DO MACROECONOMIC INDICATORS MATTER? EVIDENCE FROM HOUSEHOLD WELFARE AND DIVORCE DYNAMICS IN POST-PANDEMIC CENTRAL JAVA

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of economic factors on divorce in Central Java Province, with a focus on Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) per capita, open unemployment rate, poverty rate, and per capita expenditure. This research employs a quantitative approach based on panel data covering 35 regencies/cities over the period 2019–2024. The analysis is conducted using panel data regression with the Fixed Effects Model (FEM), which is selected through the Chow Test and Hausman Test. The results indicate that per capita expenditure has a negative effect on the divorce rate, while GRDP per capita, the open unemployment rate, and the poverty rate do not show a significant effect. These findings suggest that the stability of household consumption and real economic well-being plays a more substantial role in influencing divorce dynamics compared to macroeconomic indicators. The implications of this study highlight that economic development policies should be directed toward increasing purchasing power, strengthening social protection, and enhancing family resilience. The novelty of this research lies in the use of a comprehensive approach that integrates macroeconomic and microeconomic indicators in the study of divorce during the post-COVID-19 economic recovery period.

Keywords: Divorce, Economic Factors, Per Capita Expenditure, Panel Data, Central Java

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a fundamental social institution established to create a harmonious, secure, peaceful, and prosperous family life. Law Number 16 of 2019, which amends Law Number 1 of 1974 on Marriage, affirms that husbands and wives have the obligation to love one another, respect each other, remain faithful, and provide both physical and emotional support. This provision is in line with Law Number 52 of 2009 on Population Development and Family Development, which defines a quality family as one formed through a legally valid marriage, prosperous, healthy, independent, and future-oriented. From the perspective of economic and social development, the family is regarded as the smallest social unit that plays a strategic role in shaping the quality of human resources and maintaining socio-economic stability in society (Lanz et al., 2020; Pujadas-Mora & Brea-Martinez, 2020).

Normatively, every couple entering into marriage expects a lasting and harmonious household life (Agussalim & Sabrina, 2024). A harmonious family serves as the primary foundation for preventing domestic conflict, domestic violence, and divorce, and contributes to social resilience and national development through the formation of a generation that is physically, mentally, and socially healthy (Al Farisi et al., 2024). Family relationships grounded in affection and tranquility also function as the child's first educational environment in shaping character, personality, and psychological stability. These conditions ultimately affect the overall quality of social and economic life in society (Ghafur, 2019; Saputra & Subiyantoro, 2021).

However, social realities indicate that not all marriages can be sustained in the long term. Failure to build relationships that are fair, open, and based on peace often triggers ongoing domestic conflicts that culminate in divorce (Yanti, 2020; Jannah et al., 2023). Divorce, as stipulated in Article 38 of Law Number 16 of 2019, is a legal event marking the dissolution of a marriage through a court decision. The increase in divorce rates not only affects couples and children but also generates broader socio-economic consequences, such as weakened social cohesion, increased burdens on welfare and mental health services, and a decline in the quality of human resources that may hinder long-term development (Ajisaputri, 2021; Aftab & Younas, 2023; Bukhtiar et al., 2025).

One factor consistently associated with rising domestic conflict and divorce is economic conditions. Economic pressure arising from income instability, unemployment, poverty, and the inability to meet daily living needs has been shown to increase household vulnerability to conflict and disintegration (Wijayanti, 2021; Lee et al., 2023). Inadequate economic conditions can trigger psychological stress, reduce the quality of spousal communication, and intensify conflicts that ultimately lead to divorce (Khairuddin, 2024; Ansari, 2025). Conversely, economic stability and maturity within the family play an important role in maintaining household harmony and sustaining marriage into later life (Stevenson et al., 2022; Chen & Yeung, 2025).

This phenomenon is reflected in the dynamics of divorce cases in Central Java Province during the period 2019–2024, which exhibit a fluctuating pattern. Data from the Central Java Provincial Statistics Office shown in Table 1 indicate that the number of divorces declined sharply in 2020. This condition is presumed to be related to restrictions on community mobility and limited access to court services during the COVID-19

pandemic. Subsequently, the number of divorces increased again in 2021 and 2022, in line with the recovery of economic activities and the rising economic pressure on households in the post-pandemic period. In 2023 and 2024, the number of divorces declined again, although it remained at a relatively high level. This pattern indicates that regional economic dynamics play an important role in influencing the development of divorce cases in Central Java.

Table 1.
Number and Fluctuation of Divorces in Central Java Province

Year	Number of Divorces (cases)	Fluctuation (%)
2020	65.755	−20.55
2021	75.509	14.83
2022	85.412	13.11
2023	76.367	−10.59
2024	64.569	−15.45

Source: Central Java Provincial Statistics Agency (BPS), processed data (2026).

A number of empirical studies demonstrate a significant relationship between economic factors and divorce. Studies by Gonalons-Pons & Gangl (2021), Di Nallo et al. (2022), Barbuscia et al. (2023), as well as Adilkhanova & Aliyev (2024) show that unemployment and income instability increase the risk of divorce through heightened household conflict. Other studies emphasize that poverty levels and low household economic welfare contribute to an increase in divorce filings, particularly divorce petitions initiated by women (Amri et al., 2022; Thielemans & Mortelmans, 2022; Rabbani et al., 2025). At the macro level, several studies indicate that increases in regional income and per capita expenditure have the potential to suppress divorce rates through improvements in living standards and family economic resilience (Azis, 2021; Sa'diah et al., 2023; Apostolou, 2025).

