two objects result from selecting the best performance in carrying out the marriage preparation course. This research includes qualitative research with a juridical approach and uses the theory of the legal system. The result of the study is that the implementation of a good marriage preparation course can give a positive impression and knowledge to the course participants. The participants stated the importance of prospective wives and husbands taking marriage preparation course. This course assists candidates in dealing with the romance of domestic life in the future, especially if the material also provides testimonials of the couples. One problem to solve by working couples is not being able to get permission from the workplace to take courses. Hopefully, there will be a policy from the government that requires workplaces to permit workers to take courses in the future.

Keywords: Marriage Preparation Courses, Dispensation Permits, Course Benefits, Provisions for Married Life, Muslims, Christians.

Abstrak: Tulisan ini bertujuan membuktikan bahwa setelah mengikuti kursus perkawinan, para calon istri dan suami peserta kursus merasakan manfaat yang luar biasa mengikuti kursus perkawinan. Sebab materi-materi yang disampaikan sangat relevan dan penting sebagai bekal dalam mengharungi kehidupan rumah tangga. Tulisan ini merupakan laporan hasil penelitian pelaksanaan kursus perkawinan yang dilaksanakan di kalangan umat Islam di Riau dan umat Kristen di Yogyakarta. Pemilihan dua objek ini merupakan hasil seleksi pelaksanaan terbaik dalam melaksanakan kursus perkawinan. Penelitian ini termasuk penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan yuridis dan menggunakan teori system hukum. Hasil penelitiannya adalah bahwa pelaksanaan kursus perkawinan yang baik ternyata mampu memberikan kesan dan ilmu positif bagi peserta kursus. Para peserta menyatakan pentingnya para calon istri dan calon suami mengikuti kursus perkawinan. Sebab dengan kursus para calon mempunyai bekal ilmu dalam menghadapi romantika kehidupan rumah tangga kelak, lebih-lebih kalau materi dilengkapi dengan testimoni jurus para pasangan menyelesaikan romantika kehidupan rumah tangga. Satu masalah yang dirasakan perlu diselesaikan bagi pasangan yang pekerja, adalah tidak dapat izin dari tempat bekerja untuk mengikuti kursus. Semoga ke depan ada kebijakan dari pemerintah yang mewajibkan tempat bekerja memberikan izin bagi pekerja untuk mengikuti kursus.

Kata Kunci: Kursus Persiapan Pernikahan, Izin Dispensasi, Tunjangan Kursus, Bekal Hidup Berumah Tangga, Muslim, Kristen.

Introduction

The emergence of the marriage course is motivated by the fact that the divorce rate is high. As an initial effort to overcome this problem among Muslims, the Marriage Advisory, Development and Preservation Agency (*Badan Penasehatan, Pembinaan dan Pelestarian Perkawinan*/BP4) was formed with marriage advisory activities. Feeling that the existence of BP4 was not enough to solve family problems, a course emerged. The bride and groom course initially appeared in 2009, later followed by the pre-marriage course in 2013, followed by the issuance of the Decree of the Director-General of Islamic Community Guidance (Kepdirjen Guidance Islam, No. 881 of 2017 concerning Instructions for Implementing Marriage Guidance. The latest decision was Kepdirjen Guidance Islam No. 379 of 2018 concerning Imple-

mentation Guidelines Premarital Marriage Guidance for Bride and Groom.

In line with the Muslim community, Catholic Christians also have the same program, implementing the marriage preparation course. Even the Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, Lukman Hakim Saifudin, praised and received inspiration from how the Catholic Christian church prepares families through the marriage preparation course. He expressed this idea at the event of hitting the gong to mark the opening of the 4th General Assembly of the Indonesian Catholic Church in Via Renata, Cimacan, Bogor Regency, West Java, Monday 2 November 2015 to Friday 6 November 2015. Then news emerged in Re-

publika that the government was preparing pre-nuptial course.¹

Many research reports described the implementation of marriage preparation courses. It can be grouped into four categories. First, the studies explain the implementation model of the course. Second, the studies demonstrate the potential, relevance and positive benefits and negative impacts of the marriage preparation course. Third, the studies illustrate the Regional Regulation's effects that support the implementation of the marriage course. Fourth, studies demonstrate the success rate of course implementation. This paper includes groups of four: a study whose results explain the success rate of performance and a comparison between the Ministry of Religion in Pekanbaru City, Riau and Christians in Yogyakarta.

The first group, studies that explain the implementation model of the course include one research location and several places. Those are studies by Dhita Amalia Safitri, Kamaruddin, Asrianto Zainal,² Abdul Jalil,³ Afrizal,⁴ and M. Agus Noorbani.⁵ While a study that takes more than one object of research is conducted by Daniel Rabitha.⁶

The second group, studies that explain the potential, relevance and positive benefits and possible negative impacts of the marriage preparation course are conducted by Khoiruddin Nasution,⁷ Ummianna Assyriaah, Dwiwana Achmad H., Suparno,⁸ and Deden Hidayat.⁹

The third group, the studies whose results explain how the positive impact of the Regional Regulation that supports the implemen-

¹ 'Pemerintah Siapkan Kursus Pranikah,' *Republika*, Monday 9 November 2015, p. 12.

² Dhita Amalia Safitri, Kamaruddin, Asrianto Zainal, "Peran Kantor Urusan Agama dalam Penyelenggaraan Kursus Pra Nikah Perspektif Peraturan Dirjen Bimas Islam Nomor Dj.II/ 542 Tahun 2013," *Kalosara* 1 no. 1 (2021): 25-45.

³ Abdul Jalil, "Implementasi Program Bimbingan Perkawinan Pranikah bagi Calon Pengantin di KUA Kecamatan Cilandak Kota Jakarta Selatan," *Andragogi: Jurnal Diklat Teknis Pendidikan dan Keagamaan* 7, no. 2 (2019): 181-199.

