

## SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS AS DETERMINANTS OF DIVORCE: A Study at the Banyuwangi Religious Court

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**Abstract:** This study examines social and cultural factors as determinants of divorce in the Banyuwangi Religious Court during 2020–2025. Divorce cases remained consistently high, ranging from 5,570 to 6,091 annually, with wife-initiated divorces rising from 68.8% in 2020 to 75.25% in 2025. Using a qualitative descriptive-analytical approach, data were collected through interviews with the Chief Judge and analysis of ten divorce rulings issued between 2021 and 2025. Four key socio-cultural determinants were identified: the influence of social media in shaping unrealistic marital expectations; shifting gender roles linked to women's growing economic independence; cultural acculturation through Banyuwangi's tourism sector, which heightened risks of infidelity; and economic vulnerability exacerbated by inadequate pre-marital preparation, addictive behaviors, and the prolonged impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The study also reveals an epistemological gap between complex social realities and administrative legal classifications, as diverse marital conflicts are often grouped under the broad category of "continuous disputes." These findings highlight the need to strengthen pre-marital education, culturally responsive family mediation, and more comprehensive divorce recording systems to support effective family resilience policies.

**Keywords:** Divorce, Sociocultural Factors, Marital Conflict

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini menelaah faktor sosial dan budaya sebagai penentu perceraian di Pengadilan Agama Banyuwangi periode 2020–2025. Kasus perceraian tetap tinggi, 5.570–6.091 per tahun, dengan cerai gugat meningkat dari 68,8% (2020) menjadi 75,25% (2025). Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif-analitis, data diperoleh melalui wawancara dengan Ketua PA Banyuwangi dan analisis sepuluh putusan perceraian. Empat determinan utama ditemukan: pengaruh media sosial yang membentuk ekspektasi perkawinan tidak realistis; pergeseran peran gender akibat kemandirian ekonomi perempuan; akulturasi budaya melalui pariwisata yang meningkatkan risiko perselingkuhan; serta kerentanan ekonomi yang diperburuk oleh ketidaksiapan pranikah, perilaku adiktif, dan dampak pandemi Covid-19. Studi ini juga mengungkap kesenjangan epistemologis antara kompleksitas realitas sosial dan klasifikasi hukum administratif, karena konflik rumah tangga sering digolongkan ke dalam kategori "perselisihan terus-menerus." Temuan ini menekankan perlunya pendidikan pranikah, mediasi berbasis budaya lokal, serta sistem pencatatan perceraian yang lebih komprehensif untuk mendukung kebijakan ketahanan keluarga.

**Kata Kunci:** Perceraian, Faktor Sosial Budaya, Konflik Perkawinan

## INTRODUCTION

Marriage has long been regarded as one of the most fundamental social institutions for maintaining social order, transmitting cultural values, and ensuring family continuity. However, the dynamics of marital life in contemporary society have become increasingly complex due to rapid social transformation, economic globalization, technological advancement, and changing cultural values. These developments have reshaped how individuals perceive marital relationships, family responsibilities, and personal fulfilment. (Aminudin et al., 2025) argue that economic globalization has significantly shifted marital values, encouraging individuals to prioritize personal happiness and self-actualization over collective family obligations that traditionally functioned as safeguards for marital stability. This transformation has been accompanied by the weakening of community bonds, changing expectations between spouses, and the expansion of digital communication technologies that frequently intensify marital tensions.

The growing complexity of factors affecting marital stability has attracted considerable scholarly attention across sociology, family studies, and legal studies. Marriage sustainability is no longer determined solely by economic preparedness but is also influenced by broader social and cultural dimensions. According to (Manna et al., 2021), couples' ability to adapt to social demands and cultural changes constitutes a critical determinant of

marital resilience. Effective communication, mutual understanding of gender roles, emotional adjustment, and the capacity to negotiate changing social expectations are increasingly recognized as essential elements for maintaining harmonious family relationships. Consequently, marital instability cannot be adequately understood through economic indicators alone, as it is deeply embedded within broader socio-cultural structures.

