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Mediation Efficacy in Resolving Divorce Cases: A Case Study of the Purworejo Religious Court

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Abstract

Marriage constitutes a sanctified event in the human experience, aimed at the establishment of a harmonious, serene, and comfortable domestic sphere. Within the Islamic framework, marriage is designed to forge a familial unit characterized by Sakinah, Mawadah, and Warahmah. This study endeavors to assess the efficacy of mediation in the resolution of divorce cases, ascertain the success rate of mediation within the Purworejo Religious Court, and identify the obstacles encountered by mediators in the implementation of Supreme Court Regulation Number 1 of 2016. Employing a normative-sociological approach, this research relies on legal inquiries utilizing both library resources and primary data gleaned directly from the community. The findings of this investigation reveal that Supreme Court Regulation Number 1 of 2016, serving as the legal framework for the management of divorce cases, has not effectively mitigated the escalating domestic conflicts. These conflicts stem from diverse factors, encompassing persistent disputes, abandonment, economic challenges, domestic violence, and various underlying issues, leading to a consistent increase in divorce cases over the years. Furthermore, the mediation process within the Purworejo Religious Court demonstrates a pronounced ineffectiveness, with a meager 9.95% success rate recorded between 2020 and September 2022. Consequently, all case studies involving the mediation process have proven unsuccessful in the resolution of divorce cases.



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A. INTRODUCTION

Marriage is an important event in human life, because marriage not only concerns the personalities of the two candidates for husband and wife, but also concerns family and community affairs (Yuliana & Az-Zafi, 2021). In essence, marriage is considered as something sacred and therefore every religion always connects the methods of marriage with religious methods. According to Islam, the purpose of legal marriage is to form a family that is *Sakinah*, *Mawwadah* and *Warrahmah*, which is the essence of marriage in the Qur'an contained in a verse, namely Q.S Ar-Rum Verse 21 (Royani, 2015). Marriage in the Qur'an is in line with what is stated in Article 1 of Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage (Marriage Law) which reads "The bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife with the aim of forming a happy and eternal family (household) based on the Almighty God." If we examine the words "inward and outward bond" and the words "happy and eternal", it can be interpreted that the principle of marriage is once in a lifetime and there should not

be a divorce (Huda & Munib, 2022). But in reality in married life not all marriages can run smoothly in accordance with what is aspired to, various problems eventually arise, both small and large problems that can cause relationships to become disharmonious. Therefore, if a family is unable to maintain the integrity of its household, what will happen is separation or divorce.

Divorce is the breaking up and ending of a marriage. Divorce is the end of the relationship between husband and wife (Zahid & Badi, 2020), caused by the failure of the husband or wife to carry out their respective roles. Divorce is a civil case that begins with a lawsuit from the plaintiff, be it a husband or wife. The Marriage Law adheres to the principle of making divorce difficult Article 113 of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) jo. Article 38 of the Marriage Law. Article 114 states that the breakdown of marriage caused by divorce can occur due to divorce or based on a divorce suit. Then Article 115 KHI confirms the sound of Article 39 paragraph (1) in accordance with the KHI concept, namely for Muslims divorce can only be done in front of a Religious Court session after the Religious Court tries and fails to reconcile the two parties (Nafisaadullah & Syawali, 2022).

Basically, divorce is the last resort taken after efforts and all efforts have been made to improve marital life and it turns out that there is no other way but divorce. The Indonesian legal system has provisions that aim to provide guidelines for justice seekers to resolve disputes through litigation and non-litigation channels. Dispute resolution through litigation is the settlement of cases through trials in court which requires the judge to first reconcile the parties to the dispute. Dispute resolution through non-litigation channels, namely settlement outside the court session, can be pursued through arbitration, mediation as an alternative dispute resolution (Risa, 2018).

When observing the history of the Dutch colonial period, the regulation of dispute resolution by peaceful means was regulated in Article 130 HIR (*Het Herziene Indonesich Reglement*, *staatsblad* 1941: 44), or Article 154 RBg (*Rechts Reglement Buitengewesten*, *staatsblad*, 1927: 227), both articles recognize and require dispute resolution through peaceful means. Article 130 of the HIR, Paragraph (1), stipulates that if both parties are present on the designated day, the District Court, under the guidance of the chairman, will endeavor to facilitate their reconciliation. As for Paragraph (2), it states that if such reconciliation is attainable, an official record will be created during the proceedings, wherein both parties will be legally bound to adhere to the agreement reached. This recorded document will possess the legal authority and impact akin to a customary court judgment.

