

The Roles of Marriage Counseling and Mediation in Domestic Conflict Resolution: A Comparative Study

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRAK
Volume: 4 ISSN: 2963-5489 KEYWORDS Marriage counseling, Mediation Counseling,	Conflicts that occur between husband and wife are unavoidable. However, not all households can solve their problems privately, which results in prolonged conflicts that affect the harmony of husband and wife. Marriage counseling and mediation counseling can be an effort to resolve conflicts or disputes between married couples by involving other parties. However, the two counseling have significant differences. Therefore, this study aims to discuss the different roles of marriage counseling and mediation counseling in an effort to resolve household conflicts. This research uses a qualitative approach and literature study method that uses books, journals and official articles as data sources. With this approach, it can provide more in-depth information and readers can better understand the differences between marriage counseling and mediation counseling.

1. Introduction

Problems or conflicts are very common in every human being who has a life. However, not all humans can overcome their own problems so they need the help of an expert to help overcome them. And so it is in the household life of a husband and wife. Which of course has the hope that the marriage that is lived becomes a happy family by having a good emotional relationship or intimacy. Because a good emotional relationship between family members is a foundation that can strengthen household harmony. The harmony that is formed makes the marriage a quality one. Marriage is said to be of quality if it forms an atmosphere of mutual love, full of love, mutually committed, has a bond with each other and supports each other. But conflict is inevitable during married life. Husband and wife can be in conflict due to differences, dissatisfaction, infidelity, or financial circumstances.

Domestic conflicts that occur between married couples are generally caused by personality incompatibility or differences in their habits or cultures. And some studies have found that economic circumstances are one of the factors that cause internal conflict between household couples. In addition, in today's digital era, it is found that infidelity is the cause of household conflicts that are rampant in society. Prolonged household conflict can lead to separation or divorce. So handling problems or conflicts in a household is very necessary to do before divorce occurs. Families who have not been able to resolve their household conflicts personally can seek direction or counseling from other parties. Special household counseling is different from counseling conducted for individuals because the target of guidance is family members. Therefore, counseling for husband and wife couples can be divided into marriage counseling and mediation counseling. Therefore, this research will focus on the discussion related to the different roles of marriage counseling and mediation counseling on household conflict resolution.

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2. Literature Review

Counseling is a process of directing or guiding someone who is experiencing conflict, so that the individual can overcome the conflict he is experiencing starting with recognizing himself, then understanding and ending with directing himself. According to Casmini, counseling conducted by married couples can help them to explore the problems they face and find constructive solutions. Marriage counseling is a guidance process carried out by a counselor to married couples who have conflicts in their household relationships. With the aim that married couples can understand and find solutions to the conflicts they face. In addition, marriage counseling also aims to be a means of rebuilding the harmony of married couples. Meanwhile, mediation consultation is a process that involves a mediator as a neutral third party who facilitates discussions between the two parties of a husband and wife who are experiencing conflict. Mediation counseling aims to help both parties reach a mutual agreement.

In research conducted by Reizki Maharani, et al (2025) shows that one of the efforts made to overcome household conflicts that have the potential to divorce is to conduct marriage counseling. The study shows that marriage counseling is one of the solutions to prevent or overcome household problems or conflicts. The services provided not only provide space to talk about problems, but also provide strategies and tools to improve the couple's relationship. Meanwhile, research conducted by Muh Takdir, et al (2023) shows that mediation consultation conducted at the Religious Court is a program that is a rare start to reconcile conflicting couples. So that mediation consultation can be said to be an alternative to finding solutions for parties who are experiencing conflict. Previous research on this issue has focused more on marriage consultation or mediation consultation only, while no other research has been found regarding the discussion of the differences between the two. So there are research opportunities to explore these issues.

3. Methodology

A qualitative approach is the approach used in this research with literature study as the method. The reason is that this method makes it possible for researchers to analyze more deeply related to marriage consultation and mediation consultation through related data sources. Literature studies used as data sources include books, journals and official articles relevant to the topic. By collecting all data related to marriage consultation and mediation consultation, significant differences can be found even though they are based on the same goal, namely to overcome or provide solutions to household conflicts experienced by married couples.

4. Results and Discussion

Marriage is a physical and spiritual bond shared by a man and woman as husband and wife with the intention of forming a happy family forever. However, during married life it is not always filled with happiness, conflicts between married couples often occur. Some households can overcome these problems or conflicts privately. But not a few households cannot overcome their conflicts, so the conflicts become prolonged and continue to accumulate. Prolonged conflict can lead to separation or divorce. So to anticipate this, it is advisable to get counseling from an expert either a counselor for consultation sessions or a mediator for mediation sessions. In general, counseling means the activity of giving direction to individuals who have problems of their own accord. In the counseling process, the client will be directed as much as possible to develop the potential of his mind and soul so that he can overcome the life problems experienced. And counseling that is oriented towards married couples is called marriage counseling.

Marriage counseling is a form of professional assistance process for husbands and wives, either personally or in pairs by reviewing the household system as a whole and developing towards a well adjusted person, so that the social system of household life becomes harmonious and functional again. The purpose of marriage counseling according to Huff and Miller is to increase empathy and self-awareness between couples, release awareness and strengths and potentials, couples can be open to each other, provide solutions for a more intimate relationship, improve communication skills, solve problems that are happening between couples, and improve husband and wife skills to be able to manage conflicts. All the goals of marriage

counseling do not escape the role of an expert called a counselor. Counselors must meet certain requirements to be categorized as appropriate counselors in dealing with clients. Formally, a counselor must have an educational background in guidance and counseling, psychology or the like. In addition, they have attended training and have official certificates, have become members of related professional organizations, and can work in accordance with professional and legal codes of ethics. These requirements are of course balanced with the great role that must be carried out when the counseling procession occurs.