⁴ Afrizal, "Implementasi Kursus Pra Nikah dalam Mengurangi Angka Perceraian di KUA Pringsewu," *Ijtima'iyya: Jurnal Pengembangan Masyarakat Islam* 10, no. 1 (2017): 97-120.

⁵ M. Agus Noorbani, "Layanan Kursus Pra-Nikah di KUA Kecamatan Cicantayan Kabupaten Sukabumi," *Jurnal PENAMAS* 28, no. 2 (2015): 277-294.

⁶ Daniel Rabitha, "Penyelenggaraan Kursus Pra Nikah di Kabupaten Purwakarta: Kasus KUA Purwa-

karta, Cibatu, dan Babakan Cikao," *Penamas* 28, no. 3 (October-December 2015): 505-524.

⁷ Khoiruddin Nasution, "Usaha Preventif Menyelesaikan Masalah Keluarga: Telaah Teks Peraturan Kursus Perkawinan" *Varia Peradilan* XXXII, no. 376 (2017): 48-68; This article describes the preventive potential of implementing Marriage Preparation Courses for couples. *idem.*, "The Role of the Marriage Preparation Course in Building a Prosperous Family," in *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* XV, no. 2 (2015): 181-188; This paper also explains how the role of Marriage Preparation Courses is in providing provisions for couples so that they can carry out the functions of marriage and fulfill the rights and obligations between husband and wife, with this function the purpose of marriage can be achieved.

⁸ Ummianna Assyriaah, Dwiwana Achmad H., Suparno, "Relevansi Materi Kursus Calon Pengantin terhadap Faktor-Faktor Penyebab Perceraian di Kabupaten Pati," *Suara Keadilan* 20, no. 2 (2019): 161-171. This paper concludes that the course is not ideal, for example, at least in terms of time, which should have been cut from 16 hours to 3-4 hours. However, the course material remains relevant to reducing the divorce rate, as evidenced by the low percentage of complaints about divorce in the Pati Regency KUA from 2014 to 2018. The divorce rate has decreased from 344 to 226 cases of divorced couples in 2018. Although it is still necessary for further studies to confirm the decrease in the number of divorce complaints as a positive impact of the marriage course, at least there is connected logic.

⁹ Deden Hidayat, "Regulasi Sertifikasi Pranikah Ditinjau dari Kaidah Masalah dan Mafsadat dalam Hukum Islam," *Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum* 17, no. 1 (2020): 83-101. This paper describes the benefits and the disadvantages of the Prenuptial Certification for those who want to get married. The advantage is knowledge as a provision to navigate household life. While the negative impact is anxiety that this program can delay marriage candidates because they are required to take courses.

tation of the marriage preparation course are conducted by Zahrotul Firdaus dan Ita Musarrofa.¹⁰

The fourth group, studies whose results explain the success rate of course implementation include only one-place studies and comparative studies. One location study is conducted by Suci Cahyati Nasution¹¹ and Juniarti Harahap.¹² While the comparative research are conducted by Muhammad Lutfi Hakim,¹³ Muhammad Husnul,¹⁴ and Ari Azhari.¹⁵

This study is in the fourth group, a comparison of the implementation of the marriage preparation course among Muslims and Catholic Christians, focusing on understanding the impressions, messages, and views of the course participants. This study used the legal system theory to analyze the problem of this

marriage preparation course. There are three aspects of this theory to be studied, including the content, structure, and culture of law.¹⁶

The object of the study of legal substance is the material or content of the marriage preparation course regulations, and the legal structure study focuses on institutions and law enforcement. The participants are the Head of KUA (Religious Affairs office), Qazi (marriage officiant), BP4, and course implementer for the Muslim group. In the Christian group, they are Pastors, course organizers and course participants. Besides, the study of legal culture focuses on the society subject to being regulated by law concerning ideas, ideas, values, norms, habits, and the like.

Furthermore, to evaluate the implementation of the marriage preparation course, whether it is good or not, is generally based on the rules that have been set in the form of books and guidelines. Those forms are used as standards to measure the quality of the implementation of the marriage preparation course.

This research is field research in the form of data on the implementation of marriage preparation courses. Data is directly from the head of the office of Religious Affairs, BP4 administrators, Qazi (marriage officiant), extension workers, organizers and participants of the marriage preparation course for Muslims. Pastors, course organizers and course participants for Christian groups. Meanwhile, this research is an exploratory study in terms of its objectives.

Research data sources consist of primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data sources in Islam are the Head of KUA, BP4 administrators, Qazi (marriage officiant), extension workers, organizers, and course participants. Primary data sources from Christians are pastors, organizers, and partici-

¹⁰ Zahrotul Firdaus dan Ita Musarrofa, "Peraturan Bupati Rokan Hulu Provinsi Riau Nomor 5 Tahun 2016 tentang Kewajiban Mengikuti Kursus Pra-Nikah," *Al-Hukama'* 7, no. 2 (2018): 464-501.

¹¹ Suci Cahyati Nasution, "Pelaksanaan Kursus Pra Nikah dan Kursus Calon Pengantin oleh KUA Kecamatan Sungai Kanan Kabupaten Labuhanbatu Selatan Provinsi Sumatera Utara," Unpublished *Thesis*, Faculty of Sharia and Law UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2016.

¹² Juniarti Harahap, "Implementasi Peraturan Direktorat Jenderal Bimbingan Masyarakat Islam No: DJ.II/542 Tahun 2013 tentang Pedoman Penyelenggaraan Kursus Pra Nikah (Studi di BP4 dan Lembaga Arrahman Prewedding Academy)," Unpublished *Thesis*, Faculty of Sharia and Law UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2015.