The provisions in Article 130 HIR/154 RBg, both articles recognise and explain the settlement of disputes through peaceful means. Seeking peace is the obligation of the judge, and the judge cannot decide the case before mediation is conducted *as* an effort to reconcile the parties to the dispute. After Indonesia's independence, the Supreme Court is the highest Judicial Power institution in

Indonesia as mandated by Article 24 (paragraph 2) of the 1945 Constitution on Judicial Power. Court annexed mediation has been in effect in Indonesia since the issuance of Supreme Court Regulation (PERMA) Number 2 Year 2003 on Court Mediation Procedures. This PERMA has the purpose of perfecting the Supreme Court Circular Letter (SEMA) Number 1 Year. 2002 regarding the Empowerment of Courts of First Instance, in applying the same peaceful instances as regulated in Article 130 HIR and Article 154 RBg. Articles 130 HIR and 154 RBg regulate the institution of peace which requires the judge to first reconcile the parties before the case is reviewed by the judge. With the enactment of PERMA Number 2 Year 2003, mediation must be applied to all civil cases submitted to the courts of first instance and requires judges to first reconcile the parties before examining the case.

The Supreme Court continued to monitor and then evaluate PERMA Number 2 Year 2003 and there were still many problems found in the application of the PERMA, so it was deemed necessary to revise it again because the effectiveness of PERMA Number 2 Year 2003 was still considered less than optimal, therefore the Supreme Court issued PERMA Number 1 Year 2008. The religious courts have practiced mediation based on PERMA No. 1/2008. Mediation of 'divorce cases" or can be referred to as "disputes of the heart" because the husband and wife are psychologically emotional. In the preamble of point A of PERMA Number 1 of 2008, it is stated that mediation is one of the faster and cheaper dispute resolution processes, and can provide greater access to the parties to find a satisfactory settlement and fulfil a sense of justice. Furthermore, in the consideration of point B of PERMA Number 1/2008 states that the integration of mediation into the court process can be an effective instrument to overcome the problem of case backlogs in the courts.

Basically, PERMA Number 1 Year 2008 is a refinement of SEMA Number 1 Year 2002 and PERMA Number 2 Year 2003, for example regarding the time or duration of mediation in PERMA Number 2 Year 2003 the mediation time is 30 (thirty) working days then in PERMA Number 1 Year 2008 it is extended to 40 (forty) working days and can be extended by 14 (fourteen) working days when the mediator assesses that the parties to the dispute still have the willingness and good faith to deliberate. In early 2016 the Supreme Court issued PERMA Number 1 Year 2016 on Mediation Procedures in Courts.

The Religious Court is one of the implementing institutions of judicial power that applies mediation in the settlement of a divorce case, including the Purworejo Religious Court (PA Purworejo) is a court of first instance in Indonesia that has the authority to handle disputes from certain groups, namely Muslims. The position of the court which is the executor of judicial power whose role is to solve legal problems and can be said to be a place where people seek justice, but the court is still not optimal in applying mediation as a way of resolving disputes peacefully and appropriately, this can be seen from the data on divorce cases in the

Religious Court, from the number of incoming divorce cases only a few were successfully mediated, most of which were continued to the divorce trial process (Nugraheni, 2020). In order to achieve satisfactory dispute resolution and fulfil a sense of justice for the parties, mediation must achieve real effectiveness and should succeed in reconciling the disputing parties to avoid divorce. Noting the data on divorce cases registered at the Purworejo Religious Court for the last 3 (three) years from January 2020 to September 2022, if accumulated in total, there were 5,442 cases and 607 cases could be mediated while only 41 cases were successfully mediated (around 9.95%).

B. RESEARCH METHOD

The type of research used is normative sociological with a statutory approach and a sociological approach. Normative research is legal research which is a process to find a rule of law, as well as legal doctrines in order to answer the legal issues faced, while sociological research is legal research that obtains data from primary data or data obtained directly from the community (Marzuki, 2011). The object of this research refers to a system of legal norms including legal rules or rules related to legal sources in the form of legislation and also approaches to legal subjects (Soekanto & Mamuji, 2011), namely those who are the sources of this research, the author focuses on mediators and also the parties to the dispute in the Purworejo Religious Court.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Effectiveness of Mediation as an Effort to Settle Divorce Cases in Purworejo Religious Court

All lawsuits that have been registered at the Court, before entering into the trial process, the judge examining the case must offer settlement efforts through mediation by inviting the parties to negotiate to resolve their problems by means of peace and deliberation, as required by PERMA Number 1 of 2016 which has binding legal force and force on the parties litigating in court. If the mediation effort is unsuccessful, the case can proceed to trial until the judge's decision stage. In the consideration of the decision, the judge must also mention that mediation efforts have been made against the parties. If the mediation process is not carried out then the decision is null and void, this shows that the implementation of mediation has binding legal force (Sofiani, 2010). Here is Table 1. Mediation flow:

Table 1. Mediation flow

- Registration of the lawsuit at the Court Registrar, payment of fees and signing of the power of attorney to pay (SKUM)
- Appointment of a panel of examining judges by the President of the Religious Court

III	The Panel of Judges determines the hearing by stipulation, the Bailiff of the court summons the parties (plaintiff, defendant, and codefendant)						
IV	 Parties present Delivery of the mediation process by the chairman of the panel Parties not present Re-calling is carried out 						
V	 Mediator Selection Postponement of trial Verstek Judgement Autumn Verdict 						
VI	The mediator holds an initial meeting Introductions and information about the mediation procedure						
VII	 Resume submission and exchange Conduct a dialogue about some offers Caucus Submission of other bid proposals Mediation process failed 						
VIII	 Formulation of points - The trial proceeds of agreement Explanation Analysis and correction 						
IX	 Submission of the peace agreement confirmed as a Peace Deed document to the panel of Judges examining the case Confirmation into Deed Peace 						

Source: Mediation in Divorce Cases

The implementation of the mediation process in PA Purworejo, regarding the selection of mediators which is the right of the parties, but in practice the parties submit the selection of mediators to the Chairman of the Court through the determination. The appointment of mediator judges is done through the determination of the President of the Court, who is appointed as a mediator judge entirely from the panel of judges. The parties meet the mediator judge with the assistance of a designated officer. The mediation process was directed by the mediator judge within a time limit of 30 days, with the aim of giving the parties the opportunity to think again whether to resolve their household problems by divorce or to reconcile. Based on the agreement of the parties, the mediation period can be extended for a maximum of 14 working days.

Mediator judges who carry out their duties as mediators have a certificate obtained after attending the Special Education for Professional Mediators (PKPM). This special education is organised by an institution accredited by the Supreme Court. In practice, if there are no certified mediators in the court area, judges within the court can perform the function of mediator.

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In practice, when the parties succeed in reaching an agreement, the plaintiff or applicant is obliged to withdraw his lawsuit or application (Pramesti, 2018). However, if an amicable agreement is only partially reached, namely that what is agreed is not about divorce but other issues that are accumulated with divorce, then the divorce lawsuit continues the process to trial. And the results of the partial mediation agreement can be requested to be included in the decision either in the convention and/ or in the counterclaim (Hanif & Ulya, 2023).

The mediation process witnessed by the author in the mediation room of PA Purworejo followed a specific sequence: First, the mediator introduced themselves and verified the parties' identities. Subsequently, the mediator clarified the purpose of mediation, emphasizing their neutral stance and commitment to remaining impartial. Next, the mediator inquired about the issues at hand, prompting the parties to express their concerns. However, when both parties began simultaneously sharing their problems, emotions ran high, leading the mediator to intervene and determine the order of speaking. The judge-mediator then encouraged the parties to engage in amicable negotiations and work toward resolving their disputes in a cooperative manner. While the mediator played an active role in guiding the negotiations, the parties ultimately chose to pursue a

divorce. Despite this, they reached some agreements. Specifically, the parties reached a partial agreement pertaining to child custody recommendations and the monthly provision for child maintenance.

According to the provisions before conducting mediation, the mediator judge can hold a meeting with one of the parties without the presence of the other party, which is called a caucus, but PA Purworejo did not conduct a caucus before the mediation process because it was not necessary. Article 14 letter (e) of PERMA Number 1 Year 2016 states that the Mediator may hold a meeting with one of the parties without the presence of the other party (caucus).

The results of the author's interview with the mediator judge who explained that the mediation process in general is more deliberative, the mediator's role is to provide explanations and directions on how to make the parties make decisions and reach an agreement. The mediator becomes a bridge for the parties and in the process advice will come out from the mediator judge. According to the code of ethics the mediator should not impose his/her will on the parties but only help the parties formulate the agreement reached and the mediator is not encouraged to decide the case or impose his/her fair view during the mediation process.

The Effectiveness of Mediation as an Effort to Settle Divorce Cases

The application of the theory of effectiveness that occurs in the field is not as easy as theory alone because there are many factors that cause the peace process through mediation to not run effectively according to the findings that the authors get at the research location, namely based on the list of divorce cases at the Purworejo Religious Court in the period 2020 to 2022, showing clearly the data on divorce cases that have been mediated. Also listed are the number of cases that could not be mediated and cases that were not successfully mediated and cases that were successfully mediated, namely a very small number of successful cases. The following table 2. Divorce and Mediation Case Data (Kepaniteraan, 2022).

