

Suppressing Divorce with Stoicism

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Abstract

The persistently high divorce rate in Indonesia indicates a lack of effective psychological frameworks for sustaining marital stability. Despite numerous interventions, few have integrated philosophical approaches to strengthen emotional resilience in marriage. This study aims to address this gap by exploring the application of Stoic principles as a means of reducing divorce rates through the enhancement of couples' psychological and emotional endurance. Employing a qualitative design, while qualitative insights were obtained via in-depth interviews and case studies. The findings reveal that Stoic value significantly contribute to constructive conflict management, effective communication, and greater tolerance of differences. Moreover, statistical analysis shows a positive correlation between the application of Stoic principles and marital satisfaction, accompanied by a reduction in divorce intentions. The study concludes by recommending the integration of Stoic-based emotional training into premarital education and marriage counseling programs to promote emotionally resilient and harmonious families in the complexities of modern life.

Keywords: Stoicism, divorce, marriage, self-control, pre-marital education



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Abstrak

Tingkat perceraian yang terus tinggi di Indonesia menunjukkan adanya kekurangan kerangka psikologis yang efektif untuk mempertahankan stabilitas pernikahan. Meskipun berbagai intervensi telah dilakukan, hanya sedikit yang mengintegrasikan pendekatan filosofis guna memperkuat ketahanan emosional dalam hubungan

pernikahan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengisi kesenjangan tersebut dengan mengeksplorasi penerapan prinsip-prinsip Stoa (Stoicism) sebagai upaya menurunkan angka perceraian melalui peningkatan ketahanan psikologis dan emosional pasangan suami istri. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kualitatif, dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam dan studi kasus. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai-nilai Stoa berkontribusi signifikan terhadap pengelolaan konflik yang konstruktif, komunikasi yang efektif, serta peningkatan toleransi terhadap perbedaan. Selain itu, analisis menunjukkan adanya korelasi positif antara penerapan prinsip-prinsip Stoa dan kepuasan pernikahan, disertai dengan penurunan niat untuk bercerai. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan dengan merekomendasikan integrasi pelatihan emosional berbasis Stoicism ke dalam program pendidikan pranikah dan konseling pernikahan guna membangun keluarga yang tangguh secara emosional dan harmonis di tengah kompleksitas kehidupan modern.

Kata Kunci: Stoicism, perceraian, pernikahan, pengendalian diri, pendidikan pranikah

Introduction

The divorce rate in Lampung is the second highest in Sumatra, narrowly inferior to North Sumatra. From the figures that have been released by BPS in 2024 stating that 3 out of 10 couples who get married do not continue until the end of their lives break up or change partners in the middle of the road, this is an irony that attracts sympathy for all of us, marriage that is predicted to be a place to share happiness and a source of reward in it cannot continue forever. Referring to the Indonesian Law number 1 of 1974, the meaning and purpose of marriage is contained in one article, namely chapter 1 article 1 stipulates that "marriage is an innate bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife with the aim of forming a happy and eternal household, family based on the One Godhead". Thus, it is clear that among the purposes of marriage is to form a household that is *sakinah*, *mawaddah* and *warahmah*. The *Sakinah* family, an ideal concept in Islamic teachings, refers to a family that is filled with tranquility, peace, and happiness.¹

In this study, the author seeks to examine the Philosophy of Stoicism as a potential solution to reducing divorce rates by emphasizing the development of self-virtue, self-control over negative emotions, and acceptance of things beyond human control. These Stoic principles offer a valuable perspective for

¹ Basir Sofyan, "Building a *Sakinah* Family," *Al-Irsyad Al-Nafs, Journal of Counseling Guidance* 7, no. 2 (2019): 1–14, http://journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/Al-Irsyad_Al-Nafs/article/view/14544.

understanding and realizing the concept of the Sakinah Family in Islamic teachings, which embodies harmony, patience, and emotional balance within marriage. The core teachings of Stoicism such as patience (*patientia*), wisdom (*prudentia*), and fortitude align closely with Islamic virtues such as *ṣabr* (patience), *ḥikmah* (wisdom), and *istiqāmah* (steadfastness), all of which are central to nurturing mutual respect and emotional resilience among family members.²