¹³ Muhammad Lutfi Hakim, "Kursus Pra-Nikah: Konsep dan Implementasinya (Studi Komparatif Antara Bp4 Kua Kecamatan Pontianak Timur Dengan GKKB Jemaat Pontianak)," *Al-'Adalah* XIII, no. 2, (2016): 141-154.

¹⁴ Muhammad Husnul, "Bimbingan Perkawinan Islam dan Katolik (Studi Komparasi Pedoman Perkawinan Islam dan Katolik di Kota Yogyakarta)," Unpublished *Thesis*, Post Graduate UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2015.

¹⁵ Ari Azhari, "Pelaksanaan Kursus Pra-Nikah (Studi Komparatif di Kantor Urusan Agama Kec. Gondokusuman Kota Yogyakarta dengan Lembaga Pembinaan Persiapan Hidup Berkeluarga Kevikepan DIY)," Unpublished *Thesis*, Post Graduate UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2014.

¹⁶ Lawrence Friedman, *The Legal System: A Social Science Perspective* (New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 1975), p. 6 and 15.

pants. Meanwhile, secondary data sources are literature that provides information about marriage preparation courses related to regulatory information and course implementation.

The primary data collection techniques¹⁷ used in this study: interviews, observations, and FGDs to collect data related to the implementation of the marriage preparation courses. These three techniques are also a triangulation of data collection techniques. In addition to, it also corrects each other for the truth and validity of the data. Observations of the marriage course were carried out during the marriage preparation courses from 14 to 15 January 2019 at PB4 Pekanbaru and the marriage preparation courses from 7 to 8 January 2019 at Christ Baciro Parish, Yogyakarta.¹⁸

The data analysis process begins with data collection. The next step is to examine all the data obtained from interviews, observations and FGDs, by (1) organizing the data into categories, (2) describing it into units, (3) synthesizing it, (4) arranging it into a pattern, (5) choosing which ones are important to study, and (6) making conclusions so that they are easily understood by themselves and others.¹⁹ Those data analysis techniques are based on Miles and Huberman's qualitative data analysis technique.²⁰ First, the reduction of the data collected includes summarizing and selecting the arranged systematic primary data to provide a clear picture of the research. After that,

the primary data are selected, the theme is searched and then the data is simplified into primary data with essential points. Second, is the presentation of data, where the data is arranged in the form of a narrative and systematic description to make it easier to find a central theme based on the focus to make it easier to give meaning. Third, conclusion and verification. This retrieval process is based on various incoming information and arranged in the form of data presentation.

However, practically the data analysis method is also carried out with an interactive-analysis model, in which the data analysis process runs concurrently with data collection.

The systematic discussion is as follows. After the first part describes the background of the importance of research, research objectives, and how to conduct research, it is explained how Muslims implement the marriage preparation courses. The following discussion illustrates how the performance of the Marriage Preparation Course among Catholic Christians is carried out in a simple comparative analysis. Finally, the paper ends with a concluding note.

Implementation of Marriage Preparation Courses among Muslims

a. The Ideals of Pre-Marriage Course and Bride and Groom Course

Based on the marriage preparation course rules, both pre-marriage course rules and bride and groom course rules, the ideal course format can be measured using the following five indicators: 1) course material; 2) resource person; 3) organizer; 4) course length; and 5) source of funds.

Based on the marriage preparation course rules, both pre-marriage from each of the points mentioned above, the indicators are: *first*, the course materials for the pre-marriage course include: a) The Ministry of Religion's policy on developing the *sakinah* (the spirit of

¹⁷ The data collection method is a systematic and standardized procedure to obtain the required data. There is always a relationship between the data collection method and the research problem to be solved. Moh. Nazir, *Metode Penelitian* (Bogor: Ghalia Indonesia, 2005), p. 174.

¹⁸ However, the observation data on the implementation of the Christ Baciro Parish Marriage Preparation Course was strengthened by observations on the performance of courses on the 12 and 13 March 2019.

¹⁹ Lexy J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*, (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2006), p. 209.

²⁰ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan: Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Cet-XI, (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2010), p. 338.

tranquillity) family (1 hour of lesson); b) the policy of the Directorate General of Islamic Guidance on the Implementation of the Pre-Marriage Course (1 hour of lesson); c) Legislation on marriage and family development (2 hours of lesson); d) Marriage Law (2 hours of lesson); e) marriage procedures (2 hours of lesson); f) implementation of family functions (2 hours of lesson); g) care for love in the family (2 hours of lesson); h) conflict management in the family (2 hours of lesson); and i) psychology of marriage and family (2 hours of lesson).

Second, resource person, based on the material mentioned above, means that a minimum number of experts is needed, religious experts, experts on marriage legislation, reproductive health experts, family management experts, and family psychologists.

Third, the course organizer following the regulations (before 2016 is BP4) or other competent and accredited organizations. However, an article mentions the Ministry of Religion as the organizer. There are 2 (two) additional paragraphs in the Pre-Marriage Course Regulations: 1) "The Ministry of Religion may organize a pre-marital course whose implementation collaborates with the Marriage Advisory, Development and Preservation Agency or BP4, or other Islamic religious organizations"; and 2) "In its implementation, BP4 and Islamic religious organizations that organize pre-marital courses can cooperate with other agencies or ministries or other institutions. Meanwhile, based on the 2016 regulations, the course organizers are the District KUA or the Regency/City Ministry of Religion.

Fourth, the time for guidance for the pre-marriage course is 16 hours of lessons. While the length of guidance for the bride and groom course is 24 hours of lessons.