No.	Year	Number of case received	Cases mediated	Successful cases mediated	Unsuccessful cases mediated	Mediation success rate
1.	2020	1974	244	2	236	1%
2.	2021	1961	202	18	181	9%
	2022					
3.	Jan -	1507	161	20	124	13%
	Sep					

Table 2. Data on divorce and mediation cases

The data on mediation of divorce cases above illustrates that there are things that need to be studied, namely First, the number of cases that cannot be mediated, namely in 2020 the number of registered cases totalled 1974.

In 2021, there were 1961 registered cases, of which 202 could be mediated, and in 2022 until September, there were 1507 cases, of which only 161 could be mediated. Secondly, from the number of cases that could be mediated, the percentage of cases that were successfully mediated was still low. In 2020 the number of cases mediated was 244, but only 2 cases (1%) were successfully mediated, in 2021 the number of cases mediated was 202 cases and 18 cases (9%) were successfully mediated, then in 2022 until September the number of cases mediated was 161 and only 20 cases (13%) were successfully mediated. Although there seems to be an increase every year, the percentage of successful mediation is still very small, still far below 50%. It is known that the parameter for a n effective mediation is if it has achieved a minimum success rate of 50% + 1 = 51%.

Based on the research that the author conducted by witnessing the mediation process in PA Purworejo, the author argues that the ineffectiveness of mediation efforts is due to *First*, the success of mediation is not the main goal but only an effort and the effort is not maximised in its implementation. *Second*, mediation efforts do not force the parties to reconcile, the parties are free to determine that they will reconcile and live in harmony again or remain divorced. because there is no coercion for them to live in harmony again, they still choose to divorce.

The mediation process is more of a formality (an order of legislation and as a maximum effort to prevent conflict (dispute) in the future. Mediation here is not intended to resolve a dispute (Pranadita, 2019). Mediation in the settlement of civil disputes in court is considered ineffective because mediation is often only carried out to fulfil formalities so that there are still many cases that fail in mediation, so the hope to empower the Mediation institution in the Court is not fully optimal (Rahmah, 2019).

Mediation Success and Challenges in Divorce Cases at Purworejo Religious Court

The following is **Table 3**. Data on the number of cases per year at Purworejo Court.

No.	The Cases	Number of Cases Per Year			
INO.	THE Cases	2020	2021	2022	
1.	Zina	0	0	0	
2.	Drunk	2	O	0	
3.	Madat	2	0	0	
4.	Gambling	2	1	0	
5	Leaving one of the party	594	392	78	
6.	Sentenced to Prison	1	1	1	
7.	Polygamy	1	1	2	
8.	Domestic Violence (KDRT)	15	8	2	

9.	Body defects	0	0	0
10	Disputes and constant bickering	582	815	929
11.	Forced Marriage	1	0	0
12.	Apostate	0	5	1
13.	Economics	236	283	74
	Total	1.436	1.501	1.087

When studying the annual report data above from 2020 to 2022, it can be said that the reason why a husband or wife filed a divorce suit through PA Purworejo was due to 13 (thirteen) factors. If classified from all the factors causing divorce, there are 3 (three) dominant factors, namely (1) the factor of leaving one of the parties, (2) economic factors and (3) the factor of continuous disputes and quarrels is the most dominant factor causing divorce. If examined, these three factors are sourced from within the household as well as the psychological and biological influences of the married couple. Related to the reasons for divorce lawsuits due to continuous disputes and quarrels in the examination of cases in PA Purworejo, that there are several causes that trigger the dispute between husband and wife, namely (1) because of infidelity problems, (2) unable to provide offspring, (3) interference from the husband's or wife's family that is too far in the household and so on.

In connection with the large number of divorce cases registered in PA Purworejo with various reasons for divorce, it is natural that professional mediators are needed and meet the quality and quantity in balance with the number of cases processed, that the existing conditions are as follows:

- a. It is known that PA Purworejo has 6 mediator judges and all mediator judges have main duties as panel judges and almost all of the mediator judges have attended mediator education and have mediator certificates.
- b. A mediator who is concurrently a judge of the tribunal means concurrently holding a position, which certainly affects the effectiveness of mediation efforts. If a mediator has the main task as a panel judge, of course, during mediation he will have a split focus. It is known that a judge has the duty and responsibility of processing cases at trial, if the assembly judge is given the additional responsibility of carrying out the mediator's duties, the less likely the mediation effort will succeed. because the judge will handle the process after the mediation effort is unsuccessful, namely continuing to litigation which is his main task, so that during mediation, the mediator judge seems to be in a hurry to complete the mediation to immediately proceed to trial.

