



Empowering Prospective Brides and Grooms through Qaryah Thayyibah Based Premarital Nutrition Education at KUA Kramatwatu

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Abstract

Stunting in Indonesia remains a complex public health challenge, with poor preconception nutritional status, particularly among prospective mothers, being one of the contributing factors to its high prevalence. Adequate nutrition before pregnancy plays a crucial role in determining pregnancy outcomes and supporting optimal child growth and development. However, this aspect has not yet been systematically integrated into premarital education programs at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA). In Kramatwatu Subdistrict, Serang Regency, the prevalence of early marriage remains relatively high, while existing premarital guidance has not sufficiently addressed key issues such as nutrition, reproductive health, and household food security. This community service program aimed to provide integrated premarital education through a community-based approach grounded in Qaryah Thayyibah values, which emphasize family resilience in spiritual, social, and health dimensions. The program was implemented through the development of integrated educational modules, participatory thematic classes for prospective brides and grooms, and the provision of educational media, including leaflets, posters, and short videos. The results showed a substantial improvement in participants' knowledge of preconception nutrition, reproductive health, household food security, and stunting prevention. Pre-test and post-test evaluations revealed an average score increase of 24.80 points, indicating the effectiveness of the intervention in enhancing participants' understanding of these key topics.

Abstrak

Masalah stunting di Indonesia merupakan tantangan kesehatan masyarakat yang kompleks. Salah satu faktor yang berkontribusi terhadap tingginya prevalensi stunting adalah rendahnya status gizi pranikah, terutama pada calon ibu. Kecukupan gizi sebelum kehamilan berperan penting dalam menentukan kualitas kehamilan serta pertumbuhan dan perkembangan anak. Namun, aspek tersebut belum secara sistematis terintegrasi dalam program edukasi pranikah di Kantor Urusan Agama (KUA). Di Kecamatan Kramatwatu, Kabupaten Serang, angka pernikahan usia muda masih relatif tinggi, sementara bimbingan pranikah yang tersedia belum secara optimal membahas isu-isu penting seperti gizi, kesehatan reproduksi, dan ketahanan pangan keluarga. Kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk memberikan edukasi pranikah yang terintegrasi melalui pendekatan komunitas berbasis nilai Qaryah Thayyibah yang menekankan ketahanan keluarga dalam aspek spiritual, sosial, dan kesehatan. Metode pelaksanaan meliputi penyusunan modul edukatif, penyelenggaraan kelas tematik bagi calon pengantin berbasis partisipatif, serta penyediaan media edukasi berupa leaflet, poster, dan video pendek. Hasil evaluasi menggunakan pre-test dan post-test menunjukkan adanya peningkatan pemahaman peserta mengenai gizi pranikah, kesehatan reproduksi, ketahanan pangan keluarga, dan pencegahan stunting, dengan rata-rata peningkatan skor sebesar 24,80 poin.

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INTRODUCTION

Stunting remains one of the most persistent public health challenges in Indonesia because it is closely related not only to child feeding practices after birth, but also to maternal nutritional status before and during pregnancy. Poor preconception nutrition may increase the risk of maternal malnutrition, low birth weight, and fetal growth restriction, all of which are important predictors of stunting in early childhood (Aryastami et al., 2017; Puspita et al., 2023). Therefore, stunting prevention should not begin only after pregnancy or childbirth, but should start earlier during the premarital and preconception periods (Jannah et al., 2021; Pasaribu et al., 2024)

Preconception nutrition is a critical entry point for preparing healthy pregnancies and preventing intergenerational nutritional problems. Prospective brides and grooms need adequate knowledge of balanced nutrition, reproductive health, household food security, and family readiness before marriage. Previous studies have shown that nutrition education for prospective brides and grooms can improve knowledge, awareness, and preventive behavior related to stunting (Atmaka et al., 2022; Husna et al., 2022; Johan et al., 2024; Putri et al., 2024). However, in practice, premarital guidance often focuses more on legal and religious aspects of marriage, while health-related issues such as preconception nutrition, reproductive readiness, and household food security are not yet systematically and contextually integrated.