Fifth, the source of funds; the regulations for the prospective bride course have not stated the source of the course funding. Meanwhile, in the pre-marriage course regulations, the fund is noted from the APBN and APBD. Then in the Decree of the Director-General of Islam-

ic Community Guidance No. DJ.II/748 of 2014 concerning Technical Guidelines for Management of Non-Tax State Revenue for Marriage or Referral Fees outside the District Office of Religious Affairs, the source of the course funds may be taken from the deposit funds of prospective husbands who marry outside the KUA. The funds are IDR 50,000 from each partner.

b. Implementation of the Pre-Marriage Course and the Bride and Groom Course

There are three implementing institutions for the course in Pekanbaru, namely: (1) Pekanbaru City BP4 held at the Ar-Rahman Grand Mosque, Pekanbaru, and (2) BP4 Riau province;²¹ and (3) Institute of Sakinah Family Counseling and Education Institute Faculty of Sharia and Law UIN Suska Riau, implemented at UIN Suska Riau.²² So every bride and groom from various districts may take courses in one of these places. In principle, the bride and groom can take this course anywhere, and the important thing is that there is a certificate when registering for marriage at the KUA. However, only two institutions have implemented the marriage course, namely BP4 Pekanbaru and LP2KS Faculty of Sharia and Law UIN Suska Riau.

The courses carried out by BP4 of Pekanbaru started in 2014. at that time, the implementation was still at the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in Pekanbaru. In line with the regulation that BP4 must separate from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and become an inde-

²¹ BP4 Pekanbaru has obtained an operational permit to organize a marriage preparation course; SK BP4 Prov. No. 01 of 2015 Ministry of Religious Affairs, Operational Permit Number Kd.04.4/02/BA.00/1885/2015. This decree is available in the Course brochure. The name listed in the booklet is the Pre-nuptial Course for Bride and Groom. This name seems to combine the two terms of the Pre-Marriage Course and the Bride and Groom Course, becoming a Pre-Marriage Course for Bride and Groom.

²² Interview with Yusran, MA., staff of LP2KS UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Pekanbaru, 12th of September 2018, and verified on 4th of January 2019.

pendent body. The BP4 office in Pekanbaru moved to a new office in the Pekanbaru City Grand Mosque building and occupied the BP4 office. Now, BP4 of Pekanbaru occupies two offices, two meeting rooms, and one common hall.

Based on field observations in the course, first, the pre-marriage course is held for two days, namely Saturday and Sunday. Each day takes 8 JPL, which means 16 JPL according to the pre-marriage course regulations. Thus, in terms of time (duration), the course is based on the rules. Likewise, the material presented follows the regulations, namely: 1. Ministry of Religion Policy regarding the Development of the Sakinah Family, 2. Legislation on marriage and family development, 3. Marriage Law, 4. Marriage procedures, 5. implementation of family functions, 6. Caring for love in the family, 7. management of conflict in the family, and 8. psychology of marriage and family. The speakers are also based on expertise in line with the duration and material. The source of the funds is from the couple getting married, which is charged Rp. 150,000 per person. Since couples receive a subsidy as part of the payment when they get married, Rp.25,000 each, each partner pays BP4 Rp.125,000. The room used to deliver the material is the AC room. As additional information, since the opening of the pre-marriage Course program, participants who take part in each batch must be above 100 participants. Indeed, in the Aidil Adha season, there are more than 200 participants.²³ What BP4 Pekanbaru has done will

soon be followed by Dumai, Rohul, Siak and Kampar Regencies in Riau Province.²⁴ In an

are Course participants: 1. KUA Tampan = 13.5 pairs, 2. Marpoyan Damai = 13 pairs, 3. Tenayan Raya = 7 pairs, 4. Rumbai Pesisir = 4 pairs, 5. Rumbai = 4 pairs, 6. Payung Sekaki = 4, 7. Lima Puluh = 1 pair, 8. Bukit Raya = 6 pairs, 9. Sukajadi = 3 pairs, 10. Senapelan = 2 pairs, 11. Sail = 0 pairs, and 12. Pekanbaru = 0 pairs. Total 57 pairs = 115 participants; The course reports from January 28-29, 2019, are: 1. KUA Tampan = 8 pairs, 2. Marpoyan Damai = 18 pairs, 3. Tenayan Raya = 11 pairs, 4. Rumbai Pesisir = 3 pairs, 5. Tassel = 4 pairs, 6. Payung Sekaki = 3 pairs, 7. Lima Puluh = 0 pairs, 8. Bukit Raya = 4 pairs, 9. Sukajadi = 0.5 pairs, 10. Senapelan = 6 pairs, 11. Sail = 1 pair, and 12. Pekanbaru = 2 pairs. Total is 60.5 pairs = 121 participants; Course reports on 4-5 February 2019 are: 1. KUA Tampan = 17 pairs, 2. Marpoyan Damai = 8.5 pairs, 3. Tenayan Raya = 5 pairs, 4. Rumbai Pesisir = 1.5 pairs, 5. Tassel = 4 pairs, 6. Payung Sekaki = 4.5 pairs, 7. Limapuluh = 0 pairs, 8. Bukit Raya = 6 pairs, 9. Sukajadi = 3 pairs, 10. Senapelan = 3 pairs, 11. Sail = 1 pairs, and 12. Pekanbaru = 0 pairs. Total is 53 pairs = 107 participants; The course reports on 11-12 February 2019 are: 1. KUA Tampan = 10 pairs, 2. Marpoyan Damai = 11 pairs, 3. Tenayan Raya = 6 pairs, 4. Coastal Rumbai = 2 pairs, 5. Rumbai = 4 pairs, 6. Payung Sekaki = 7 pairs, 7. Limapuluh = 0 pairs, 8. Bukit Raya = 7 pairs, 9. Sukajadi = 0 pairs, 10. Senapelan = 1 pair, 11. Sail = 1 pair, and 12. Pekanbaru = 0 pairs. Total 49 pairs = 98 participants; The course reports on 18-19 February 2019 are: 1. KUA Tampan = 11 pairs, 2. Marpoyan Damai = 16.5 pairs, 3. Tenayan Raya = 9 pairs, 4. Rumbai Pesisir = 4 pairs, 5. Rumbai = 4 pairs, 6. Payung Sekaki = 6.5 pairs, 7. Limapuluh = 3 pairs, 8. Bukit Raya = 6 pairs, 9. Sukajadi = 1 pair, 10. Senapelan = 3 pairs, 11. Sail = 4 pairs, and 12. Pekanbaru = 0 pairs. Total is 68 pairs = 136 participants; The course reports on April 1-2, 2019, are: 1. KUA Tampan = 13 pairs, 2. Marpoyan Damai = 12 pairs, 3. Tenayan Raya = 10 pairs, 4. Rumbai Pesisir = 3 pairs, 5. Tassel = 6.5 pairs, 6. Payung Sekaki = 6.5 pairs, 7. Limapuluh = 1 pair, 8. Bukit Raya = 6 pairs, 9. Sukajadi = 3 pairs, 10. Senapelan = 2 pairs, 11. Sail = 3 pairs, and 12. Pekanbaru = 0 pairs. Total is 66 pairs = 132 participants.

