



## THE RISE OF DIVORCE AMONG CIVIL SERVANTS, ESPECIALLY GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES WITH WORK AGREEMENTS (PPPK)

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### Abstract

Divorce is currently a social phenomenon increasingly common across various circles, including the Civil Service (ASN), particularly among Government Employees with Work Agreements (PPPK). Unlike the general public, divorce among ASN follows a special procedure that involves administrative stages, starting at the work unit and BKPSDM, and culminating at the Religious Court. In Serang Regency, this phenomenon needs attention because it affects family stability and ASN performance. Domestic conflicts, poor communication, and the inability to manage problems are the dominant factors leading to divorce. This study aims to analyze the phenomenon of divorce among ASN and PPPK in Serang Regency and to examine the local government's strategic steps to address this issue. The research uses a mixed-methods approach, combining descriptive, qualitative, and quantitative methods. Data was obtained through interviews and secondary data from the Serang Regency BKPSDM. The results show that divorce is influenced by prolonged conflict and ineffective communication, even though mediation efforts have been made. Local governments need to strengthen ongoing guidance and prevention efforts to reduce divorce among civil servants.

**Keywords:** Divorce; Civil Servants; PPPK; BKPSDM; Serang Regency.

### INTRODUCTION

From an Islamic perspective, marriage is not merely a social contract but a sacred act of worship that is carried out throughout one's life with the intention of seeking the pleasure of Allah SWT. Marriage aims to achieve tranquility (*sakinah*), love (*mawaddah*), and compassion (*rahmah*), which are the main foundations of family resilience according to the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, and the spiritual and moral awareness of both partners is essential for building a harmonious relationship in family life (Nabil, 2025).

Throughout their marriage, couples will face various phases of life and trials that require patience, sincerity, communication skills, and a willingness to understand and forgive each other. Contemporary research states that when every household activity is carried out with the intention of worship, such as earning a living, caring for children, and working together in managing the household, the spiritual depth and value of love cultivated by the couple becomes stronger and has an impact on family harmony as a

manifestation of worship to Allah SWT. Therefore, marriage in Islam can be understood as a lifelong act of worship with both worldly and spiritual dimensions, because every deed done with sincerity will receive a reward from Allah SWT. Shwan Gluk Rafeeq & Hemin Aziz Braem. (2023). Therefore, marriage can be understood as a lifelong act of worship, both worldly and spiritual.

In married life, there are fundamental values, such as patience (*ṣabr*), sincerity (*ikhlaṣ*), mutual acceptance of each other's shortcomings, the ability to forgive mistakes, and a positive outlook (*ḥusnuzan*). These values play an important role in building harmony between husband and wife while strengthening the family's resilience in facing the dynamics of modern life. Islam also views marriage as a means of perfecting faith, as emphasized in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, which states that marriage perfects half of religion, indicating that the quality of marriage is closely related to the quality of faith and to a Muslim's social life. (Shihab, 2021; Rafeeq & Braem, 2023).

However, in contemporary society, marriage does not always conform to ideal expectations. Various trials, pressures, and conflicts often arise in domestic life, and not all couples have the emotional readiness or relational skills to deal with them. When conflicts are not managed constructively, divorce is often seen as the last resort. Recent studies show that divorce is generally triggered by recurring disputes, poor quality of communication between partners, and failure to manage conflicts and emotions healthily in married life. (Amato, 2021; Fincham & Beach, 2023).

In addition to internal factors, divorce is influenced by external factors, especially the economic pressures that families face. The inability to meet basic needs, income instability, prolonged financial pressure, and economic inequality between husbands and wives have been shown to increase the vulnerability of domestic conflicts and the risk of divorce. In addition, divorce is also triggered by other factors such as infidelity, domestic violence, interference from third parties—whether from extended family or other parties—as well as deviant behaviors such as gambling and alcohol addiction, which significantly damage trust and the stability of the marriage. (Amato, 2021; Dew & Stewart, 2022; Fincham & May, 2023).

In Indonesia, the strength of patriarchal culture remains one of the factors contributing to divorce. The pattern of husband-wife relations in patriarchal cultures tends to be hierarchical, with the husband in a dominant role and the wife in a subordinate position requiring constant service. When such relations are not guided by principles of justice, reciprocity, and cooperation, the potential for household conflict increases and becomes harder to avoid. In fact, Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of deliberation, justice, and good treatment between husband and wife as the foundation of a harmonious marriage (QS). An-Nisa: 19." (Hidayati, 2021; Mufidah, 2022).

The phenomenon of divorce is not only prevalent in the general public, but also rampant among civil servants, particularly Government Employees with Work Agreements (PPPK). The mass media and online

media often highlight cases of PPPK divorce, which are considered to have increased after their appointment as civil servants. One case that has attracted public attention is the divorce of a PPPK in Aceh Singkil. This case went viral because it was assumed to have occurred after the inauguration as PPPK. However, clarification shows that the domestic conflict had been going on for a long time. The divorce was carried out before the official inauguration (Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023).

