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Implementation of Premarital Counseling in The Family Learning Center (PUSPAGA) Program at The Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office of Hulu Sungai Utara Regency

Nida Urahmah¹, Mawarti², Muhammad Reza Bakri³, Rusadi⁴

1,2,3,4. Public Administration Study Program, Amuntai College of Administrative Sciences, Indonesia

Correspondance: nidaurahmah697@gmail.com¹, mawartijati@gmail.com², bakri@gmail.com³, rusadi12@gmail.com⁴

Abstract: The implementation of Premarital Counseling in the Family Learning Center Program at the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office of North Hulu Sungai Regency still lacks socialization from the implementation of the Technical Implementation Unit of the Office and there are still many people in North Hulu Sungai Regency who do not know about the implementation of this Program, nor do they know the purpose, function and effect of this program. The lack of Human Resources (staff) in the implementation of this Program affects the service capacity, especially the number of Premarital Counseling Clients per day. This study used qualitative descriptive method with data collection through interviews, observation and documentation. The source of the data was taken through 10 informants purposively. Data analysis techniques use data condensation, data presentation, and conclusions. Test data credibility with Extended observations, Increase Persistence, Triangulation and Membercheck. The results showed that the implementation of Premarital Counseling in the Family Learning Center Program at the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Service of Hulu Sungai Utara Regency was not optimal, this can be seen from the indicators; Transmission is not optimal, clarity is not optimal, human resources (staff) are not optimal. As for what is optimal, it is seen from the aspects that include consistency, facilities, authority, honesty, commitment, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), and coordination between related organizations. The influencing factors are transmission that is still not optimal, clarity about the program is not optimal, resources that are still not good. In order to improve the implementation of Premarital Counseling in the Family Learning Center Program at the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office of Hulu Sungai Utara Regency, it is recommended that efforts should be carried out transmission that is not optimal and clarity of communication that is not optimal and the Head of the PPPA Office should increase Human Resources (staff), especially counselors implementing the program in the implementation of the Family Learning Center Program can be implemented well.

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1. Introduction

The family is the first and primary environment in shaping a child's character, behavior, and development. The quality of parenting provided by parents greatly determines the creation of a harmonious family capable of protecting children from various forms of violence, neglect, and other social problems [1], [2]. However, various

family issues still pose challenges faced in Indonesia. Data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection shows that cases of violence against children and family issues are still quite high, necessitating preventive efforts thru strengthening family capacity even before entering household life [3].

As a form of the government's commitment to improving family resilience, the Family Learning Center (PUSPAGA) was established as a one-stop service based on children's rights. PUSPAGA provides various educational, consultation, and counseling services for families, prospective couples, parents, and children [4]. One of the focused services is the Premarital Counseling Program, which is a support service aimed at equipping prospective couples with knowledge, skills, and psychological, social, and legal readiness to build a harmonious, quality, and resilient family.

The Premarital Counseling Program plays a strategic role as a preventive measure in reducing the potential for household conflicts, divorce, domestic violence, and early marriage. Thru this service, prospective brides and grooms gain an understanding of family communication, child-rearing, reproductive health, role distribution within the family, and constructive conflict resolution. Thus, this program is expected to improve the quality of family life while also supporting the realization of prosperous families [5], [6], [7].

In Hulu Sungai Utara Regency, the implementation of the Premarital Counseling Program is under the Department of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection thru the PUSPAGA service. Although the program has been running, its implementation still faces several obstacles that affect its effectiveness. Based on the initial observations, many prospective brides and grooms, especially those marrying at a young age, still do not understand the purpose, benefits, or procedures of attending premarital counseling. This condition indicates that the dissemination of information to the public has not been fully optimal.

In addition, the socialization carried out by the implementing officers, including the Technical Implementation Unit (UPTD) at the village level, is still limited, resulting in uneven dissemination of information regarding PUSPAGA services. On the other hand, the limited number of counselors, which consists of only two people, means that the service has not yet been able to reach the entire community effectively. This condition has the potential to affect the quality of service, the effectiveness of assistance, and the achievement of program goals.