²⁴ Interview on 12 September 2018, and strengthened on 11 January 2019, with Drs. H. Amirullah Hasyim, head of BP4 Pekanbaru City. Retirement of employees of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Riau Province. After occupying 12 KUA in the Riau Province, he entered the Regional Office as Head of the Sakinah Family. After retiring, he was appointed chairman of BP4 Pekanbaru.

²³ After each course, a report is made and sent to the Head of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Riau Province, the Head of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Pekanbaru and the Head of KUA in Pekanbaru. Example of an implementation report on 7-8 January 2019. Course participants: 1. KUA Tampan = 16 pairs, 2. Marpoyan Damai = 22.5 pairs, 3. Tenayan Raya = 3 pairs, 4. Rumbai Pesisir = 6.5 pairs, 5. Tassel = 8 pairs, 6. Payung Sekaki = 6, 7. Lima Puluh = 1 pair, 8. Bukit Raya = 4 pairs, 9. Sukajadi = 1 pair, 10. Senapelan = 2 pairs, 11. Sail = 1 pair, and 12. Pekanbaru = 2 pairs. Total is 73 pairs = 146 participants. The course reports for January 14-15, 2018,

emergency, a person may not attend the course but give a logical reason.²⁵ It may also include not having to take the course. As a reason, the candidate is believed to have the competence already. This condition was experienced by Gemilang when registering to take a class at BP4 Pekanbaru.²⁶

Second, resource persons deliver material according to their expertise. What is written in the schedule is a resource for practical implementation. There are several competent resource persons in the brochure, and there is not only one resource person for one material. Therefore, which resource persons will deliver the material is known during the course.

Third, the implementation of the course with the available schedule is still possible for changes, both in terms of the timing of material delivery and from the resource person's side. For example, the topic in the second session can be changed to the fourth session in the schedule. This incident happened to adjust the schedule of the speakers.

In principle, as additional information, the same practice is carried out by LP2KS. UIN Suska lecturers delivered materials on religious topics. In contrast, professional speakers convey other related materials, such as material on Reproductive Health from the School of Midwifery and Psychology from UIR. Likewise, the course occurs on two days; Saturdays and Sundays. The difference is in the problem of course funding. The courses funded at LP2KS are taken from the cost of Solemnisation for marriage. Therefore, participants are free from charges. As a result, there are very few funds available to the organizers. To cope with this issue, the lecturers who are resource persons for the course become part of community service activities included in the Lectur-

ers' performance report. Meanwhile, the honorarium for resource persons outside of UIN is paid by the course committee while waiting for compensation from the marriage subsidy for the marriage preparation course.²⁷

By using the five indicators/assessment standards set out in the marriage course regulations, in principle, they have been fulfilled: 1. course materials, 2. resource persons, 3. course organizers, 4. duration of the course (duration), and 5. funding. It is said in principle because, in the implementation, it is not exactly as stated in the text of the Course Rules, but substantially it has been fulfilled. Likewise, the funds that the government should provide are covered by the course participants.

Responses from course participants generally gave an upbeat assessment and stated that the course was crucial and relevant as material for future family life. Other studies also noted similar responses. The same reaction, for example, can be pointed out in the course implementation at the KUA, Cilandak District, South Jakarta. In the words of one participant, "pre-wedding debriefing for the bride and groom is critical. Therefore, the premarital marriage guidance program must be maintained, even improved in quality, especially regarding resource persons and learning media facilities."²⁸

Implementation of the Marriage Preparation Course among Catholic Christians

a. Course Ideals

Following premarital guidance is a must for the entire congregation. The legal basis for this must be based on the agreement of the Java Regional Dioceses. This guidance is a prereq-

²⁵ Interview with Rusydi, Head of KUA, Marpoyan Damai District, Pekanbaru, Riau, 12 September 2018, strengthened on 4 January 2019.

²⁶ The results of an interview with Gemilang, a married husband who attended the Pre-Marriage Course by BP4 Pekanbaru at the Ar-Rahman Grand Mosque, Pekanbaru Mayor's Office, 16-17 July 2018.

²⁷ Interview with Mr. Yusran, MA., staff of LP2KS UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Pekanbaru 12th of September 2018, and completed on 4th of January 2019.

²⁸ Results of interviews with Muhammad Djulfajri and Apriliani Efendi, brides-to-be who follow premarital marriage guidance. Abdul Jalil, "Implementasi Program Bimbingan Perkawinan Pranikah..." p. 194.

uisite for marriage in the Catholic Church. The basis for consideration of the requirements is the initiative of the Church, which wants to assist the bride and groom in preparing themselves as husband and wife. However, in some cases, this premarital guidance can be dispensed.²⁹

The organizers of Catholic marriage guidance are the marriage guidance executive committee, which represents the Church. Especially in implementing Catholic premarital guidance in Yogyakarta, the most significant number of congregations is carried out at the Christ King Baciro Church, Yogyakarta. The executor of marriage guidance, both premarital and family guidance in Yogyakarta, is the Yogyakarta Kevikepan under the Archdiocese of Semarang.