Rapid social and cultural change has also contributed significantly to the escalation of divorce rates in many societies. Contemporary families are increasingly exposed to pressures arising from modernization, urbanization, labor mobility, and digital communication platforms. (Januari, 2023) demonstrates that social pressures within modern families, including the influence of social media and changing patterns of interpersonal communication, substantially affect marital dynamics. The inability of couples to adapt to evolving social norms, shifting expectations, and emerging forms of interaction often generates prolonged conflicts that ultimately lead to marital dissolution. These developments suggest that divorce should be understood not merely as an individual or legal issue but as a social phenomenon shaped by broader cultural transformations.

Indonesia has experienced a notable increase in divorce cases over the past decade, making divorce an urgent social issue requiring comprehensive

scholarly investigation. Statistical data from the Central Statistics Agency indicate that divorce cases increased substantially from 291,677 cases in 2020 to 448,126 cases in 2022. Although the figures declined slightly in 2023 and 2024, they rose again to 438,168 cases in 2025. Such trends indicate that marital instability remains a persistent challenge within Indonesian society. Furthermore, (Wastaljideri & Miaz, 2026) identify digital technological development, particularly the widespread use of social media, as a contributing factor to increasing divorce rates through the emergence of new forms of conflict, including diminished trust, online infidelity, and changing communication patterns between spouses.

The distribution of divorce cases across Indonesian regions reveals substantial variation, indicating the importance of local social and cultural contexts in shaping marital outcomes. East Java represents one of the regions with the highest divorce rates in the country. Data from the East Java Provincial Statistics Agency recorded 83,208 divorce cases in 2025, placing the province second only to West Java. As explained by (Rofi & Salsabila, 2022), regional differences in divorce patterns are closely associated with variations in socio-economic conditions, cultural norms, family structures, and local value systems. Therefore, understanding divorce requires attention to localized social realities rather than relying solely on national-level explanations.

Banyuwangi Regency offers a particularly significant context for examining the socio-cultural determinants of divorce. As the easternmost region of Java Island and one of Indonesia's rapidly developing tourism destinations, Banyuwangi has undergone extensive economic and cultural transformation during the last decade. The expansion of tourism activities has accelerated interactions between local communities and external cultural influences, generating new patterns of social behavior and family relationships. (Bahar & Romadloni, 2025) demonstrate that tourism development not only contributes to economic growth but also introduces new values through processes of cultural acculturation that reshape local social life. Such transformations create unique social conditions that may influence marital relationships and conflict dynamics within families.

Divorce trends in Banyuwangi further highlight the importance of investigating local socio-cultural dynamics. Data from the Banyuwangi Religious Court indicate that divorce cases reached 6,047 in 2020, increased to 6,319 in 2021, declined to 5,799 in 2022 and 5,231 in 2023, before rising again to 5,981 in 2024 and remaining high at 5,523 cases in 2025. Despite fluctuations, the consistently high number of divorce cases suggests the existence of persistent structural and cultural factors influencing marital instability. Notably, Religious Court statistics indicate that continuous disputes and quarrels constitute the

second most common ground for divorce after economic problems. Supporting this observation, (Nursyifa & Hayati, 2020) found that the misuse of social media has become a major trigger of domestic conflicts leading to divorce, while effective prevention requires broader sociological interventions involving families, communities, and legal institutions.

Previous studies have extensively examined the relationship between social and cultural factors and marital stability. (Manna et al., 2021) emphasize that changing family values and increasing marital conflicts are among the primary drivers of divorce in Indonesia. Similarly, (Manuputty et al., 2024) demonstrate that local customs, religious values, and cultural traditions significantly influence family harmony and marital sustainability. While these studies successfully identify the importance of socio-cultural variables, they generally focus on divorce as a social phenomenon and pay limited attention to how complex socio-cultural realities are translated into administrative and legal categories within religious court proceedings. Consequently, existing scholarship has not sufficiently explained how social and cultural factors are reconstructed, simplified, and represented through legal classifications used in divorce adjudication.