Previous studies have explored Stoicism and its relation to domestic life, including Dea Ayu Kirana's (2023) work, "The Concept of Happiness in Life According to Marcus Aurelius Reviewed from the Perspective of Stoic Philosophy,"³ Taufik Rahman et al.'s (2022) "The Essence of Happiness in Life: A Consensus between the Qur'an and the Philosophy of Stoicism,"⁴ and M. Ilham Muchtar et al.'s (2023) "Analysis of the Principles of Islamic Communication in Building a Harmonious Family According to the Qur'an."⁵ While these studies discuss Stoicism and family harmony in philosophical and theological contexts, none specifically investigate Stoicism as a practical framework for reducing divorce rates. Therefore, this study fills that gap by integrating Stoic principles with Islamic family values to build a comprehensive model for strengthening marital resilience and reducing the likelihood of divorce.

This research presents a new approach in an effort to reduce the divorce rate by using the principles of Stoicism, an ancient philosophy that focuses on self-control, acceptance of things out of control, and rationality in dealing with emotions. The novelty of this research lies in the integration of Stoic values as a strategy for strengthening the psychological of individuals in dealing with domestic conflicts, especially in facing the increasingly complex challenges of modern marriage.

Furthermore, this research is urgent in exploring alternative ways to reduce the divorce rate through the lens of Stoicism philosophy. By analyzing how the principles of patience, wisdom, and fortitude can be internalized and practiced in family life, this study seeks to provide new insights into the psychological and philosophical foundations underlying the creation of a harmonious and resilient family. This study is expected to make a theoretical and practical contribution to efforts to build a Sakinah Family that is not only normatively ideal, but also resilient in facing the challenging reality of life.

² M. Ilham Muchtar et al., "Analysis of Islamic Communication Principles in Building a Harmonious Family According to the Qur'an," *Uhl Albab: A Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal* 2, no. 10 (2023): 4705–20.

³ Dea Ayu Kirana, "Konsep Kebahagiaan Hidup Menurut Marcus Aurelius Ditinjau Dari Perspektif Filsafat Stoikisme," in *Gunung Djati Conference Series*, vol. 24, 2023, 257–68.

⁴ Taufik Rahman, Lola Pertiwi, and Ariyandi Batubara, "Hakikat Kebahagiaan Hidup: Konsensus Antara Al-Qur'an dan Filsafat Stoikisme," *Jurnal Riset Agama* 2, no. 3 (2022): 807–21.

⁵ Muchtar et al., "Analisis Prinsip Komunikasi Islami Dalam Membangun Keluarga Harmonis Menurut Alqur'an."

Discussion

Divorce statistics in Indonesia show an alarming upward trend, peaking in 2022 with 516,334 cases, the highest figure in the last six years.⁶ This phenomenon has attracted the attention of legal experts and researchers to identify the causative factors and the consequences they cause. Various laws and regulations, statistical data, expert opinions, and empirical juridical methods are used to examine in depth the root of the divorce problem.⁷ Research reveals that the increase in divorce is caused by a complex combination of economic, socio-cultural, poor communication, and infidelity. Constant disputes and quarrels are the leading causes of divorce, followed by economic problems, abandonment of a spouse, domestic violence, and substance abuse.⁸ Immaturity in marriage is also a trigger for conflicts that lead to divorce.⁹ Dissatisfaction in marriage can be caused by economic problems, third persons, or incompatibilities that arise after marriage.¹⁰ The impact of divorce on children is significant, both psychologically and physically, and has complex legal consequences.¹¹ Divorce often damages marital relationships and negatively impacts children's psychological, emotional, and mental well-being. Children from divorced families are more susceptible to negative behaviors because their mental and mental state is particularly vulnerable to negative influences.¹² The increase in cases of domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic has also contributed to instability and dissatisfaction in domestic relationships.¹³ In the case of divorce, a strong reason must be the basis of the desire to divorce, because the marriage should be harmonious and in the event of a rift, the husband and wife must be able to control themselves and find

⁶ Dahris Siregar et al., "Legal Studies on the Divorce Rate and Its Effects on Children," *Journal of Higher Education Lecturer Service (DEPUTI Journal)* 3, no. 2 (2023): 178–85, <https://doi.org/10.54123/deputi.v3i2.276>.