The object of marriage guidance in Catholicism is the congregation, namely the participants of prospective married couples (premarital) and couples who have the status of husband and wife (family guidance). Participants in premarital counselling are carried out in a collective –classical- form such as a seminar. Meanwhile, family guidance is carried out in the form of face to face.

Marriage guidance material is divided into two, namely premarital and family guidance. For premarital guidance, materials include 1. male and female/gender equality, 2. marriage in the Catholic view, 3. husband-wife psychology, 4. household economy, 5. marital morals, 6. husband-wife communication, 7. physiology of men and women, 8. welcoming gems of the heart, 9. natural family planning, and 10. sexual adjustment of husband and wife.³⁰

²⁹ Romo Widada Prayitna, "Tanya Jawab Pernikahan di Gereja Katolik", dalam <https://yrwidada-prayitna.wordpress.com/2009/10/11/tanya-jawab-pernikahan-di-gereja-katolik/>. Accessed on 20th of December 2018.

³⁰ Tim Penulis, *Buku Panduan Pembinaan Persiapan...*, p. 2.

The material written in the Family Life Preparation Course book, revised edition, is grouped into the primary and additional material. The subject matter is 1. Teachings of the Catholic Church on marriage, 2. family communication, 3. psychology of men and women; 4. Human reproduction and its regulation; 5. natural family planning; and 6. household economy.

While the other groups are: 1. technical preparation for marriage, 2. gender and its problems, 3. gender perspective in a Catholic family, 4. education on essential values in the family, 5. fostering a harmonious sexual life, and 6. pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum and baby care.

Some modules are printed in more concise writing and PowerPoint (ppt) form. The ppt includes 1. getting ready for marriage, welcoming and introductions; 2. love as a unique experience; The love of husband and wife; 3. Jesus came to meet us; The call to become a Christian; 4. How to build a better house? Planning married life; 5. They will become one flesh; complementarity and dialogue in the union of husband and wife; 6. Sexuality, the language of love; marital sexuality; 7. Marriage love, a sign of God's love; fidelity and fertility in the covenant; 8. Called to be parents; responsible family; 9. How to be a Christian family? Family spirituality and mission in the Church and the World; 10. Our love is a sign of Christ's love. The sacramentality of marriage; 11. Let's prepare for our marriage, the liturgy of the sacrament of marriage, and 12cover; celebrations and farewells.

Meanwhile, in the Wedi Parish Marriage Preparation Course Handbook, it is:³¹ 1. marriage procedures, 2. family psychology, 3. marriage in the Catholic view, 4. marriage morals, 5. household economy, 6. husband and wife communication, 7. male and female phys-

³¹ Tim Pembina, *Buku Pegangan Kursus Persiapan Perkawinan* (ttp.: Paroki Wedi, t.t.).

iology, 8. welcoming heart jewels, 9. family planning, and 10. sexuality.

In the Guidebook for Family Life Preparation for Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY), the course materials are:³² 1. equality of men and women/gender, 2. marriage in the Catholic view, 3. psychology of husband and wife, 4. household economy, 5. marital morals, 6. communication between husband and wife, 7. physiology of men and women, 8. welcoming gems heart, 9. family planning, and 10. sexual adjustment of husband and wife.

Wedi Parish Books and DIY Kevikepan Books are books that existed before being refined into a revised edition. Therefore, the revised book updates and refines the previous book. Although several books contain the marriage preparation course materials, the curriculum and syllabi are not mentioned.

The resource person for marriage guidance is the speaker who conveys the marriage guidance material. Resource persons for premarital guidance are competent speakers in the field of material presented. Meanwhile, priests generally carry out family guidance in local parishes because this guidance is not carried out in a collective form. The delivery was done privately – very confidential; only the priest and the husband and wife knew about the matter.

b. Implementation of the Marriage Preparation Course

Before explaining the implementation of the course, it is necessary first to understand five things. First, the Church of Christ the King Baciro should carry out two courses: 1. a course for prospective brides (Catechesis for Marriage Preparation [KPP]) and 2. a course for teenagers of marriageable age. However, the course for teenagers has not been

implemented due to insufficient resources. Second, the term used for the marriage course is 'catechesis', not a course.³³ According to one opinion, the meaning of catechesis is the learning of faith. Another idea says that catechesis emphasizes the process of two-way communication. Thus, a two-way method is used between the presenter and the course participants in the course.³⁴ Third, in the Diocese of Yogyakarta, there are 32 parishes. Twenty-five parishes have implemented the course, while seven other parishes have not implemented it. However, of the 25 parishes that have implemented it, only eight have implemented the catechesis concept, while the rest have not used it.³⁵ Fourth, the certificate of marriage course is mandatory for anyone who will marry, and the certificate is only valid for six months. If the candidate does not get married within six months, the candidate must retake the course.³⁶ Fifth, the implementation of courses at the Church of Christ the King Baciro Parish is once in 2 months, on Saturdays and Sundays at the beginning of odd-month weeks. The determination of this schedule is adjusted to the plan of KPP in

³² Kordinator Kevikepan DIY, *Pembinaan Persiapan Hidup Berkeluarga Kevikepan Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta; Disingkat dari Bahan-Bahan Pengajar* (ttp.: tnp., t.t.).

³³ Throughout this paper, the use of the term is generally the Marriage Preparation Course (KPP), not the Marriage Preparation Catechism (KPP). The goal is to make it easier for the reader. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that these two terms are used for the same purpose, Marriage Preparation Course.