Another important gap concerns the discrepancy between the complexity of lived marital experiences and the administrative categories employed by

religious courts. (Andri, 2023) reveals that economic factors underlying divorce frequently involve multidimensional issues such as debt accumulation, prolonged financial instability, and unmet family obligations rather than merely insufficient income. Similar complexities may also characterize socio-cultural factors, yet these dimensions often become condensed into broad administrative categories such as “continuous disputes and quarrels.” Existing studies rarely investigate how local social and cultural dynamics contribute to the formation of conflicts that are ultimately categorized within these legal classifications. This unresolved issue represents a significant theoretical and empirical gap in contemporary divorce studies.

This study contributes to the literature by integrating socio-cultural analysis with the legal-administrative framework of divorce adjudication in the Religious Court of Banyuwangi. Unlike previous studies that primarily examine divorce determinants from sociological or legal perspectives separately, this research explores how local social and cultural transformations shape household conflicts and how such conflicts are subsequently represented within administrative divorce categories. The novelty of this study lies in its effort to bridge the gap between social reality and legal classification, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of divorce determinants in a rapidly changing socio-cultural environment.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the role of social and cultural factors as determinants of divorce in the Banyuwangi Religious Court, identify the most dominant socio-cultural factors underlying divorce cases, and examine how the socio-cultural dynamics of Banyuwangi society shape patterns of marital conflict that are administratively classified as continuous disputes and quarrels. The scope of the study is limited to divorce cases adjudicated by the Banyuwangi Religious Court, with particular emphasis on the interaction between local social transformations, cultural change, and the legal categorization of divorce grounds.

## **METODE**

This study employed a qualitative approach within an empirical legal research framework to explore how social and cultural factors shape divorce cases categorized as “continuous disputes and quarrels” in the Banyuwangi Religious Court. A qualitative design was selected because the study sought to investigate the meanings, experiences, and socio-cultural dynamics underlying legal classifications of divorce that cannot be adequately explained through quantitative measurements alone (Sugiyono, 2019). The research focused on examining the interaction between legal-administrative constructions and the social realities experienced by married couples in the local community.

Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary

data were obtained through an in-depth semi-structured interview with a key informant, identified as RH, who serves as a senior judicial authority at the Banyuwangi Religious Court. The informant was purposively selected based on direct involvement in the administration and adjudication of divorce cases. The interview explored patterns of divorce cases, judicial considerations, and the relationship between legal categories and socio-cultural conditions encountered in court practice. Secondary data consisted of ten divorce judgments issued by the Banyuwangi Religious Court, statistical reports on divorce factors from 2020 to 2025, and relevant scholarly publications addressing divorce, socio-cultural transformation, family conflict, and religious court practices in Indonesia.

Document selection was conducted purposively by choosing judgments classified under the category of continuous disputes and quarrels and containing detailed descriptions of the parties’ social and cultural backgrounds. Data collection was undertaken through three complementary techniques: semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and literature review. The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model of qualitative analysis, involving data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing through an iterative process. Coding procedures were applied to identify recurring themes related to cultural change, social interaction patterns, economic pressures, digital technology influences, and family value

transformations. To ensure trustworthiness, source triangulation was employed by systematically comparing findings derived from interviews, court judgments, statistical records, and relevant academic literature. This process enabled the verification of data consistency and strengthened the credibility of the study’s interpretations and conclusions.

**HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN**

**Characteristics and Classification of Divorce Cases at the Banyuwangi Religious Court**

**1. Volume, Case Trends, and the Prevalence of Divorce by Petition**

Statistical data from the Banyuwangi Religious Court for the 2020–2025 period reflects a consistently high caseload. The number of new cases ranges from 5,570 to 6,091 per year, while the number of cases

resolved is not always identical to the number of new cases in the same year due to cases carried over from the previous year. In terms of case types, the proportion of divorce cases filed by wives has continued to rise: from 68.8% in 2020 to 75.25% in 2025. This means that three out of every four cases are filed by wives. This pattern reflects a structural shift in gender relations within households, as identified by Khairuddin (2024), who noted that women’s economic independence is increasingly opening their access to formal legal channels. In terms of socioeconomic background, the parties generally come from the lower-middle class—namely, farmers, farmworkers, private-sector employees, and homemakers—with educational levels ranging from elementary school to high school.