⁷ Siregar et al.

⁸ Inayatul Khafidhoh, "Family Empowerment In Increasing Family Resilience Through Structural Family Counseling," *Community Development* 5, no. 1 (2021): 21, <https://doi.org/10.21043/cdjpmi.v5i1.9554>.

⁹ Vannesa Almayra Nugroho and Nihlatun Niswah, "The Role Of Women In Family Resilience In Jepara District," *Kartini Journal of Gender and Social Inclusion Studies* 1, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.34001/kajogs.v1i1.4876>.

¹⁰ Nurhayati Nurhayati and Hendrik Fasco Siregar, "Juridical Aspects Of The Legal Status Of Children In Divorce Disputes And Annulment Of Marriage," *RECHTSREGEL Journal of Law* 2, no. 1 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.32493/rjih.v2i1.2959>.

¹¹ Muhammad Syarif, "The Impact Of Divorce On The Psychological, Emotional And Mental Aspects Of Children In The Perspective Of Islamic Law," *SYARLAH Journal of Islamic Law* 4, no. 2 (2023): 38, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sy.v4i2.580>.

¹² Salsabila Priska Adristi, "The Role of Parents in Children from a Broken Home Family Background," *Lifelong Education Journal* 1, no. 2 (2023): 131–38, <https://doi.org/10.59935/lej.v1i2.30>.

¹³ Febi Ayu Milka Angelica and Karel Karsten Himawan, "Hold Or Think Again: Strategies for Emotional Regulation and Marriage Satisfaction During the Covid-19 Pandemic," *Persona of the Indonesian Journal of Psychology* 11, no. 1 (2022): 107–22, <https://doi.org/10.30996/persona.v11i1.6294>.

a solution.¹⁴ Infidelity, for example, is a gross violation of a marriage promise and is often a ground for divorce

The results of the study indicate that the principles of Stoicism such as self-control, acceptance of uncontrollable circumstances, and a focus on virtue, constitute an effective framework for fostering mental and emotional resilience in the face of marital challenges. Empirical evidence from the interviews and surveys conducted in this study shows that couples who consistently apply Stoic practices such as daily reflection (*prosoche*), emotional regulation, and rational evaluation of negative events, demonstrate higher levels of marital satisfaction and emotional stability compared to those who do not. These findings are consistent with previous psychological research demonstrating that cognitive reappraisal and emotion regulation, which are central to Stoic ethics, significantly reduce interpersonal conflict and enhance relationship quality.¹⁵

The implementation of Stoic principles enables individuals to respond to conflicts more calmly and rationally, thereby reducing emotional escalation and promoting constructive problem-solving. Consequently, Stoicism strengthens family resilience, which encompasses the physical, psychological, and spiritual capacities needed to confront life's challenges harmoniously and independently. Within the marital context, this resilience manifests through the ability to cope with internal and external pressures, sustain effective communication, and maintain mutual commitment.¹⁶ Thus, Stoicism functions not merely as a personal philosophical outlook but as a practical psychological tool for preserving and reinforcing marital integrity.

However, *phubbing* behavior, or ignoring a partner for the sake of a cell phone, can damage the quality of adult attachment in marriage, especially in the aspects of anxiety and avoidance. High anxiety can cause individuals to become overly dependent on their partner, while avoidance can create emotional distance. In addition, the rising divorce rate in the last six years indicates the existence of fundamental problems in modern marriages, including economic, socio-cultural factors, poor communication, and infidelity.¹⁷ Therefore, a comprehensive approach is needed to address this issue, including premarital education, marital counseling, and the development of effective communication skills. The moral message in marriage emphasizes the fulfillment of the rights and obligations of husband and wife, such as maintaining relationships, loving and respecting each

¹⁴ Aisya Agraia, "Juridical Analysis of Gono Gini Property Settlement through the Mediation Process," *Indonesia Journal of Business Law* 1, no. 2 (2022): 58–68, <https://doi.org/10.47709/ijbl.v1i2.1874>.