Furthermore, household socioeconomic conditions strongly affect the relationship between preconception nutritional status and the risk of stunting. Pregnant women with better access to resources, education, and health services are more capable of maintaining optimal nutritional status, thereby reducing the risk of stunting among their children (Bommer et al., 2019; Siramaneerat et al., 2024). In this context, spiritual values add an important dimension to parental responsibility toward future generations. As stated in the Qur'an:

"And let those [executors and guardians] fear [injustice] as if they [themselves] had left weak offspring behind and feared for them. So let them fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice." (QS. An-Nisa: 9)

his verse emphasizes the importance of parental preparedness in raising a generation that is physically, intellectually, and spiritually strong, including through the fulfillment of adequate nutrition before pregnancy.

Community-based approaches such as Qaryah Thayyibah offer an integrative solution for strengthening family resilience in the areas of health and food security. By involving the community in

program planning and implementation, this approach promotes local self-reliance, fosters a sense of ownership, and generates solutions that align with local cultural values and needs. This process not only enhances intervention effectiveness but also strengthens community ownership, which is crucial for sustainability and long-term impact on family health resilience (Attila et al., n.d.; Ramsden et al., 2010; Richmond et al., 2021).

The educational component embedded in health interventions also strengthens family resilience (Shariff & Hamidi, 2019). (Timler et al., 2019) argued that educating communities about nutrition is essential in addressing food insecurity, because knowledge encourages healthier choices and practices within households. By adopting a model that integrates education with other community resources, such initiatives can significantly improve long-term health outcomes.

The Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) has a strategic role as an institution that directly reaches prospective brides and grooms before marriage. KUA serves as an important platform for premarital guidance and family preparation. Nevertheless, the limited time and resources available for premarital counseling create a gap in the delivery of comprehensive education, particularly regarding nutrition, reproductive health, stunting prevention, and family resilience. This gap indicates the need for an integrated educational model that is not only informative, but also culturally and spiritually relevant to the local community.

The novelty of this community service program lies in the integration of preconception nutrition education and family resilience within the framework of Qaryah Thayyibah values. This approach emphasizes the development of healthy, resilient, and empowered families through the integration of spiritual, social, and health dimensions. By connecting health messages with Islamic family values, the program is expected to make premarital education more contextual, acceptable, and meaningful for prospective brides and grooms. This approach also strengthens the role of the KUA not only as a marriage administration institution, but also as a community-based center for family health promotion and stunting prevention.

Based on these considerations, this community service program aimed to empower prospective brides and grooms through integrated premarital education on preconception nutrition, reproductive health, household food security, and family resilience based on Qaryah Thayyibah values at the KUA of Kramatwatu Subdistrict. The program is expected to contribute to upstream stunting prevention by improving the knowledge and readiness of couples before entering married life.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials

This community service program employed a participatory and educational community-based approach based on the values of Qaryah Thayyibah. This approach was selected because the program aimed not only to transfer knowledge, but also to strengthen the awareness, motivation, and commitment of prospective brides and grooms in preparing healthy and resilient families. The Qaryah Thayyibah framework emphasized the integration of spiritual, social, and health dimensions in premarital education.

The program was conducted at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) of Kramatwatu Subdistrict, Serang Regency, on September 30, 2025. The target participants were 15 pairs of prospective brides and grooms registered at the KUA of Kramatwatu Subdistrict. Religious counselors from the KUA were involved as supporting partners and facilitators during the activity.

The educational materials used in this program consisted of an integrated premarital education module, presentation materials, leaflets, posters, and short educational videos. The main topics delivered included preconception nutrition, reproductive health, household food security, stunting prevention, and family resilience based on Qaryah Thayyibah values.

Methods

The implementation of the community service program was carried out in three main stages: preparation, implementation, and monitoring-evaluation.

1. Preparation
 - a. Coordination with partner institutions
 - b. Development and finalization of the integrated educational module
 - c. Design of supporting educational media
2. Implementation
Organization of thematic classes for prospective brides and grooms
3. Evaluation
 - a. Preparation of a community service report
 - b. Development of a logbook to be used as a guide for prospective brides and grooms at the KUA of Kramatwatu Subdistrict
 - c. Dissemination of the community service activity through mass media and journal
4. Indicators of Program Success
The success of the program was assessed using several indicators. First, there was an increase in participants' knowledge, as shown by the improvement in post-test scores compared with pre-test scores. Second, participants demonstrated active involvement during the

educational sessions, including asking questions, participating in discussions, and responding to case-based simulations. Third, participants were able to identify the relationship between preconception nutrition, reproductive health, household food security, and stunting prevention. Fourth, participants expressed a commitment to applying healthy dietary practices, reproductive health awareness, and family resilience values in their future households.