**Table 1.** Filed Cases, Resolved Cases, and Proportion of Wife-Initiated Divorces at the Banyuwangi Religious Court, 2020–2025

Year	Filed Cases	Resolved Cases	Wife-Initiated Divorce	Husband-Initiated Divorce	% Wife-Initiated Divorce
2020	6,091	6,047	4,193	1,898	68.8%
2021	5,894	6,319	4,084	1,81	69.3%
2022	5,883	5,799	4,075	1,808	69.3%
2023	5,589	5,231	3,928	1,661	70.3%
2024	5,892	5,981	4,325	1,567	73.4%
2025	5,57	5,523	4,156	1,367	75.25%

**Source:** Divorce Causation Statistics Recapitulation, Banyuwangi Religious Court, 2020–2025.

**The 14-Category Classification System and Judges’ Simplification Practices**

The Banyuwangi Religious Court employs 14 official categories of divorce causes in its divorce reporting system. However, in judicial practice, judges often simplify the classification process by

assigning cases to the most dominant ground stated in the *posita* (statement of claims). This was explicitly confirmed by RH, the Chief Judge of the Banyuwangi Religious Court (Interview, February 24, 2026):

It is true that there are 14 official classifications. However, at the Banyuwangi Religious Court, cases categorized as continuous disputes and quarrels are, in most instances, fundamentally rooted in economic problems. The inability to endure financial hardship often becomes the underlying reason behind disputes that ultimately lead to divorce.

This statement carries an important methodological implication: administrative labels recorded in official statistics do not necessarily represent the actual underlying causes of divorce. Among the 14 available categories, two factors consistently dominated the observation period—economic problems and continuous disputes and quarrels—which together accounted for more than 85% of all divorce cases annually. This phenomenon is consistent with the findings of (Manna et al., 2021), who argue that formal divorce categories in Indonesia frequently fail to capture the complexity of conflicts occurring within households. This gap between complex social realities and administrative legal constructions constitutes the central focus of the present study.

## **Socio-Cultural Factors as Determinants of Divorce in Banyuwangi**

### **1. The Impact of Social Media and Shifting Standards of Living**

RH explicitly identified social media culture as the socio-cultural variable that has undergone the most significant transformation over the past five years (Interview, February 24, 2026):

Many social and cultural factors contribute to continuous disputes and quarrels. Over the last five years, the culture of social media use has significantly influenced divorce rates at the Banyuwangi Religious Court. The widespread use of social media has raised couples' expectations regarding married life, often leading to disappointment when their spouses are unable to meet those expectations, thereby triggering marital conflicts. Many people fail to consider their actual circumstances and instead force themselves to pursue standards that are beyond their social and economic reality.”

This statement reflects the principles of Social Comparison Theory. (Morina, 2021) explains that individuals tend to evaluate themselves by comparing their situations with those of others. In a similar context, (Ahma Dahlan Baidowi, 2025) found that unwise use of social media consistently triggers marital conflicts through mechanisms such as jealousy, distrust, and unrealistic social comparisons, making digital literacy and digitally oriented premarital counseling increasingly necessary. Likewise, (Arsyad, 2020), in a study conducted within the religious court system, found a clear correlation between social media trends and rising divorce rates, with digital content functioning as a catalyst that accelerates conflict escalation between spouses.

These findings are further supported by the study of (Ramadhani et al., 2024), which demonstrated that higher marital expectations are associated with lower levels of marital

satisfaction, indicating a statistically significant negative relationship. Unrealistic marital expectations, often shaped by exposure to social media content, were identified as predictors of declining marital satisfaction, particularly among women. This finding is consistent with (Januari, 2023), who identified changes in interaction patterns and social pressures, including those mediated through social media, as factors that are nearly as influential as economic conditions in shaping divorce dynamics in Indonesia. This relationship is reflected in several court decisions analyzed in this study, particularly Case No. 1765/2024 and Case No. 2371/2025, where the *posita* narratives describe disparities in expectations between spouses that appear to be associated with unrealistic standards of living.