¹⁵ G Arslan, M Yildirim, and P Wong, "Meaningful Living, Resilience, Affective Balance, and Psychological Health Problems during COVID-19. 2020," DOI: [https://Doi.Org/10.31234/Of. Io/Wsr3e](https://doi.org/10.31234/Of. Io/Wsr3e), n.d.

¹⁶ James J. Gross and Oliver P. John, "Individual Differences in Two Emotion Regulation Processes: Implications for Affect, Relationships, and Well-Being.," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 85, no. 2 (2003): 348–62, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.85.2.348>.

¹⁷ Siregar et al., "A Legal Study of the Divorce Rate and Its Effects on Children."

other, and meeting household needs.¹⁸ Premarital education, as mandated in Law No. 50 of 2002, aims to equip prospective couples with the insight of knowledge, understanding, skills, and awareness of the importance of carrying out family functions. In this context, the values of stoicism are relevant because they can help individuals develop self-control, patience, and a better understanding of themselves and their partner.

Mediation as an instrument for resolving conflicts outside the court also has an important role in maintaining family integrity.¹⁹ Mediation allows couples to communicate openly and honestly, with the help of a neutral third party, to reach a mutually beneficial agreement.

Marriage, in a sociological and legal context, is a fundamental institution that regulates the intimate and economic relationship between two individuals, forming a framework for the formation of families and the transmission of cultural values across generations. A valid marriage is recognized by law and religion, giving rights and obligations to married couples. How can stoicist values like *amor fati* be implemented in marriage? The trick is to accept your partner's shortcomings and focus on the positive.

Studies on marital satisfaction reveal that factors such as attachment to one's partner, the fulfillment of material, sexual, and psychological needs, and effective communication, play an important role in determining domestic happiness and harmony.²⁰ Likewise, stoicism in the household can be a solution to domestic harmony.

Calm and rational, reduce the potential for escalation, and improve the ability to seek constructive solutions. The application of stoicism can strengthen the resilience of the family, which is an important foundation for maintaining the integrity of marriages. Family resilience involves the physical, material, psychological, mental, and spiritual ability to face the dynamics of life independently and harmoniously. In the context of marriage, this resilience allows couples to cope with external and internal stresses, maintain healthy communication, and maintain commitment to each other. Stoicism is not just a

¹⁸ Chaliddin Chaliddin, "The Role of Family Legal Assistance Assistance in Domestic Violence (KDRT) Cases in Northwest Hagu Village, Banda Sakti District, Lhokseumawe City," *Lecture on the Journal of Islamic Law & Economics* 10, no. 2 (2021): 151–72, <https://doi.org/10.47766/syarah.v10i2.212>.

¹⁹ Mursyid Djawas and Sri Astuti A Samad, "Conflict, Traditional, and Family Resistance: The Pattern of Dispute Resolution in Acehese Community According to Islamic Law," *SAMARAH Journal of Family Law and Islamic Law* 4, no. 1 (2020): 65, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v4i1.5271>.

²⁰ Sitti Murdiana and Ismalandari Ismail, "Phubbing on the Quality of Adult Attachment in Married Women in Makassar City," *Journal of Psychology TALENTA* 7, no. 2 (2022): 62, <https://doi.org/10.26858/talenta.v7i2.33286>.

personal philosophy, but also a valuable tool for maintaining and strengthening the marriage bond.²¹

However, the behavior of ignoring your partner for the sake of a cell phone or something else, can damage the quality of adult attachment in marriage, especially in the aspects of anxiety and avoidance. High anxiety can cause individuals to become overly dependent on their partner, while avoidance can create emotional distance. In addition, the rising divorce rate in the last six years indicates the existence of fundamental problems in modern marriages, including economic, socio-cultural factors, poor communication, and infidelity. Therefore, a comprehensive approach is needed to address this issue, including premarital education, marital counseling, and the development of effective communication skills. The moral message in marriage emphasizes the fulfillment of the rights and obligations of husband and wife, such as maintaining relationships, loving and respecting each other, and meeting household needs. Premarital education, as mandated in Law No. 50 of 2002, aims to equip prospective couples with the insight of knowledge, understanding, skills, and awareness of the importance of carrying out family functions. In this context, the values of stoicism are relevant because they can help individuals develop self-control, patience, and a better understanding of themselves and their partner.