In addition, institutional success was indicated by the availability of an integrated premarital education module and educational media that could be used by the KUA of Kramatwatu Subdistrict for future premarital guidance activities. The involvement of religious counselors also served as an indicator of program sustainability, as they are expected to continue delivering integrated health and family resilience messages to prospective brides and grooms.

5. Data Validity

To improve the validity of the findings, the evaluation results were supported by multiple sources of data, including pre-test and post-test scores, participant observations, field notes, and activity documentation. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data allowed the team to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the program's effectiveness. The use of the same instrument before and after the intervention also helped ensure consistency in measuring changes in participant knowledge.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The community service program was conducted at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) of Kramatwatu Subdistrict on September 30, 2025, and involved 15 pairs of prospective brides and grooms. The activity was implemented through an integrated premarital education session based on Qaryah Thayyibah values. The educational materials covered four main topics: preconception nutrition and stunting prevention, reproductive health and pregnancy readiness, household food security based on local resources, and spiritual-family resilience within the framework of Qaryah Thayyibah.

Before the educational session, participants completed a pre-test to assess their baseline understanding of preconception nutrition, reproductive health, household food security, and stunting prevention. After the intervention, a post-test was administered using the same knowledge domains. The results showed a clear improvement in

participants' understanding after the educational activity.

Table 1. Summary of Pre-Test and Post-Test Results

Indicator	Pre-test	Post-test	Mean Difference
Number of respondents	15	15	15
Mean score	55.07	79.87	24.80
Standard deviation	10.35	7.47	12.18
Minimum score	40	70	1
Maximum score	70	90	40

The mean score increased from 55.07 in the pre-test to 79.87 in the post-test, indicating an average improvement of 24.80 points. This finding shows that the educational intervention improved participants' understanding of the relationship between preconception nutrition, reproductive health, household food security, and stunting prevention. In addition, the decrease in standard deviation from 10.35 to 7.47 suggests that participants' knowledge became more evenly distributed after the activity. This indicates that the program did not only increase the average level of knowledge, but also reduced variation in understanding among participants.

To improve readability and strengthen the presentation of evaluation results, the pre-test and post-test findings should also be presented in graphical form.

Discussion

The community service program conducted at the KUA of Kramatwatu Subdistrict on September 30, 2025, targeting 15 pairs of prospective brides and grooms, produced positive results in improving participants' understanding of preconception nutrition, reproductive health, household food security, and stunting prevention.

1. Increased Knowledge among Prospective Brides and Grooms

Based on the pre-test and post-test results, there was a significant increase in participants' understanding scores. Before receiving the educational intervention, most participants had not fully understood the relationship between preconception nutrition and the risk of stunting in children. After the program, the majority of participants were able to explain the importance of balanced nutrition, reproductive health, and proper family planning in preventing stunting. This finding is consistent with Atmaka et al. (2022), who reported that preconception nutrition education programs can improve the knowledge and attitudes of prospective brides and grooms toward stunting prevention. This indicates a positive shift in participants' intentions and behaviors, which were strongly influenced by the educational intervention.

This increase in knowledge also contributes to improved decision-making regarding dietary practices and lifestyle behaviors (Nabila et al., 2023). Thus, educational interventions do not merely enhance knowledge, but also shape attitudes and behaviors that support future family health.

Beyond direct education, community-based approaches have also been shown to be effective. The "Beli Lanting" program by Adhanuraina et al. (2024), for example, demonstrated how empowering prospective brides and grooms through cadre training can extend the impact of balanced nutrition education in the community. A similar approach was reflected in this community service program, in which Qaryah Thayyibah values were applied to strengthen spiritual and social dimensions. This integration made the educational content more contextual, culturally relevant, and more readily accepted by participants. Therefore, integrating nutrition education and reproductive health into premarital guidance is a highly relevant and strategic preventive step.

2. The Qaryah Thayyibah-Based Approach

The integration of Qaryah Thayyibah values added spiritual and social dimensions to this activity. The educational intervention emphasized not only health-related aspects but also the moral and religious responsibility of prospective brides and grooms in preparing a healthy, strong, and empowered generation. This approach proved effective in strengthening participants' motivation to apply the knowledge they had gained, as it was aligned with the cultural and religious values of the local community.

