

Community Empowerment: Enhancing the Role of Families in Dealing with Domestic Conflicts

¹Habib Huhsin Syafingi, ²Hary Abdul Hakim, ³Meivialora, ⁴Ardi Kusna Fianto, ⁵Aryudha Ilham Ramadhan Prayoga, and ⁶Krisna Mukti

^{1,2,4,5,6}Universitas Muhammadiyah Magelang

³Advokad Kantor Hukum & Mediasi MS

*Corresponding author email: habibmuhcin@ummgl.ac.id

Abstract

Domestic conflict is a social phenomenon inseparable from the dynamics of family life and has the potential to disrupt family harmony and functioning if not managed constructively. This study aims to analyze the increasing role of families in managing domestic conflict with stress on the experiences, meanings, and social processes experienced by family members. The study used a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method to explore the lived experiences of families in managing domestic conflict. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews, limited observations, and supporting documentation of families who have experienced or are currently experiencing domestic conflict in the Mertoyudan area. Research participants were selected purposively with the criteria of direct involvement in the conflict resolution process. The results show that domestic conflict is understood as a relational process that develops gradually, influenced by economic pressures, ineffective communication, and emotional accumulation. These findings strengthen the perspective of family systems theory and family resilience by positioning the family as an active subject in conflict management. This research highlights the importance of strengthening internal family capacity through family-based communication and conflict resolution education.

Submitted:

Oktober 16, 2025

Accepted:

November 29, 2025

Published:

December 31, 2025

This work is licensed
under a Creative
Commons Attribution-
NonCommercial 4.0
International License

Keyword

Domestic Conflict, Family Roles, Family Communication, Family Resilience

Abstrak

Konflik rumah tangga merupakan fenomena sosial yang tidak terpisahkan dari dinamika kehidupan keluarga dan berpotensi mengganggu keharmonisan serta keberfungsian keluarga apabila tidak dikelola secara konstruktif. Pemberdayaan masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan peran keluarga dalam menangani konflik rumah tangga. Pemberdayaan ini dilaksanakan dengan metode fenomenologi untuk menggali pengalaman hidup keluarga dalam mengelola konflik domestik. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam semi terstruktur, observasi terbatas, dan dokumentasi pendukung terhadap keluarga yang pernah atau sedang mengalami konflik rumah tangga di wilayah Mertoyudan. Partisipan pemberdayaan dipilih secara purposive dengan kriteria keterlibatan langsung dalam proses penyelesaian konflik. Hasil pemberdayaan menunjukkan bahwa konflik rumah tangga dipahami sebagai proses relasional yang berkembang secara bertahap, dipengaruhi oleh tekanan ekonomi, komunikasi yang tidak efektif, dan akumulasi emosi. Temuan ini memperkuat perspektif teori sistem keluarga dan ketahanan keluarga dengan menempatkan keluarga sebagai subjek aktif dalam pengelolaan konflik. Pemberdayaan ini berimplikasi pada pentingnya penguatan kapasitas internal keluarga melalui pendidikan komunikasi dan resolusi konflik berbasis keluarga.

Kata Kunci

Konflik Rumah Tangga, Peran Keluarga, Komunikasi Keluarga, Ketahanan Keluarga

Introduction

Domestic conflict is a social phenomenon that is inseparable from the dynamics of family life and has a broad impact on individual well-being and the social functioning of the family. Conflict does not always take the form of physical violence or open hostility, but often manifests as emotional tension, miscommunication, and unequal relationships between family members. Such conflicts often develop latently and drag on because they are not

managed constructively. Therefore, domestic conflict needs to be understood as a meaningful social process, not merely as a legal event or a private family matter.¹

In recent years, domestic conflicts have received increasing attention as awareness of mental health, the importance of healthy family relationships, and the protection of vulnerable groups has grown. Various studies show that unresolved family conflicts contribute to an increase in divorce, psychological disorders, and social instability.² Changes in family structure, economic pressures, and shifting cultural values further compound the complexity of these conflicts. In the Indonesian national context, domestic conflicts are also a dominant factor in family cases in the judicial system, although most conflicts are not formally recorded because they are resolved informally within the family or community.³