³⁴ Interview with Mr Gregorius Yacob Mateus, Head of the Catechism for Marriage Preparation for Christ King Baciro Parish, Yogyakarta, January 27, 2019; interview with Mr Agustinus Windu Aji, Speaker of the Catechism for Marriage Preparation, Christ the King Baciro Parish, Yogyakarta, March 12, 2019.

³⁵ The parishes that have used catechesis are Nandan and Gamping parishes for the Sleman Regency, Kometiran and Baciro parishes for the Yogyakarta, Klodran Parish in Bantul Regency, Wonosari Parish in Gunung Kidul Regency, Nanggulan and Promosan Parish in Kulon Progo Regency. Interview with Gregorius Yacob Mateus, Head of the Catechism for Marriage Preparation for Christ King Baciro Parish, Yogyakarta, January 27, 2019.

³⁶ Interview with Mr F.X. Bambang Ananto, Catechism Team for Marriage Preparation for Christ King Baciro Parish, Yogyakarta, January 27, 2019.

other parishes. With this schedule, candidates who cannot take courses in their parish can participate in other parishes by showing a cover letter from their parish.³⁷ It turned out that there were participants from other parishes who took courses at Christ King Baciro Parish: "Actually, I'm not from Baciro Parish but Sedayu Parish. In Sedayu, the schedule is four days every afternoon. I joined Baciro Parish because I adjusted to my husband's busy schedule so that we could join. After all, if you go to the time that every afternoon, the work will be uncomfortable, especially if you go home to the KPP at night, the subsequent day work again."³⁸

The same substance happened to Valentinus Fery Setiawan: "Incidentally, I registered when the registration date and activities had run. So I was passed at Baciro Parish. So, I enrolled there and got married in Mlati here. The procedure is from the Mlati Parish. Here, you can get a cover letter stating that you want to join the KPP there."³⁹

Based on observations on the implementation of the Christ King Baciro Parish Marriage Preparation Course, held on Saturday-Sunday, January 7 to 8, 2019, finally five important notes were recorded, plus one additional note.

First, each couple pays IDR 300,000 - (three hundred thousand rupiahs). In other words, each participant pays IDR 150,000-. With this money, participants get 1. certificate, 2. guidebook and cost of 12 copies of materials, 3. lunch, dinner, and coffee break for two

days. So, in principle, the money is paid back to participants in another form.⁴⁰

Second, from the beginning of the course, each course participant is given a presence paper that functions to detect attendance (control card [control card]). In practice, each participant asked for the speaker's signature after delivering the material.

Third, the material presented in the course is not the same as what is written in the manual, but substantially and in principle no different. In addition, every material is always accompanied by testimony. This testimony is undoubtedly significant for candidates who will become husband and wife or father and mother. Sometimes a testimonial is more meaningful and convincing to a soon-to-be-married couple than a theory. Because theory is sometimes far from reality, testimony is a fact of life that has been experienced by the couple who gave testimony. Therefore, the testimony material is critical to convey to the course participants.

Fourth, the duration of course implementation is very effective and efficient. The length of this course implementation is two days same as the actual planned. Almost no time is wasted without meaning – likewise, the seriousness of the organizers and the very high motivation of the participants. One proof is that each participant is given a control card. With this card, each participant is required to ask for the speaker's signature after the material is delivered. Participants who leave only one material will be penalized for failing to pass and asked to repeat the next marriage preparation course. This control card proves the seriousness of the organizers in providing material to course participants. Meanwhile, the seriousness of the participants can be seen

³⁷ Interview with Gregorius Yacob Mateus, Head of the Catechism for Marriage Preparation for Christ King Baciro Parish, Yogyakarta, January 27, 2019.

³⁸ Interview with Ms Anastasya Riantika, participant of the First Phase of Marriage Preparation Catechism, Christ King Baciro Parish, Yogyakarta, 13th of March 2019.

³⁹ Interview with Bro Valentinus Fery Setiawan, participant of the First Phase of the Marriage Preparation Catechism, Christ King Baciro Parish, Yogyakarta, 13th of March 2019.

⁴⁰ It was confirmed in an interview with Mr Gregorius Yacob Mateus, Head of the Catechism for Marriage Preparation for the Christ King Baciro Parish, Yogyakarta, on 27th of January 2017.

during the dialogue, and they asked to provide comments.

Fifth, the resource persons who provide the material are competent experts in their respective fields, so that both in terms of material and delivery, participants can enthusiastically listen and actively participate. Competent presenters and interesting delivery methods give participants a positive impression and make them always remember the material presented. Likewise, the organizers are the KPP team prepared within one year, according to the Archdiocese of Semarang provisions.⁴¹

In addition, according to the interview results, the implementation of the Marriage Preparation Course at the Christ King Baciro Parish in Yogyakarta was attempted when there was a Wedding Mass. At this moment, the course participants must evaluate the implementation of the Marriage Mass. This evaluation is also a learning medium for course participants to make them more focused and diligent in attending the course.