Factors Supporting the Mediation Process

Mediation Facilities and Means in PA Purworejo can influence the success of mediation. The mediation facilities and facilities available in PA Purworejo are

(Faiz, 2022): The commodious and well-maintained room provided a comfortable environment for parties and mediators. Adorned with stickers and slogans promoting harmonious and peaceful domestic life, along with depictions of deliberations and peace agreements, the room exuded an atmosphere conducive to productive mediation sessions. The mediation room consists of a single rectangular table and six chairs, accommodating the mediation process effectively. Additional amenities such as an Air Conditioner (AC) and the availability of drinking water further enhance the mediation experience. PA Purworejo demonstrates a commitment to continual improvement and expansion of its facilities and mediation rooms, conducting thorough monthly evaluations to ensure their upkeep. Upon assessing the mediation amenities and provisions, it is evident that PA Purworejo boasts highly adequate and comprehensive facilities. Notably, it even houses a separate caucus room, further underscoring its dedication to facilitating successful mediation proceedings.

Mediation Barrier Factors

The number of cases that could not be mediated was due to one of the defendants or plaintiffs or even both parties not being present at all during the mediation process even though they had been officially summoned twice. This is one of the obstacles to mediation that the Religious Courts cannot overcome. In cases where one of the parties is never present and cannot be mediated, the judge will immediately process the case at trial, because the examination of the case must continue so the judge decides verstek, which is a decision without the presence of one of the parties and the judge examines the case based on the lawsuit filed by the plaintiff. If in the future the party who was never present comes and is not satisfied with the verstek decision, the party can file a verdict through the Religious High Court (Syaefudin, 2022).

The low percentage of mediation success in PA Purworejo means that there are things that need attention and are obstacles to the mediation process that make mediation less effective as an effort to resolve divorce cases. According to the author's observations, there are 2 obstacles that influence the lack of effectiveness of mediation efforts in PA Purworejo, namely obstacles from the litigants and obstacles due to the lack of professional mediators (Qonita, 2022).

a. Barriers from the Parties

The non-participation of either the plaintiff or defendant in the mediation process constitutes a significant impediment. In the event the plaintiff is absent during mediation, the mediator lacks the capacity to facilitate the proceedings, as only one party is present. Moreover, if both parties are absent or demonstrate a lack of willingness to engage in the mediation process, the mediator deems the mediation process as non-operational. Filing for divorce in the Religious Court ensues when familial efforts to reconcile prove futile, thereby presenting a

challenge for the mediator in their pursuit of reconciliation. Another circumstance leading to mediation failure arises from the parties involved in the dispute exhibiting a propensity to prematurely abandon the mediation process. This premature cessation hinders the optimization of the negotiation process, as their inclination is to swiftly conclude mediation and pursue litigation as the next course of action.

b. No Professional Mediator Available

In order to process the large number of divorce cases in PA Purworejo and also to maximise the success of mediation, that which becomes an obstacle to mediation needs to be minimised. In addition to the problem of the absence of the parties, the lack of mediator resources can also be an obstacle to the success of mediation. Mediator resources need to be improved, namely regarding the qualifications and quantity of mediators. Thus it is hoped that mediation efforts can be increased in success. Mediation is one form of alternative dispute resolution that has a major influence on the final outcome of the case.

In addition, it is necessary to provide incentives for mediators who successfully carry out the mediator function properly. This will certainly provide motivation and increase the enthusiasm and performance of mediators in finding the right strategy for the success of mediation. Regarding the provision of incentives for mediators who are successful in carrying out their duties, there is no point in the PERMA that regulates this.

D. CONCLUSION

Mediation at the Purworejo Religious Court, aimed at resolving divorce cases, has not proven to be effective. The success rate of mediation from 2020 to September 2022 stood at a mere 9.95%. The findings of the author's research, based on the analysis of three cases, reveal that all mediation attempts failed to yield a resolution in divorce cases, underscoring the inadequacy of the mediation process. The success or failure of mediation can be delineated by two primary parameters: the educational background and income level of the involved parties. Several factors impede the smooth execution of the mediation process. The absence of parties, coupled with their limited willingness to reconcile due to the heightened acrimony in their disputes, as well as the considerable ego factor among the parties, are significant obstacles. Furthermore, the dearth of professional mediators specialized in the mediation process further hinders the effectiveness of mediation. In contrast, the success of mediation hinges on the willingness of the parties to reconcile and the availability of well-equipped facilities and infrastructure at the Purworejo Religious Court.

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COMPETING INTEREST

The authors of this research article declare no competing interests.

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