Domestic conflicts are also evident at the local level, particularly in Banyurojo Village, Mertoyudan Subdistrict, Magelang Regency. Based on field observations and assistance reports, domestic conflicts in this area are generally triggered by communication problems, economic pressures, and unequal roles within the family. Many families choose to keep conflicts as internal matters because they are considered a social disgrace that should not be discussed openly. As a result, conflicts are often not resolved completely, potentially causing further impacts on the emotional well-being of family members.⁴

The role of the family, especially the role of the mother, is central in dealing with domestic conflicts. Mothers are often positioned as guardians of emotional stability, mediators of conflict, and the ones who strive to maintain communication and harmony within the family. This role is often carried out through a willingness to compromise and control emotions,

¹ Muh Ansar, Ria Komariyatus, and Moh Nasir, "Berbagai Masalah Keluarga : Masalah Komunikasi" 4, no. 1 (2024): 9–15.

² Ni Made and Noviyanti Mayatika, "Efektivitas Komunikasi Pasangan Bekerja Dalam Mengatasi Konflik Rumah Tangga Untuk Tercapainya ' Work Family Balance ' Di Kelurahan Tanjung Karang Mataram" 2024, 2302–15.

³ Rani Farida et al., "Urgensi Komunikasi Interpersonal Dalam Mewujudkan Keluarga Sakinah : Studi Tentang Peran Komunikasi Suami Istri Dalam Penyelesaian Konflik Rumah Tangga" 23, no. 2 (2025): 383–96.

⁴ Irene Shinta Maheswari, Agus Naryoso, And Primada Qurrota Ayun, "Komunikasi Keluarga Untuk Mengatasi Konflik Interpersonal Antara Remaja Dan Orang Tua Sambung," 2025.

even when faced with limited support and high psychological burdens.⁵ This situation indicates that the resolution of domestic conflicts is, in fact, largely placed on women without adequate structural support.⁶

The MS Mediation and Legal Consulting Office acts as the main partner that directly handles domestic conflicts in the community. Based on case reports, assistance, and initial observations, the conflicts handled by partners are not only related to legal aspects, but also concern emotional and social issues within the family. Most clients come when the conflict has been going on for quite some time and is at a complex stage. The conflict resolution approach that has been used so far still tends to be oriented towards procedures and the final outcome of the resolution, so it does not fully address the experience and meaning of the conflict from the family's perspective.⁷

Strengthening the role of the family is seen as a key factor in dealing with domestic conflicts constructively and sustainably. Family counseling and mediation programs are considered more effective when they are based on an understanding of the real experiences, emotions, and internal dynamics of the family.⁸ However, most studies and counseling practices still focus on formal conflict resolution and have not explored the internal processes of families in interpreting and managing conflict. This condition shows a consistency in studies of domestic conflict, particularly empowerment that emphasizes the meaning, experiences, and social processes of families as active subjects.⁹

This empowerment focuses on enhancing the role of families, especially mothers, in handling domestic conflicts. It aims to explore the experiences, meanings, and social

⁵ Devina Putri Anggreini, "Ketahanan Keluarga Pada Pasangan Suami Istri Disabilitas Sensorik Di Kota Semarang" 5 (2023): 47–57.

⁶ Markus Y Hage, "Corrective Justice And Its Significance On The Private Law" 7, no. 1 (2022): 1–30.

⁷ Jolf John Tendean et al., "Strategi Adaptif Dalam Meredakan Konflik Keluarga Jolf" 1, no. 2 (2023): 31–45.

⁸ Made and Mayatika, "Efektivitas Komunikasi Pasangan Bekerja Dalam Mengatasi Konflik Rumah Tangga Untuk Tercapainya ' Work Family Balance ' Di Kelurahan Tanjung Karang Mataram" In Tanjung Karang Mataram Village."