## **2. Shifting Gender Roles and the Phenomenon of Divorce by Petition**

The increasing dominance of wife-initiated divorces, rising from 68.8% in 2020 to 75.25% in 2025, represents a statistical manifestation of shifting gender power relations, as explicitly explained by RH (Interview, February 24, 2026):

There are many cases in which wives file for divorce because they hold higher occupational positions than their husbands. A clear example at the Banyuwangi Religious Court is the increasing number of women appointed as government contract employees (P3K) who subsequently divorce their husbands because they perceive themselves as being financially more capable. This

demonstrates that changing gender roles have become one of the major drivers of divorce. In Banyuwangi, many wives feel disappointed by their husbands' inability to fulfill economic responsibilities, which has also contributed to a growing trend of women seeking employment overseas.

This finding is concretely reflected in Decision No. 1775/Pdt.G/2022, where a wife migrated to Hong Kong as a domestic worker with her husband's consent due to economic hardship. After eleven years of interrupted communication, it was the wife who eventually filed for divorce. (Al-Razi & Kamilia, 2023) interpret this phenomenon as a consequence of modernization, which encourages women to utilize formal legal mechanisms when marital relationships are no longer perceived as equitable.

From a broader perspective, (Meidyawati & Qodir, 2023) argue that disparities between husbands' and wives' incomes constitute one of the primary factors motivating women to initiate divorce. When women achieve greater economic independence than their spouses, dissatisfaction with unequal marital relationships tends to intensify into conflicts that culminate in wife-initiated divorce. Similarly, Decision No. 3344/2022 and Decision No. 3063/2023 contain narratives in which husbands describe their wives as "stubborn" and "disrespectful of the husband's position as head of the household." These descriptions reflect tensions between traditional patriarchal gender norms and

evolving gender values, a phenomenon also identified by (Manna et al., 2021) in their analysis of changing family values in Indonesia. This dynamic is closely linked to Banyuwangi's context as a region undergoing rapid economic transformation. As women gain greater economic opportunities through government programs such as P3K appointments, traditional gender-role expectations do not necessarily adapt at the same pace, thereby creating structural tensions within marital relationships.

### **3. The Infiltration of Foreign Cultures Through Tourism and Extramarital Affairs**

As a leading national tourism destination, Banyuwangi faces significant pressures arising from cultural acculturation. RH specifically identified this characteristic as a factor that exacerbates marital relationship dynamics within the region (Interview, February 24, 2026):

In Banyuwangi, the influx of foreign cultures through entertainment venues and tourist attractions has contributed to the high incidence of infidelity that ultimately leads to divorce. In fact, the rate of infidelity among husbands and wives is relatively similar in Banyuwangi.

Bahar & Romadloni (2025) demonstrate that Banyuwangi's transformation into a major tourism destination has generated not only positive economic impacts but also introduced new values and patterns of social interaction that do not always align

with the marital norms traditionally upheld by the local community. This intensive process of cultural acculturation creates a space where local values emphasizing commitment and loyalty in marriage intersect with external influences that may be more permissive toward interactions between members of the opposite sex outside marital relationships. Evidence of this phenomenon can be found in two court decisions analyzed in this study. Decision No. 1546/2023 documented a husband's extramarital affair that was substantiated through direct witness testimony at a hotel, while Decision No. 2159/2021 described mutual suspicions of infidelity between both spouses. (Manuputty et al., 2024) further argue that the weakening of local customs and cultural values under the pressures of modernization and external cultural influences constitutes an important predictor of increasing marital conflict.

A particularly significant finding is that infidelity is not recorded as a separate category within the official statistics of the Banyuwangi Religious Court. Instead, such cases are entirely subsumed under the broader administrative category of "continuous disputes and quarrels." As a result, one of the most distinctive cultural dimensions associated with Banyuwangi's status as a tourism region becomes largely invisible within official divorce statistics. This finding illustrates how administrative legal classifications may obscure important socio-cultural factors

underlying marital dissolution, thereby reinforcing the gap between social reality and formal legal categorization that constitutes the central concern of this study.