This case shows that an ASN divorce, although a personal matter, still has social and institutional impacts. ASN are seen as public servants and role models for society, so their personal lives are often in the public spotlight (Law No. 20 of 2023). Divorce among ASN can erode public trust and tarnish the institution's image if not handled wisely by the individuals concerned and relevant agencies (BKN, 2023).

A similar phenomenon also occurred in Serang Regency, where several government employees with work agreements (PPPK) who had been appointed as civil servants (ASN) filed for divorce for various reasons, such as prolonged domestic disputes, economic problems, infidelity, domestic violence (KDRT), and poor communication between spouses. Recent studies show that increased economic independence, particularly among female ASN and PPPK, has an impact on increasing the courage and capacity to make divorce decisions when the marriage is deemed unhealthy. This finding aligns with social change theory, which holds that changes in an individual's social and economic status can influence relationship patterns, power dynamics, and decision-making within the family. (Puspitawati, 2021; Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2022).

The government has responded to this phenomenon through regulations governing marriage and divorce permits for civil servants, as stipulated in Government Regulation No. 10 of 1983 in conjunction with Government Regulation No. 45 of 1990. These regulations require civil servants to obtain permission from the competent authorities before filing for divorce. The primary purpose of this regulation is not to restrict civil servants' personal rights, but to provide space for guidance, mediation, and peace efforts so that divorce can be prevented as much as possible.

Strategic steps taken by the government and agencies include implementing strict divorce permit procedures, providing guidance and mediation by regional leaders, premarital education and preparation, enforcing compliance with regulations, and ongoing socialization of the importance of harmonious families (KemenPAN-RB, 2022). Premarital education is considered important for improving prospective couples' mental and emotional readiness and for equipping them with communication and conflict-management skills.

This collective and tiered effort is expected to reduce the divorce rate among civil servants and PPPK employees. Harmonious and healthy families are the primary foundation for productive, professional, and ethical civil servants. Family resilience not only affects individual well-being, but also organizational stability and the quality of public services (BKKBN, 2021).

The modern sociological perspective views marriage primarily as a relational institution oriented toward emotional well-being, psychological satisfaction, and equality of roles between partners. The sustainability of marriage is primarily determined by the quality of communication and the fulfillment of individual needs, so divorce is often understood as a rational decision when the relationship is deemed no longer functional (Carr & Springer, 2022).

Comparative literature in public policy approaches views divorce among civil servants as having institutional and social implications. The state has an interest in regulating civil servant divorces through administrative mechanisms to maintain organizational stability and public trust. This perspective emphasizes structural control, in contrast to the Islamic approach, which focuses on strengthening moral and spiritual commitment in marriage (Cherlin, 2021).

Thus, the high divorce rate among civil servants and PPPK employees needs to be understood comprehensively by considering religious, psychological, sociological, economic, and legal dimensions simultaneously. This holistic and sustainable approach aligns with the views of Carr and colleagues, who emphasize that a single factor cannot explain the dynamics of divorce; instead, they result from complex interactions among individual conditions, family relationships, and surrounding social structures and public policies (Carr, 2021).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Marriage as Worship and Family Resilience**

Marriage in Islam is understood as a sacred institution that aims to build peace of mind (sakinah), reinforced by love (mawaddah) and compassion (rahmah). Spiritual values in marriage serve as the foundation of family resilience, especially amid modern social and economic pressures. Recent studies confirm that the internalization of religious values and awareness of the purpose of marriage contribute significantly to a couple's ability to manage conflict and maintain household sustainability (Amalia et al., 2024).

### **Domestic Conflict and Factors Leading to Divorce**

Divorce is a social phenomenon that is generally preceded by repeated and unresolved domestic conflicts. Recent empirical studies in religious courts show that ongoing disputes, poor communication between spouses, and an inability to manage emotions have been the dominant factors causing divorce in recent years (Anggraeni et al., 2025). These findings reinforce the view that conflict is not merely a matter of differences of opinion but is closely related to the quality of interpersonal relationships in marriage.

### **Economic Factors and Gender Dynamics**

Economic pressures remain an important determinant in rising divorce rates. Income instability, unemployment, and unequal economic burdens often trigger prolonged conflict within households. Recent research shows that changes in economic status, particularly the increased economic independence of one partner, can affect the distribution of power and decision-making within the family, thereby increasing the risk of divorce (Hendriyanto et al., 2025; Rabbani et al., 2025).

### **Psychological and Social Impact of Divorce**

Divorce not only affects married couples but also has broad psychological and social implications, especially for children. Recent studies show that children from divorced families are prone to emotional disturbances, decreased psychological well-being, and difficulties in social relationships if they are not supported by an adaptive and supportive environment (Asriadi, 2025). Therefore, divorce should be understood as a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing emotional, social, and structural aspects.