⁹ Rustam Latupono, La Jamaa, and Abubakar Kabakoran, "Penyelesaian Konflik Dalam Rumah Tangga Studi Kasus Penyebab Perceraian Di Kota Ambon" no. c (2023): 67–81.

processes experienced by families in the context of domestic conflict assistance in Banyurojo Village. Theoretically, this empowerment contributes to strengthening the study of domestic conflict based on family system theory and family resilience. Practically, the findings of this empowerment are expected to form the basis for the development of a more reflective, contextual, and capacity-building approach to family assistance.

Method

This community empowerment activity began with a series of preparations focused on planning and organizing activities in the field. The entire process was carried out collaboratively between the team of students from Muhammadiyah University Magelang (UNIMMA) and implementing partners from the MS Mediation & Legal Consulting Office, with the support of the Banyurojo Village Government, Mertoyudan District, Magelang Regency.

The preparation stage began with initial coordination with partners and village officials. At this stage, the team held an official meeting at the MS Mediation & Legal Consulting Office to formulate the activities, determine the focus of empowerment, and agree on the roles of each party. The meeting was followed by an initial field visit to Banyurojo Village to identify the social conditions of the community, especially families who had experienced domestic conflicts.

Next, problem mapping and identification of community needs were carried out. The team and its partners collected preliminary data through brief interviews with community leaders and several housewives. The interviews revealed that most domestic conflicts in this area were caused by miscommunication, economic pressure, and differences in perception in family decision-making. This mapping became the basis for the preparation of materials and activity approaches to suit the real needs of the community.

The next stage was the preparation of an activity plan and the division of tasks among team members. Students were responsible for preparing educational materials, creating interview instruments, and documenting activities. Meanwhile, the MS Mediation & Legal

Consulting Office prepared resource persons and practitioners who would provide direct training on mediation techniques and non-litigation conflict resolution.

During this preparatory stage, field interview guidelines and observation sheets were also prepared, containing a list of questions to explore the experiences of housewives in dealing with family conflicts. These guidelines were compiled so that the interview and observation process in the field would be focused and respectful of the participants' privacy.

In addition, the team also prepared the facilities and infrastructure for the activity, such as a meeting room at the Banyurojo Village Hall, documentation equipment, presentation materials, and logistical needs for participants. All preparations were carried out in a planned manner so that the field practice activities could run smoothly, interactively, and according to the agreed schedule.

All of these preparatory stages are an important foundation before the implementation of activities in the field. Through this process, the implementation team gained a comprehensive understanding of the social context of the community, the characteristics of the participants, and the patterns of conflict that occur in the family environment. Thus, the practical activities that will be carried out are not only ceremonial in nature, but are truly tailored to the needs of the community and can have a real impact on improving the ability of families to manage domestic conflicts peacefully and amicably.

Results and Discussion

Initial Discussion and Mapping of Family Issues

The first activity was an initial discussion aimed at mapping mothers' understanding of domestic conflict and the role of the family in dealing with it (Figure 1). This activity was carried out using a dialogical and participatory approach, so that participants could openly share their experiences and views. The results of the activity showed that most mothers viewed domestic conflict as normal, but often did not discuss it openly because it was considered a private family matter.

Conflicts are generally triggered by economic pressures, differences of opinion between husbands and wives, and a lack of effective communication. The discussion also revealed that mothers tend to take on the role of emotional buffer and guardian of family harmony, even if it means sacrificing their own feelings. The findings of this activity reinforce the issue raised in the introduction that domestic conflict is still latent and its resolution is largely left to women without adequate support.



Figure 1. Initial discussion on mapping family issues

In-depth Interviews with Women in Banyurojo Village

The second activity consisted of semi-structured in-depth interviews with women residents of Banyurojo Village (Figure 2). The interviews were conducted to explore their personal experiences, perceptions, and challenges in carrying out their family roles during domestic conflicts. The interview results showed that women play a very dominant role in maintaining the emotional stability of the family.

Mothers act as mediators of conflict, managers of emotions, and parties who try to keep communication going. However, these roles are often carried out under limited conditions, whether in terms of economics, time, or support from spouses. In addition, the interviews also revealed that local cultural norms of pressure and submissiveness also influence the way mothers deal with conflict. This condition shows an imbalance of roles in the family that has the potential to cause psychological burdens for mothers.