#### **4. Premarital Economic Unpreparedness, Post Pandemic Consequences, and Addictive Behaviors**

Economic factors within the socio-cultural context of Banyuwangi do not operate in isolation; rather, they interact with various social and cultural dynamics that shape marital stability. RH identified two interrelated dimensions that contribute significantly to marital conflict and divorce (Interview, February 24, 2026):

“Economic-related disputes may arise from inadequate financial preparation before marriage, as well as from the deterioration of a family’s economic condition due to factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, accumulated debt, or infidelity that leads to financial instability. Most divorce cases brought before the court result from declining economic conditions during the course of marriage, compounded by shifting gender roles and increasingly high expectations influenced by social media.”

The first dimension is structural and originates at the beginning of marriage. Decision No. 1775/2022 illustrates this condition. The couple entered marriage as agricultural laborers with unstable incomes. As household needs increased, the wife was compelled to seek employment abroad, a decision that ultimately contributed to the permanent breakdown of the marital relationship. (Januari, 2023) argues that

inadequate economic preparedness before marriage is one of the strongest predictors of long-term marital instability, as financial vulnerability often creates persistent pressures that undermine family resilience.

The second dimension is dynamic and emerges during the course of marriage through the deterioration of household economic conditions. Decision No. 1765/2024 exemplifies this situation, where the husband failed to provide financial support, frequently engaged in gambling, and consumed alcohol, forcing the wife to bear the family’s financial responsibilities alone. Decision No. 2371/2025 adds another dimension through substance abuse involving *pil koplo* (illicit prescription drugs). Such addictive behaviors should not be viewed merely as individual moral failings but rather as broader social phenomena associated with economic hardship, psychological stress, and limited access to healthy social coping mechanisms among young men with relatively low educational attainment.

The sharp increase in economic-related divorce cases—from 2,868 cases in 2023 to 4,243 cases in 2024—occurred three to four years after the official end of the COVID-19 pandemic. This pattern is consistent with the findings of (Ramadhani et al., 2024), who documented a five percent increase in divorce cases in Indonesia during and after the pandemic, largely driven by economic pressures that intensified unresolved marital conflicts. Similarly,

(Wijayanti, 2021), in a study conducted in Banyumas Regency, found that divorce during the pandemic period was predominantly initiated by younger women with unstable incomes, a profile closely resembling that of many litigants in the Banyuwangi Religious Court. These findings suggest that the cumulative effects of the pandemic—manifested through debt accumulation, asset depletion, and income stagnation among agricultural laborers and private-sector workers—did not emerge immediately but became fully visible several years after the crisis had formally ended. Furthermore, (Siregar et al., 2023) emphasize that the continuing rise in divorce rates in Indonesia is driven by a combination of economic hardship, ineffective communication, and socio-cultural factors that cannot be understood in isolation from one another.

Overall, the findings indicate that economic factors, intertwined with broader social and cultural transformations, constitute the most dominant determinant of divorce cases in the Banyuwangi Religious Court. At the same time, social media influence, shifting gender roles, and processes of cultural acculturation function as reinforcing factors that intensify marital tensions and conflicts. Therefore, divorce should not be understood as the consequence of a single causal factor; rather, it is the outcome of complex interactions among economic, social, and cultural forces that collectively shape marital relationships and their eventual dissolution.

## **Manifestation of Socio-Cultural Factors within the Category of Continuous Disputes and Quarrels**

### **1. Article 19(f) as the Most Frequently Applied Legal Ground for Divorce**

Among the ten court decisions analyzed, nine were adjudicated based on Article 19(f) of Government Regulation No. 9 of 1975 in conjunction with Article 116(f) of the Compilation of Islamic Law, which identifies continuous disputes and quarrels as a legal ground for divorce. Only Decision No. 1775/2022 was decided under Article 19(b), concerning abandonment by one spouse, as the fact of physical separation for eleven years was considered too substantial to be subsumed within the broader narrative of continuous disputes and quarrels.

A recurring pattern emerged across the analyzed judgments, where judicial reasoning employed nearly identical formulations. In most cases, the court concluded that: *“The Panel of Judges finds that the marital relationship has irretrievably broken down, as continuous disputes and quarrels have persistently occurred, leaving no reasonable prospect of reconciliation between the parties.”* The repeated use of this standardized legal formulation reflects the intrinsic characteristics of the judicial classification system, which is designed to operate through uniform legal categories. As noted by (Andri, 2023), the social realities underlying divorce cases are often far more complex and multidimensional than the administrative labels ultimately recorded in court decisions. Consequently,

while Article 19(f) functions as an effective legal mechanism for adjudicating divorce cases, it may simultaneously obscure the diverse socio-cultural, economic, and relational factors that contribute to marital breakdown. This finding highlights the gap between lived social experiences and the formal legal constructions through which divorce

cases are categorized and resolved within the religious court system.