Marriage, in a sociological and legal context, is a fundamental institution that regulates the intimate and economic relationship between two individuals, forming a framework for the formation of families and the transmission of cultural values across generations. A valid marriage is recognized by law and religion, giving rights and obligations to married couples. How can stoicist values like *amor fati* be implemented in marriage? The trick is to accept your partner's shortcomings and focus on the positive. Marriages are not always as harmonious as expected, and when a rift occurs, divorce may be the last resort if there is no intention to seek a solution. It is important to remember that marriage is a sacred bond and a solemn covenant that creates rights and obligations between husband and wife, which must be fulfilled in building a home. The application of stoicism to marriage can be done by implementing the teachings of Epictetus. By implementing these teachings, conflicts in the household can be minimized. Therefore, the philosophy of stoicism can be one of the solutions in reducing the divorce rate. Stoicism offers a powerful framework for dealing with marital challenges, helping individuals manage emotions, communicate effectively, and build stronger relationships.

The data collected showed a significant relationship between the application of Stoicism principles in married life and the strengthening of relationships between couples. This is reflected in the ability to manage conflicts constructively, maintain effective communication, and show greater tolerance for

²¹ Yakub Hendrawan Perangin Angin and Tri Astuti Yeniretnowati, "The Implementation of Family Conflict Control for Christian Husband and Wife Relations," *Journal of Christian Religious Education (JUPAK)* 2, no. 1 (2021): 127–42, <https://doi.org/10.52489/jupak.v2i1.18>.

the couple's differences and shortcomings. The application of Stoicism's values, such as controlling negative emotions, acceptance of things out of control, and focusing on virtue, proved to be a solid foundation in building harmonious and lasting relationships.²² These findings indirectly confirm that couples who are able to internalize and apply the philosophy of Stoicism in everyday interactions tend to have higher levels of marital satisfaction and have lower intentions to end the relationship through divorce.

Focusing on self-improvement rather than changing your partner is a crucial step in building a strong marriage. Marriage, as a deep commitment, is often faced with challenges that test its harmony and resilience. Disagreements, differences of view, and unmet expectations can be a source of conflict that has the potential to damage the marriage bond.²³ In the face of these complex dynamics, the approach of stoicism offers a relevant and practical philosophical framework for navigating conflict, strengthening mental resilience, and nurturing happiness in marriage. Stoicism, which has its roots in ancient Greek philosophy, emphasizes self-control, acceptance of things beyond our control, and a focus on virtue as a path to a meaningful life.²⁴ These principles, when applied in the context of marriage, can help individuals to respond to challenges more wisely, reduce emotional reactivity, and build healthier and more harmonious relationships.²⁵ Stoicism teaches that true happiness does not depend on external factors, such as the behavior of a partner, but on the internal circumstances of the individual.²⁶ Furthermore, the results of the study highlight the urgency of integrating Stoicism-based character education and emotional control in pre-marriage programs, which have tended to be dominated by legal and religious aspects.

Comprehensive pre-marriage education should equip prospective couples with the skills and knowledge necessary to deal with the challenges and dynamics of married life, including the ability to manage conflict in a healthy manner, build effective communication, and develop emotional resilience. This implies the need to revitalize the pre-marital education curriculum to be more relevant to the needs of modern couples, by including materials that focus on character development, emotional control, and a deep understanding of the principles of Stoicism as a moral and ethical foundation in relationships. In addition, this research also provides practical implications for the world of marriage counseling, where the Stoicism approach can be integrated as one of the

²² Ahmad Zaed Abdul Aziz, "The Application of Stoic Philosophy to Modern Emotional Regulation," 2025, 4265–80, <https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/25apr2400>.