The concept of Qaryah Thayyibah, which is rooted in cultural and religious values, significantly contributes to strengthening family resilience and community empowerment, particularly in the areas of health, nutrition, and spiritual well-being. The program implemented at the KUA of Kramatwatu Subdistrict emphasized the application of this concept by integrating preconception nutrition education, reproductive health, and household food security within a spiritual framework.

The results showed that a community-based approach adopting Qaryah Thayyibah values enhanced participant engagement and the effectiveness of material delivery. This was reflected in the improved understanding of prospective brides and grooms after the socialization sessions, where participants not only understood the concept of preconception nutrition but were also spiritually motivated to apply it in building a *sakinah* family.

Family resilience is a fundamental protective factor that helps families adapt to health-related challenges. Chew et al. (2025) emphasized that a healthy family climate can serve as an important

mediator in shaping healthy lifestyles, including physical activity and balanced nutritional intake. This finding supports the results of the present program, in which the participants' written reflections on their commitment to a healthy family demonstrated their readiness to make the household a foundation for nutritional and health resilience. In addition, the social support among family members strengthened through Qaryah Thayyibah values may enhance the adaptability of prospective couples in addressing future health challenges, including the risk of stunting in the next generation.

The religious and spiritual guidance central to Qaryah Thayyibah also provides a strong foundation for the success of public health programs. Fitriana and Ahmad (2022) emphasized that positive communication and interaction within the family can lead to significant improvements in spirituality and individual well-being. This is relevant to the present program, in which the educational content emphasized not only nutrition and health, but also spiritual values as a fundamental motivation for maintaining family health.

In this context, Qaryah Thayyibah serves as a local framework that connects physical health with spirituality and social solidarity, making family health education more contextual and effective.

The integration of Qaryah Thayyibah values into family health education also strengthens program sustainability. Programs based on community and spiritual values do not merely address short-term problems, but also build long-lasting collective awareness. In the KUA of Kramatwatu Subdistrict program, this sustainability was reflected in the integrated premarital education module that can continue to be used by the KUA, as well as in the commitment of participants, which is expected to be implemented in their future family life.

3. The Role of KUA as a Strategic Partner

This program also strengthened the role of the KUA as a comprehensive family development institution. Premarital guidance at the KUA has traditionally focused more on spiritual and legal aspects of marriage, whereas issues of health, nutrition, and family resilience have received less attention. Through this program, the KUA was equipped with an integrated premarital education module and educational media that can be used sustainably.

Atmaja et al. (2020) showed that cross-sectoral synergy in premarital education can encourage the adoption of health and well-being values within families. This is relevant to the present community service program, in which prospective brides and grooms gained not only religious insight but also practical skills, such as planning balanced meals using local food ingredients. In addition, Sukandar et

al. (2023) emphasized that the communication strategies of religious counselors are highly effective in fostering Islamic family development, as they not only teach religious norms but also internalize healthy and harmonious lifestyle values. In this program, the integration of nutrition education, household food security, and spiritual values was proven to increase participants' knowledge while also strengthening their motivation to build a *sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah* family that is also healthy.

The outcome of this activity was not limited to improved knowledge, but also included a concrete commitment from prospective brides and grooms to adopt healthy lifestyle practices in their future households. This has the potential to reduce the risk of stunting from an upstream perspective, since prevention efforts begin during the premarital period. Moreover, the involvement of KUA counselors and facilitators strengthened institutional capacity in providing sustainable guidance to the community.





Figure 1. Delivery of Qaryah Thayyibah-Based Premarital Nutrition Education at KUA Kramatwatu

CONCLUSION

This community service program demonstrated that integrated premarital education based on Qaryah Thayyibah values effectively improved the knowledge of prospective brides and grooms regarding preconception nutrition, reproductive health, household food security, and stunting prevention. The increase in the mean score from 55.07 in the pre-test to 79.87 in the post-test indicates that the educational intervention had a positive impact on participants' understanding and awareness of preparing healthy and resilient families before marriage.

The program also strengthened the role of the KUA of Kramatwatu Subdistrict as a strategic partner in delivering comprehensive premarital guidance that integrates health, spiritual, and social dimensions. For sustainability, the integrated premarital education module should continue to be used in routine premarital guidance, supported by collaboration between KUA counselors, health professionals, and educational institutions. Continuous mentoring and periodic evaluation are recommended to ensure that preconception nutrition education and stunting prevention remain part of sustainable family development programs.

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