## 2. The Heterogeneity of Root Causes Behind a Single Legal Label

The following table reveals the heterogeneity hidden behind the uniformity of legal labels in the 10 rulings analyzed

**Table 2.** Factors Identified in the Facts of the Case and Their Legal Classification

Case Number	Factors Identified in the <i>Posita</i> (Statement of Claims)	Legal Provision Applied
1404/2021	Domestic violence (husband physically assaulted wife)	Article 19(f) of Government Regulation No. 9/1975 in conjunction with Article 116(f) of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI)
2159/2021	Mutual allegations of infidelity	Article 19(f) of Government Regulation No. 9/1975 in conjunction with Article 116(f) of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI)
3344/2022	Marital incompatibility and personality-related egoism	Article 19(f) of Government Regulation No. 9/1975 in conjunction with Article 116(f) of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI)
1775/2022	Physical separation for 11 years (overseas migrant worker)	Article 19(b) of Government Regulation No. 9/1975 in conjunction with Article 116(b) of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI)
1546/2023	Proven infidelity (supported by direct witness testimony)	Article 19(f) of Government Regulation No. 9/1975 in conjunction with Article 116(f) of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI)
3063/2023	Personality incompatibility	Article 19(f) of Government Regulation No. 9/1975 in conjunction with Article 116(f) of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI)
1765/2024	Neglect of financial support, alcohol abuse/gambling, and infidelity	Article 19(f) of Government Regulation No. 9/1975 in conjunction with Article 116(f) of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI)
4235/2024	Concealed debt and residential conflict	Article 19(f) of Government Regulation No. 9/1975 in conjunction with Article 116(f) of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI)
2371/2025	Addictive behavior and economic failure	Article 19(f) of Government Regulation No. 9/1975 in conjunction with Article 116(f) of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI)
3972/2025	Wife's dissatisfaction with the husband's financial provision	Article 19(f) of Government Regulation No. 9/1975 in conjunction with Article 116(f) of the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI)

Source: Banyuwangi Religious Court Rulings, 2021–2025

The table above shows that behind a single, identical legal formula lie at least six different types of issues: domestic violence, infidelity, personality conflicts, failure to provide financial support,

addictive behavior, and relational conflicts resulting from economic pressures. When contextualized with the interview findings, this list must also include the impact of social media and shifting gender norms as

two variables present in the factual narratives, even though they were never explicitly mentioned as grounds for the lawsuit. The most analytically significant case is No. 1546/2023: the infidelity in this case was not merely an allegation but was corroborated by an identified eyewitness present in the hotel room. Legally, the proven affair actually meets the criteria of Article 19(a) on adultery, but the judge still applied Article 19(f). This pattern is

consistent with the findings (Manuputty et al., 2024) that local legal constructions tend to favor categories that are more flexible and easier to prove.

**3. Statistical Evidence: Shift in Classification**

Quantitative data reveals a statistically significant phenomenon. Economic factors and disputes consistently moved in opposite directions throughout 2020–2025:

**Table 3.** Distribution and Ratio of Dominant Divorce Factors at the Banyuwangi Religious Court, 2020–2025

Year	Continuous Disputes and Quarrels	%	Economic Factors	%	Ratio
2020	1,638	29.5%	3,22	57.9%	1 : 1.97
2021	2,057	34.4%	3,137	52.5%	1 : 1.52
2022	1,742	31.7%	2,941	53.5%	1 : 1.69
2023	1,241	25.8%	2,868	59.5%	1 : 2.31
2024	825	15.0%	4,243	77.2%	1 : 5.14
2025	924	16.6%	4,324	77.6%	1 : 4.68

**Source:** Recapitulation of Divorce Causation Factors, Banyuwangi Religious Court (2020–2025), and RK5 Annual Report of the Banyuwangi Religious Court (2025).