### **Family Resilience in the Context of Social Change**

Rapid social changes, including changes in gender roles, professional demands, and the modernization of values, also affect family stability. Recent literature emphasizes that family resilience is not only determined by economic factors, but also by the ability to adapt, effective communication, and mutual understanding of values between spouses. Families with high resilience tend to cope with external pressures without resorting to divorce (Amalia et al., 2024; Rabbani et al., 2025).

## **METHOD**

The use of mixed methods in contemporary social research often refers to the work of John W. Creswell and Vicki L. Plano Clark. In the latest edition of their book, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, Creswell and Creswell explain that mixed methods allow researchers to systematically integrate quantitative and qualitative data in complementary ways to gain a more comprehensive understanding of complex social phenomena. Furthermore, Creswell and Plano Clark, in *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, emphasize that this approach is particularly relevant for public policy research and for social phenomena involving structural, psychological, and institutional dimensions, such as studies of divorce among civil servants. (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2021).

The phenomenological approach is rooted in the thinking of philosopher Edmund Husserl, who emphasized the effort to understand the meaning of human subjective experience as consciously experienced (lived experience). In contemporary qualitative methodology, phenomenology is understood as an approach that focuses on the meaning of an individual's personal experience of an event or social

phenomenon. In the context of research on divorce among civil servants, the phenomenological approach is relevant for uncovering the emotional experiences, inner conflicts, and psychological dynamics individuals experience, which statistical data cannot fully explain. Husserl's phenomenological thinking later influenced the social sciences through Alfred Schutz, who argued that social actions can be fully understood only through the subjective meanings of actors in their everyday lives. (Creswell & Poth, 2023; Zahavi, 2021).

The empirical legal approach in legal research is based on the view that law is not only understood as written norms (law in books), but also as social practices that are carried out and experienced in society (law in action). Contemporary legal methodology literature emphasizes that the empirical legal approach places law in its social context by examining how legal norms are applied, obeyed, or even ignored by relevant actors and institutions. In the context of research on the implementation of Government Regulation No. 45 of 1990 concerning Marriage and Divorce Permits for Civil Servants, this approach is relevant for analyzing how the regulation is implemented by the BKPSDM and civil service supervisory officials, as well as how these administrative practices impact the behavior and decisions of civil servants. (Marzuki, 2021; Salim & Nurbani, 2023).

From the perspective of contemporary family sociology, divorce is understood as a consequence of changes in social structure, shifts in gender roles, and transformations in power relations within the family. Recent studies show that increasing economic independence, especially among women, contributes to changes in marital dynamics and an increased likelihood of divorce, particularly when couples are unable to renegotiate roles and expectations within the household. These findings are relevant to the phenomenon of PPPK women who experience an increase in social and economic status after appointment, which has an impact on family relationship patterns and courage in making marriage decisions." (Amato, 2022; Cherlin, 2022).

From the perspective of contemporary marriage psychology, research shows that communication breakdown, recurring conflicts, and the inability of couples to manage negative emotions are the dominant factors contributing to marital breakdown. Gottman and Silver emphasize that destructive interaction patterns—such as excessive criticism, defensiveness, and conflict avoidance—significantly increase the risk of divorce if not managed through healthy and empathetic communication. Meanwhile, Amato's recent study explains that divorce results from the accumulation of long-term emotional, economic, and social pressures that the husband and wife are unable to handle adaptively. (Gottman & Silver, 2022; Amato, 2022).

This literature review notes that research on divorce among civil servants and PPPK has a strong theoretical foundation in methodology, sociology, psychology, and law, enabling it to provide comprehensive and contextual analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on data from the Serang Regency Civil Service and Human Resource Development Agency (BKPSDM), there was an increase in divorce cases among civil servants during 2025, both among civil servants (PNS) and PPPK. These findings indicate that family resilience remains a real challenge within the government apparatus.

From a gender perspective, the research results show that the majority of divorce filings came from wives. As much as 80% of divorce cases were filed through divorce suits (GC) by wives, while divorce requests (CT) filed by husbands only amounted to 20%. This condition indicates that the initiative for divorce comes more from female civil servants.

Based on the results of mediation interviews with 56 civil servants who filed for divorce with the Serang Regency BKPSDM, the main factors triggering divorce among civil servants in general consisted of continuous disputes and arguments (30%), economic problems at 25%, infidelity at 20%, lack of responsibility at 17%, domestic violence at 5%, and polygamy or second marriages without permission at 3%. This data shows that interpersonal conflicts and economic pressures are the dominant factors that are interrelated in triggering divorce among civil servants.