Figure 2. In-depth Interviews with Women in Banyurojo Village

Outreach and Group Discussion Activities on Strengthening the Role of the Family

The third activity consisted of outreach and group discussions focused on raising mothers' awareness of the importance of healthy communication, emotional management, and role sharing within the family (Figure 3). This activity was designed as a space for shared learning and collective reflection.

The results of the activity showed a change in the participants' views on domestic conflict. The mothers began to realize that conflicts can be managed more constructively through open communication and emotional support among family members. The discussion groups also encouraged solidarity and mutual support among the participants. This activity not only served as a means of education, but also as a form of social intervention relevant to the needs of the village community, as expected in the objectives of community service.



Figure 3. Counseling and Group Discussions on Strengthening the Role of the Family

Results of Community Service

Overall, the results of community service show that the activities carried out were able to increase mothers' awareness of the importance of the family's role in dealing with domestic conflicts. Mothers not only understand conflict as an individual problem, but also as a social phenomenon that requires environmental support and healthy communication.

The results of these activities show that strengthening the role of the family can be done through a community-based participatory approach. This community service provides practical contributions in the form of increasing mothers' capacity to manage conflict, as well as theoretical contributions in understanding domestic conflict from a local perspective and based on women's experiences.

Conclusion

The results of the community service activities show that a participatory approach through group discussions, in-depth interviews, and counseling can increase mothers' awareness of the importance of strengthening the role of the family in managing conflict constructively. These activities not only produced new understanding, but also built solidarity and social support among mothers as important capital in strengthening family resilience at the village level.

This empowerment contributes to the enrichment of studies on domestic conflict by presenting a community-based perspective and women's experiences in the context of rural socio-culture. In practical terms, the empowerment findings emphasize the importance of family empowerment programs that focus on improving communication skills, emotional management, and more equitable role sharing within families. From a policy perspective, these results indicate the need for continued support from village governments and relevant stakeholders in the form of family assistance programs that are sensitive to local dynamics.

References

Anggreini, Devina Putri. "Ketahanan Keluarga Pada Pasangan Suami Istri Disabilitas Sensorik Di Kota Semarang" 5 (2023): 47–57.

- Ansar, Muh, Ria Komariyatus, and Moh Nasir. "Berbagai Masalah Keluarga : Masalah Komunikasi" 4, no. 1 (2024): 9–15.
- Farida, Rani, Raya Rambu Rabbani, Hukum Keluarga Islam, Universitas Nahdlatul, and Ulama Indonesia. "Urgensi Komunikasi Interpersonal Dalam Mewujudkan Keluarga Sakinah : Studi Tentang Peran Komunikasi Suami Istri Dalam Penyelesaian Konflik Rumah Tangga" 23, no. 2 (2025): 383–96.
- Hage, Markus Y. "Corrective Justice And Its Significance On The Private Law" 7, no. 1 (2022): 1–30.
- Latupono, Rustam, La Jamaa, and Abubakar Kabakoran. "Penyelesaian Konflik Dalam Rumah Tangga Studi Kasus Penyebab Perceraian Di Kota Ambon," no. c (2023): 67–81.
- Made, Ni, and Noviyanti Mayatika. "Efektivitas Komunikasi Pasangan Bekerja Dalam Mengatasi Konflik Rumah Tangga Untuk Tercapainya ' Work Family Balance ' Di Kelurahan Tanjung Karang Mataram" 2024, 2302–15.
- Maheswari, Irene Shinta, Agus Naryoso, and Primada Qurrota Ayun. "Komunikasi Keluarga Untuk Mengatasi Konflik Interpersonal Antara Remaja Dan Orang Tua Sambung," 2025.
- Tendean, Jolf John, Janes Sinaga, Nainggolan, Sarwedy, Sinambela, and Juita Lusiana. "Strategi Adaptif Dalam Meredakan Konflik Keluarga Jolf" 1, no. 2 (2023): 31–45.



This work is licensed under [a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)