The responses from the presenters and course participants can be written as follows, starting with the speaker's response. The presenter's response to the course was more focused on time available (provided by the committee) to deliver the material. One of the presenters commented, "One hour and a half is not enough time because we want to share more. Because each person's testimony is different."⁴² Another commented, "The material for building a Christian family is very complex. There are three big things that I usually say, namely, 1. clear up relationships in the family, 2. be active in church activities

and 3. be active in community activities. At least each piece needs an hour, but it only takes one and a half hours."⁴³

The participants' responses include the following:

"This activity is crucial because it can know how to build a household and make plans for the future. My message to participants is that they must follow the existing procedures. Because later you can get advice to be more sure to get married. As for the executor, the time is only two days, while the material is a lot. However, I want only one day because it takes time, I have work, and it is not easy to get permission. If you can join for one day, that is fine."⁴⁴

Other comments:

"Even though this activity is just a recommendation and not mandatory, I think you have to participate because you must know the basics if you are married. Do not just think about what is fun. Actually, two days is fast, bro. At least for three days and there is a break too. So it is made for half a day and a half, bro, so if you study you do not get tired and it is fresher. For the testimonials, add another future bride and groom testimony who just got married, so we know that early marriage is a problem like a habit that does not know."⁴⁵

Participant comments:

"Maybe for those who do not know, they will be indifferent to this KPP, but if they are already in the household, the material is

⁴¹ After the wedding Mass was held, the course participants were asked to share their opinion about the implementation of the Marriage Mass, both substantive and technical.

⁴² Interview with Mr Fransiskus Xaverius Soetrisno, speaker of the Catechism for Marriage Preparation for Phase I, Christ King Baciro Parish, Yogyakarta, 9th of March 2019.

⁴³ Interview with Mr Agustinus Windu Aji, speaker for the Catechism for Marriage Preparation for Phase I, Christ King Baciro Parish, Yogyakarta, 12th of March 2019.

⁴⁴ Interview with Br Erna, participant of the Catechism for Marriage Preparation Batch I, Christ King Baciro Parish, Yogyakarta, 7th of March 2019.

⁴⁵ Interview with Dian Putro, participant of the Second Phase of Marriage Preparation Catechism, Christ King Baciro Parish, Yogyakarta, 13th of March 2019.

really affected. The book given is reread to review again. My message to the organizer is not to be too formal and dense. Do not just take a short break so that the participants have not had time to digest it and other materials directly be conveyed. It is good to make it Saturday-Sunday for two weeks to have time to rest. But overall, it is excellent."⁴⁶

The essence of the responses given by the participants was that they felt that the marriage preparation course was necessary, even very important. It is just that they have problems with providing and dividing course time and work. Concerning the importance of the course, participants felt that their time was not optimal. Less than optimal because the duration of time provided is only two days with quite a lot of material. As a result, the delivery of the material feels forced. So there was a suggestion of additional time to maximise it by delivering material that was more relaxed and not so dense. Because the delivery of solid material makes the burden of thought heavier. Because the mind is still digesting the material that has just been delivered, suddenly, it is time to accept the following material.

Comparison of Muslim and Protestant Christian Marriage Preparation Courses

When comparing the implementation of the pre-marriage course conducted by BP4 Pekanbaru on the one hand with the marriage preparation course by Christ Barico Parish, three main comparisons can be noted. First, BP4 Pekanbaru and Kritis Baciro Parish both have partners in conducting marriage courses. It is just that BP4 Pekanbaru only has one partner, namely the Sakinah Family Counseling and Education Institute (LP2KS)

Faculty of Sharia and Law UIN Suska Riau. Unfortunately, the two institutions in Pekanbaru have not coordinated. Each institution conducts its course at the same time, Saturday and Sunday. On the other hand, Christ Baciro Parish has eight partner parishes and has coordinated. The fruits of this collaboration include variations in the timing of the course, which makes it easier for participants to choose the right course time to suit the work time of the bride and groom.

Second, the quota for marriage course participants at BP4 Pekanbaru and Christ Baciro Parish was fulfilled due to the obligation to attend courses for every prospective bride. Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to conclude that the level of awareness of the prospective bride and groom following the marriage course is still low. However, after taking the course, prospective brides realized how vital the marriage preparation course was, as revealed by their post-course responses.

Third, the general course of the parish looks more orderly; there is a control card, there is a testimony, and the implementation of the course is prioritized when there is a wedding mass so that the bride and groom can witness it. Thus, almost the entire period of the course is filled effectively.

While detailed comparisons can be noted from five reviews, namely, 1. course materials, 2. resource persons, 3. course organizers, 4. course duration, and 5. sources of funds. First, concerning course material, the principle, BP4 Pekanbaru and Christ Baciro Parish, have the same course topics. The material presented relates to religious material, the formation of a happy family, and management material to manage household life with various aspects. Second, the resource person, the resource person who delivered the material, has expertise in their field. Third, the course organizers are equally competent. Fourth, about the course duration, the principle is both

⁴⁶ Interview with Fery, participant of the First Phase of Marriage Preparation Catechism, Christ the King Baciro Parish, Yogyakarta, 9th of March 2019.

two days, but BP4 Pekanbaru only provides Saturday and Sunday, the same as the days provided by its partner LP2KS. While the Christ Baciro Parish, apart from providing Saturdays and Sundays, also provides a variety of course times in other parishes. Fifth, the organization of the source of funds between BP4 and Christ Baciro Paris are the same. There is a fee that course participants must pay, and the amount to be paid is the same, namely Rp. 150,000, - for each course participant.

Using the legal system analysis, public awareness of taking the marriage course is still low. They followed only out of necessity. Even after attending the course, the participants realized the importance. Low awareness is not to say there is no awareness. Even though it is vital to prepare prospective husband and wife partners to build a household, there should be a rule that requires the prospective worker's place to give a permit. Because of that, the weakness of the rule is that no rule obliges prospective workers to permit to take courses. As for the course organizers, in principle, they are ready to implement, although they need improvement and refinement.

Conclusion

The results of this study are that there are similarities and differences in the marriage course of prospective brides in the context of Muslim marriages and Christian marriages. The similarity is, the purpose of the course is to provide theoretical and practical understanding for the bride and groom, while the difference is seen from the technical side of the course carried out. In the Islamic context, the course is conducted in two sessions (days); for the first day as many as eight series of events, while the second session only 6 series of events. In a Christian context, courses are conducted in two sessions (days); Saturday as many as 14

series of events and Sunday as many as 14 series of events as well.

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