In marriage counseling, the counselor acts as an advisor, leader, counseling facilitator, educator, interpersonal interaction model, communicator, counselor, and cultural broker. This means that the counselor genuinely improves the relationship between husband and wife by directing and partnering with the couple. Then actively facilitates the implementation of marriage counseling with a feeling of fun, freedom, mutual help, and a pleasant meeting of opinions and personalities. In the counseling procession, a counselor acts as a teacher who teaches the couple about things that are expected and needed inside and outside the counseling situation or teaches the client's role and function in the family setting. The counselor always puts himself in a neutral position or does not judge and does not give negative nicknames to clients, so that he always bridges communication and interprets messages from husbands or wives. And in accordance with the purpose of the consultation, of course, the counselor acts like an expert who helps the husband and wife to overcome the conflicts they experience in family life. If the family problem is about culture or custom, then the counselor helps the couple negotiate the cultural conflict with the larger culture outside of married life.

Marriage counseling will be conducted using couple therapy method, which is a type of psychotherapy that aims to improve the relationship between husband and wife in conflict. Types of couple therapy such as emotionally focused therapy (EFT), Gottman method, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), Imago relationship therapy, integrative behavioral couple therapy (IBCT). Emotionally focused therapy (EFT) is a therapy that can help couples understand the shape or their emotional response and how it can affect their domestic relationship. Gottman's method focuses more on building a healthy relationship with good communication, conflict resolution, and emotional connection. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a therapy that focuses on recognizing the negative thought patterns and behaviors of the husband and wife, and how to correct them. Imago relationship therapy can lead clients to understand their past experiences and how to overcome things from the past that have affected relationships in adulthood. And integrative behavioral couple therapy (IBCT) is a therapy that can help couples understand and accept each other's differences and work to change the problematic behavior.

Based on the above explanation of marriage counseling, couples can use marriage counseling to resolve disputes or conflicts if the couple wishes to improve and strengthen their emotional and psychological relationship. However, if the relationship between husband and wife is seriously fractured due to conflict and the couple is in the process of divorce or wants to avoid divorce, then mediation counseling can be an effort that can be made. The term mediation can be interpreted as an intermediary, so mediation counseling is a process of mediating or connecting two different conditions or two parties that were originally separated to become connected again. In other words, mediation counseling is a direction carried out by a mediator as a third party to bridge the parties in conflict, especially in this discussion is a husband and wife couple. Mediation is generally divided into formal and informal mediation or other terms litigation (court) and non-litigation (alternative dispute resolution).

Litigation or formal mediation is a mediation process that is part of a series of dispute resolution in court, so that the provision of mediation becomes an obligation that must be carried out. Meanwhile, non-litigation mediation is a voluntary mediation process between two conflicting parties with a mediator as a neutral third party without any connection to court procedures. The mediator is a neutral party who assists the conflicting parties in the negotiation process to find possibilities for dispute resolution without coercion. A mediator is the planner and organizer of mediation services, so it is necessary to explore the problems that occur and provide the best solution that can be agreed upon by the parties to the dispute. And for couples whose relationship is on the verge of separation can cancel their desire to separate.

The appointment of a mediator as a neutral third party in the mediation counseling process depends on the type of mediation being conducted. If the formal mediation is conducted in a court or mediation service institution, then based on article 1(2) of Perma 1 year 2016, the mediator in charge of mediation counseling is a judge or a party who has a mediator certificate. But if the mediation counseling conducted is informal mediation, then the appointment of the mediator is not bound by formal rules. So that the mediator who becomes a neutral third party can be a traditional leader, a family leader, a community leader, or a professional. The professional in question is one who has a certificate as well as a psychologist or counselor. Professional parties can be mediators in both formal and informal mediation.

5. Conclusion

Marriage consultation and mediation consultation generally have similarities such as the need for another party who directs or can bridge the conflicted couple and a counselor can be another party in marriage consultation and mediation. However, what makes the difference is that the party called a counselor for marriage consultation must be an expert in the field such as a psychologist or who has received similar education. Whereas the mediator depends on the mediation being conducted, if it is formal then it must be a judge, a professional or one who has a certificate. But the mediator for informal mediation is not bound to professionals, but to figures who are considered capable of being a neutral third party by the parties to the dispute such as traditional leaders, family leaders or community leaders. Another similarity is that both counseling have the aim of reconciling and providing the best solution to the problems that occur between the couples. While the difference is the process that occurs during counseling, the role of the counselor during marriage counseling is more when compared to a mediator. Marriage counseling aims to re-harmonize the married couple, improve the relationship and personality of each party. Mediation counseling aims to reconcile conflicting couples who are on the verge of divorce with the aim of reconciling or divorcing on good terms, providing a win-win solution that is acceptable to both parties to the dispute.

Marriage counseling is suitable as an effort to resolve household conflicts, if the couple wishes to improve their domestic life, increase harmony and cure each other's negative deeds and can overcome further conflicts if they occur independently. But if the problems that occur between married couples are severe that cause the couple to divorce or at that time are taking care of divorce, then mediation counseling can be sought to resolve the dispute between the two. This research still has so many shortcomings and provides opportunities for further researchers to discuss it more deeply.

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