The issue indicates that the success of implementing the Premarital Counseling Program is not only determined by the existence of policies but also influenced by effective communication, resource availability, executor commitment, and bureaucratic structure support, as explained in George C. Edward III's policy implementation model [8], [9]. These four aspects are crucial factors in determining the success of public policy implementation.

Based on the description, this research aims to analyze the implementation of Premarital Counseling in the Family Learning Center Program (PUSPAGA) at the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office of Hulu Sungai Utara Regency using George C. Edward III's policy implementation theory, which includes the variables of communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. The research results are expected to contribute to the development of public administration studies and serve as an evaluation material for the local government in improving the quality of PUSPAGA services and the effectiveness of the Premarital Counseling Program implementation.

2. Materials and Method

This research was conducted at the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office of Hulu Sungai Utara Regency, located in Sungai Malang, Amuntai Tengah District, Hulu Sungai Utara Regency, South Kalimantan. The research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type, as it aims to deeply describe the implementation of Premarital

Counseling in the Family Learning Center Program (PUSPAGA) based on real conditions in the field. This approach was chosen so that the researcher could understand the program implementation process, the roles of the implementers, and the factors influencing the success of policy implementation [10], [11].

The research data consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained directly thru interviews with informants involved in the implementation of the PUSPAGA Program, while secondary data is obtained from official documents, activity reports, legislation, and various literature relevant to the research. The selection of informants was carried out using purposive sampling techniques, which involves deliberately choosing informants based on their knowledge, experience, and involvement in the implementation of the program, thereby enabling them to provide in-depth information in line with the research focus.

Data collection techniques were carried out thru observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to directly observe the implementation of Pre-Marital Counseling services at PUSPAGA. Interviews were conducted with officials, counselors, and related parties to obtain information regarding the program's implementation process and various challenges faced. Documentation is used as supporting data in the form of archives, activity reports, photos, and other administrative documents related to the implementation of the program.

Data analysis uses an interactive model that includes data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data condensation is carried out by selecting, simplifying, and grouping the data according to the research focus. Next, the data is presented in the form of a narrative description to make it easy to understand and analyze. The final stage is drawing conclusions thru the interpretation of all research findings, resulting in an overview of the implementation of Premarital Counseling in the PUSPAGA Program along with the influencing factors [12], [13].

To ensure the validity of the data, the research applies a credibility test thru triangulation. Triangulation is conducted by comparing information obtained from various sources, data collection techniques, and the timing of data collection. Thus, the research results are expected to have a high level of validity and credibility and to objectively depict the implementation conditions of the Premarital Counseling Program.

3. Results and Discussion

The research results show that the implementation of the Premarital Counseling Program within the Family Learning Center Program (PUSPAGA) at the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office of Hulu Sungai Utara Regency has not yet been fully optimal. The implementation analysis uses George C. Edward III's theory, which includes aspects of communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. These four aspects provide an overview of the factors that support or hinder the implementation of the program.

From a communication aspect, the process of conveying information about the Premarital Counseling Program is still not optimal. Research results show that socialization to the community, especially to prospective brides and grooms, has not been conducted evenly, resulting in many people still being unaware of the existence, purpose, and benefits of the program. The low intensity of information dissemination has resulted in a relatively low level of community participation in premarital counseling services. In addition, the clarity of the information received by the public has not yet been fully understood. Some prospective brides and grooms still believe that premarital counseling is only intended for couples with specific problems, whereas this service aims to prepare couples to build a harmonious, healthy, and quality family. Nevertheless, from the perspective of communication consistency, the facilitators have provided the same information to all participants in accordance with the applicable guidelines and service standards, so no differences in content or service procedures have been found.