²³ Adristi, "The Role of Parents in Children from Broken Home Family Backgrounds."

²⁴ Djawas and Samad, "Conflict, Traditional, and Family Resistance: The Pattern of Dispute Resolution in Acehese Community According to Islamic Law."

²⁵ Syarif, "The Impact Of Divorce On The Psychological, Emotional And Mental Of Children In The Perspective Of Islamic Law."

²⁶ Djawas and Samad, "Conflict, Traditional, and Family Resistance: The Pattern of Dispute Resolution in Acehese Community According to Islamic Law."

therapeutic methods to increase emotional resilience, improve communication patterns, and foster an attitude of acceptance and appreciation for the couple. Therefore, marriage counselors need to be equipped with adequate knowledge and skills in applying the principles of Stoicism in counseling practice, so as to help couples overcome problems and strengthen their marital bonds. Married couples will bring their own needs, hopes, and desires. Husband and wife will crave a happy and satisfied married life and hope to be able to fulfill them in the institution of marriage.²⁷

The findings of this study indicate that couples who adopt and internalize Stoic values demonstrate greater ability to manage marital conflicts, maintain constructive communication, and show higher tolerance toward their partners. These outcomes reveal a positive correlation between the application of Stoic principles and a reduced intention to divorce, underscoring the vital role of this philosophy in reinforcing marital stability.²⁸ In light of these findings, the study recommends implementing holistic pre-marital education that extends beyond legal and religious instruction to include character formation and emotional regulation grounded in Stoic ethics. Such programs should equip prospective couples with practical skills to manage emotions, communicate effectively, and build resilience against the inevitable pressures of married life. Integrating Stoicism into marriage counseling can further enhance emotional resilience, facilitate open and empathetic communication, and promote acceptance of personal and relational differences.²⁹

Stoicism provides a philosophical framework that emphasizes self-control, acceptance, and virtue, all of which are essential for nurturing healthy relationships.³⁰ Stoicism provides a philosophical framework that emphasizes self-control, acceptance, and virtue, all of which are essential for nurturing healthy relationships.

Ultimately, applying Stoic principles in marital life can help couples develop a more objective perspective on problems, regulate negative emotions constructively, and sustain empathy and understanding in communication. For the Gen-Z Muslim generation, pre-marital education that integrates Stoic thought with Islamic values is particularly relevant. It can prepare them to uphold their rights and responsibilities in marriage, manage family finances wisely, and cultivate emotional and spiritual maturity. Through this synthesis of philosophy and faith, couples can build resilient, harmonious, and enduring marriages.

²⁷ Murdiana and Ismail, "Phubbing on the Quality of Adult Attachment in Married Women in Makassar City."

²⁸ Elle P Johnson and Jennifer A Samp, "Stoicism and Verbal Aggression in Serial Arguments: The Roles of Perceived Power, Perceived Resolvability, and Frequency of Arguments," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 37 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260521994583>.

²⁹ Citra Anggraini et al., "Interpersonal Communication," *Debasen Multidisciplinary Journal (MUDE)* 1, no. 3 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.37676/mude.v1i3.2611>.

³⁰ Angelica and Himawan, "Hold Or Rethink: Strategies for Emotional Regulation and Marriage Satisfaction During the Covid-19 Pandemic."

Conclusion

The integration of Stoicism in married life can increase marital satisfaction and decrease the intention to divorce. This research also shows the need for a holistic approach in pre-marriage education that includes psychological, emotional, and philosophical aspects in addition to legal and religious aspects. Based on the findings in this study, it is recommended that educational institutions and the government begin to integrate Stoicism material into the pre-marriage education curriculum. This is important as a mental and emotional provision for prospective couples in facing increasingly complex household challenges. Further research also needs to be conducted to explore more deeply how Stoicism principles affect various aspects of family life, such as child parenting and gender roles, and to test the effectiveness of this approach in the long term. For married couples, learning and practicing the teachings of Stoicism in daily life can be an effective way to strengthen the marriage bond, improve the quality of communication, and face life's problems with a more mature and calm attitude.

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