In 2021, the ratio between economic factors and continuous disputes was relatively balanced at 1:1.52. By 2024, however, the ratio had widened dramatically to 1:5.14 and remained high at 1:4.68 in 2025. This substantial shift can be understood through two complementary analytical perspectives. The first is substantive in nature. The sharp increase in economic-related divorce cases since 2024 is highly consistent with the cumulative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, which became fully apparent only three to four years later through debt accumulation, asset depletion, and prolonged income stagnation. The second perspective is administrative. Such a pronounced change

in the ratio within a relatively short period may also indicate shifts in case-classification practices within the court system. (Siregar et al., 2023) emphasize that long-term deterioration in household economic conditions is one of the principal factors that systematically erodes marital resilience. These two explanations are not mutually exclusive; rather, both carry important implications for the formulation of divorce-prevention policies.

**Analytical Implications: Research Contribution**

The gap between social reality and administrative classification carries two important implications that constitute the primary contribution of this study. First,

from an epistemological perspective, divorce statistics derived from the classification system of the Banyuwangi Religious Court should not be interpreted literally as an accurate representation of the underlying causes of divorce in society. Second, from a practical perspective, when the socio-cultural roots of divorce are not captured through sufficiently specific categories, prevention policies formulated on the basis of such data inevitably lose precision and effectiveness. Behind the broad category of “continuous disputes and quarrels” lie diverse phenomena, including domestic violence, infidelity, addictive behavior, and shifting social values, each of which requires a distinct policy response.

These findings directly fulfill the contribution proposed by this study, namely providing a comprehensive understanding of how social and cultural factors contribute to rising divorce rates in Banyuwangi and offering an empirical foundation for strengthening family development programs grounded in local social and cultural values. Based on these findings, three policy directions may be considered. First, premarital education programs administered by the Office of Religious Affairs (*KUA*) should incorporate social media literacy and marital expectation management as essential components. Second, mediation and family counseling services within the Banyuwangi Religious Court could be further developed by taking into account contextual factors such as changing gender roles and cultural acculturation, both of which have become distinctive characteristics of the region.

Third, the system for recording divorce causes should be reviewed to enable a more nuanced representation of the diverse underlying factors contributing to marital dissolution. (Manuputty et al., 2024) argue that family development programs that fail to consider the specific characteristics of local cultural contexts are unlikely to achieve sustainable reductions in divorce rates. Consequently, more context-sensitive policies are required to address the complex interaction between economic, social, and cultural factors that shape contemporary divorce dynamics in Banyuwangi.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that divorce cases adjudicated by the Banyuwangi Religious Court during the 2020–2025 period were shaped by the complex interaction of economic pressures and socio-cultural transformations rather than by a single causal factor. Four major socio-cultural determinants were identified: the influence of social media in fostering unrealistic marital expectations, shifting gender roles driven by increasing female economic independence, cultural acculturation associated with Banyuwangi’s development as a tourism destination that contributes to a higher risk of infidelity, and economic vulnerability originating from inadequate premarital preparation, compounded by addictive behaviors and the long-term consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. These factors interact dynamically and collectively intensify marital tensions that ultimately

lead to divorce. The study further reveals a significant epistemological gap between the complex social realities underlying marital breakdown and the administrative legal categories employed by the religious court system. Although the analyzed cases reflected diverse forms of conflict, including domestic violence, infidelity, economic hardship, addictive behavior, and personality incompatibility, nine out of ten decisions were classified under Article 19(f) concerning continuous disputes and quarrels. This finding demonstrates that formal legal classifications often fail to capture the multidimensional nature of divorce determinants. The sharp shift in the ratio between economic and dispute-related classifications since 2024 also suggests the combined effects of post-pandemic economic pressures and possible changes in case-classification practices. These findings highlight the need for context-sensitive family policies, including the integration of social media literacy into premarital education programs, the development of culturally informed family mediation services, and the refinement of divorce-recording systems to better represent the diversity of underlying marital conflicts. Recognizing the heterogeneity concealed behind uniform legal categories is essential for designing more effective and evidence-based family resilience policies.

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