Meanwhile, the results of a survey conducted on PPPK in the Serang Regency Government show a relatively different pattern of factors causing divorce. Based on the questionnaires completed by respondents, infidelity ranked highest at 35.2%, followed by economic problems at 30.5%, constant disputes and arguments at 21.8%, and lack of responsibility at 6.6%. The factor of domestic violence was recorded at 0%, and the factor of polygamy or second marriage without permission was also 0%. These findings indicate that relationship and economic dynamics are the main factors of divorce among PPPK employees.

Proportionally, the PPPK group accounted for 0.16% of total civil servant divorce cases in 2025. Although the percentage is relatively small, the characteristics of the triggering factors indicate a particular vulnerability.

Economic factors are a more pressing issue for PPPK employees than for civil servants. Income uncertainty and differences in salaries and allowances between PPPK and civil servants often trigger domestic disputes, especially those related to financial management and social status. In addition, concerns about contract extensions cause long-term financial uncertainty for couples.

The limitations of PPPK employment status also affect access to credit and loans, ultimately adding to economic pressure within households. In addition, distance and work locations far from the spouse's domicile (long-distance relationship/LDR) are another important trigger, as they lead to infrequent meetings and a decline in relationship quality.

The lack of communication intensity due to distance often leads to misunderstandings that result in conflict. In some cases, this condition also opens up opportunities for third parties or infidelity, which further accelerates the breakdown of PPPK households.

## **Discussion**

This discussion integrates research findings with modern sociological perspectives and the regulatory framework for civil servant divorce as stipulated in Government Regulation No. 10 of 1983 in conjunction with Government Regulation No. 45 of 1990. Sociologically, marriage is viewed as a relational institution oriented toward emotional well-being, psychological satisfaction, and role equality. The sustainability of marriage is primarily determined by the quality of communication and the fulfillment of individual needs, so that divorce is often understood as a rational decision when the relationship is deemed no longer functional (Carr & Springer, 2022). Conversely, from a public policy perspective, divorce among civil servants has institutional implications, prompting the state to implement administrative licensing mechanisms to maintain organizational stability and public trust (Cherlin, 2021).

The increase in divorce cases among civil servants indicates a gap between regulations and social reality. Although strict rules bind civil servants, the dominance of divorce suits filed by wives reflects increasing legal awareness, economic independence, and a shift in social values that no longer view divorce as taboo. Administrative regulations serve as structural controls, but they are not yet fully capable of containing the dynamics of domestic conflicts driven by relational and economic factors.

In the PPPK group, employment status pressure is a significantly differentiating factor. Contract uncertainty, differences in benefits compared to those of civil servants, and limited economic access exacerbate financial stressors for households. This condition aligns with the economic stressors theory, which posits that resource insecurity triggers conflict and marital dissatisfaction. In addition, long-distance relationships (LDR) weaken emotional bonds and the intensity of communication, thereby increasing the risk of relationship breakdown.

These findings emphasize the need for strengthened preventive policies, particularly through premarital education and family counseling for ASN and PPPK. Dissemination of divorce regulations accompanied by conflict management and financial planning guidance is an important strategy to reduce the risk of divorce, especially for PPPK who are in more vulnerable work and economic conditions.

## **CONCLUSION**

The divorce rate among civil servants has risen significantly in recent years. This phenomenon is characterized by the dominance of divorce filings by wives, reflecting the increasing courage, legal awareness, and economic independence of female ASN in taking the initiative to resolve domestic conflicts

through legal channels, despite the civil service system's strict regulations. This situation also indicates a shift in social values, where divorce is no longer considered taboo when a marriage is deemed unhealthy and dysfunctional.

In general, the main factors triggering divorce among civil servants are still dominated by ongoing disputes and arguments, followed by economic problems and a lack of household responsibility. However, among Government Employees with Work Agreements (PPPK), these factors are exacerbated by the structural pressures inherent in their employment status. Financial uncertainty due to limited employment contracts, differences in salaries and benefits compared to civil servants, and concerns about the sustainability of employment contracts create significant economic and psychological pressure on family life. In addition, job placements far from the spouse's domicile often lead to long-distance relationships (LDRs), which result in decreased communication, weakened emotional bonds, and increased vulnerability to conflict and infidelity.

Although civil servants are regulated by Government Regulation No. 10 of 1983 in conjunction with Government Regulation No. 45 of 1990 regarding marriage and divorce permits, the high divorce rate indicates that these regulations are not yet fully effective in maintaining the integrity of civil servant households. Therefore, a more comprehensive and preventive policy intervention is needed, one that is not only administrative in nature but also emphasizes stress management, family counseling, communication coaching for couples, and evaluation of placement and job protection policies, especially for PPPK. Overall, the high divorce rate among civil servants, especially PPPK, results from the interaction between classic household problems and structural pressures in the civil service that directly affect the economic and psychological stability of families.

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