In terms of resources, research shows that the availability of human resources remains the main obstacle in the implementation of the program. The number of counselors, which consists of only two people, is considered insufficient to meet the community service needs across the entire Hulu Sungai Utara Regency. This condition affects the suboptimal implementation of socialization and counseling services to the community. However, from the perspective of facilities, the implementation of the program has been supported by adequate infrastructure, such as counseling rooms, educational media, and administrative equipment that support the service process. In addition, the delegation of authority to each officer has also been clearly carried out in accordance with their respective main duties and functions, so that the implementation of services can proceed in a directed manner [14], [15].

Based on the aspect of disposition, the attitude of the implementers shows a good commitment to providing services to the community. Counselors perform their duties professionally by maintaining the confidentiality of identities and all information obtained during the counseling process in accordance with the professional code of ethics. This attitude increases public trust in the services provided. The Premarital Counseling Program is also conducted free of charge, making it accessible to the entire community. Meanwhile, incentives for the officers have become part of the employment rights received according to regulations, so they do not hinder the implementation of the program. The commitment of the officers in providing support, education, and solutions to various issues faced by prospective brides and grooms also demonstrates a high level of responsibility in achieving the program's objectives.

Furthermore, in terms of bureaucratic structure, the implementation of the Premarital Counseling Program already has Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) that serve as guidelines for all implementers. The existence of SOPs provides certainty regarding the stages of service so that the counseling process can be carried out systematically, effectively, and in accordance with regulations. In addition, the coordination between the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office of Hulu Sungai Utara Regency and various related agencies, such as the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), health facilities, and other service institutions, has been running well. The synergy supports the implementation of programs in providing more comprehensive services to the community.

The research results also identified several factors that influence the implementation of the Premarital Counseling Program. The inhibiting factors include the suboptimal dissemination of information to the public, the low understanding of prospective brides and grooms regarding the importance of attending premarital counseling, and the limited number of counselors, which prevents the service from reaching all targets maximally. On the other hand, the supporting factors for program implementation include the availability of adequate service facilities, the existence of clear Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), the commitment and professionalism of the staff in providing services, a structured division of authority, and good coordination between the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office and various related agencies. These various supporting factors are crucial in enhancing the effectiveness of the Premarital Counseling Program, although there is still a need for increased socialization, the addition of counseling staff, and the strengthening of institutional capacity to achieve the program's objectives more optimally.

4. Conclusion

The research results show that the implementation of the Premarital Counseling Program within the Family Learning Center Program (PUSPAGA) at the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office of Hulu Sungai Utara Regency has not been optimal. Based on George C. Edward III's implementation theory, the main weaknesses lie in the communication aspect, particularly the transmission and clarity of information,

as well as the human resources aspect. The dissemination of information regarding the program has not yet reached the entire community, resulting in many prospective brides and grooms not understanding the objectives, benefits, and procedures of the premarital counseling services. Moreover, the limited number of counselors has resulted in the implementation of services and outreach not being maximally carried out. Meanwhile, the aspects of disposition and bureaucratic structure have been functioning well, as evidenced by the commitment of the officers, the availability of supporting facilities, the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), and good coordination with related agencies.

Factors influencing program implementation consist of inhibiting factors and supporting factors. Inhibiting factors include the suboptimal socialization to the community, the low understanding of prospective brides and grooms regarding the importance of premarital counseling, and the limited number of human resources, especially counselors. As for the supporting factors, they include the commitment of the implementers, the availability of service facilities, the clarity of task and authority distribution, and the inter-agency coordination that has been running well in supporting the implementation of the Premarital Counseling Program.

Suggestions, The Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Office of Hulu Sungai Utara Regency needs to improve the quality of the Premarital Counseling Program implementation by increasing the number of counselors so that the service can reach more people. In addition, socialization and education activities need to be carried out more intensively, systematically, and evenly by involving village governments, the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), health facilities, and various information media so that the community can gain a better understanding of the program's benefits.

Implementing officers are expected to continuously improve the quality of communication, professionalism, and service to the community so that information about the program can be received clearly and easily understood. On the other hand, the community, especially engaged couples, is expected to be more proactive in participating in premarital counseling activities as a foundation for building a harmonious, quality family and minimizing potential household problems in the future.

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