Although the relationship between economic factors and divorce has been widely studied, most previous research remains partial, relying on one or two economic indicators, and is conducted within limited regions and time periods. Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in the use of a more comprehensive approach by simultaneously analyzing the effects of gross regional domestic product per capita, open unemployment rate, poverty rate, and per capita expenditure on the number of divorce cases at the regency and city levels in Central Java Province during the period 2019–2024. The use of panel data across regions and time provides a more comprehensive picture of regional economic dynamics, particularly during the phase of economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on the above discussion, this study aims to analyze the effects of gross regional domestic product per capita, open unemployment rate, poverty rate, and per capita expenditure on the number of divorce cases in Central Java Province during the period 2019–2024. The results of this study are expected to contribute academically to the development of family economics and social economics literature, as well as to serve as a policy consideration for local governments and religious courts in formulating divorce prevention strategies through the strengthening of household economic welfare.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Effect of GRDP per Capita on the Number of Divorce Cases

Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) per capita reflects the average level of economic welfare of the population in a given region. Within the framework of economic welfare theory and family stress theory, an increase in average income plays a role in strengthening household economic stability, reducing financial pressure, and enhancing couples' capacity to meet living needs and formulate sustainable family planning (Stevenson et al., 2022). Regions with higher GRDP per capita are generally supported by greater job availability, better quality public services, and more adequate social protection, resulting in lower levels of household conflict stemming from economic problems (Ramadhani et al., 2023). Conversely, low GRDP per capita reflects limited economic opportunities, which increases household financial stress and heightens the risk of conflict between spouses that may end in divorce. Empirical evidence presented by Ul Haq et al. (2023) and Apostolou (2025) indicates that regions with lower levels of economic welfare tend to have higher divorce rates. Therefore, an increase in GRDP per capita is expected to be correlated with a decrease in the number of divorce cases.

H_1: GRDP per capita has a negative effect on the number of divorce cases.

The Effect of the Open Unemployment Rate on the Number of Divorce Cases

The open unemployment rate describes the condition in which a portion of the labor force is unable to obtain employment and adequate income (Dewi & Nurhayati, 2023). According to family stress theory, job loss or employment insecurity constitutes a significant source of economic and psychological stress within households, leading to a decline in relationship quality, deterioration of communication, and an increase in domestic conflict (Sprung, 2022). Unemployment also weakens individuals' sense of economic security and self-esteem, which in the long term can erode the stability of marital bonds. From the perspective of social conflict theory, imbalances in economic roles within households due to unemployment often trigger tension and dissatisfaction in spousal relationships (Riana et al., 2024). Several empirical studies conducted by Gonalons Pons and Gangl (2021), Di Nallo et al. (2022), Barbuscia et al. (2023), as well as Adilkhanova and Aliyev (2024) show that regions with higher unemployment rates tend to experience an increase in the number of divorce cases. Thus, an increase in the open unemployment rate is expected to be associated with an increase in the number of divorce cases.

H_2: The open unemployment rate has a positive effect on the number of divorce cases.

The Effect of the Poverty Rate on the Number of Divorce Cases

The poverty rate reflects the proportion of the population living below the minimum needs threshold and is closely related to household social and economic vulnerability (Nugroho & Arif, 2024; Saputro & Arif, 2024). Within the framework of relative deprivation theory and family stress theory, poverty conditions intensify life pressures, increase economic anxiety, and limit families' ability to meet basic needs, thereby raising the risk of conflict and household disintegration (Lee et al., 2023). Poor households generally have lower resilience in coping with economic shocks, such as rising prices of basic necessities or income reductions, making emerging conflicts more difficult to manage. Empirical findings by Amri et al. (2022) and Rabbani et al. (2025) indicate that poverty has a positive and significant relationship with increased divorce rates, particularly

among socioeconomically vulnerable groups. Therefore, an increase in the poverty rate is expected to lead to an increase in the number of divorce cases.

H_3: The poverty rate has a positive effect on the number of divorce cases.

The Effect of Per Capita Expenditure on the Number of Divorce Cases

Per capita expenditure represents household consumption capacity and purchasing power, reflecting the actual level of economic welfare of society. From the perspective of utility theory and household welfare theory, higher levels of expenditure indicate families' ability to meet basic and non-basic needs more adequately, thereby increasing life satisfaction and reducing the potential for household conflict (Piao & Managi, 2023). In addition, based on quality of life theory, better consumption capacity contributes to improved family quality of life and greater stability of marital relationships (Nadolu et al., 2020). Conversely, low per capita expenditure indicates limited household purchasing power, which may trigger economic pressure and domestic conflict. Empirical evidence presented by Aziz (2021) and Sa'diah et al. (2023) shows that households with low levels of consumption face a higher risk of divorce. Thus, an increase in per capita expenditure is expected to be correlated with a decrease in the number of divorce cases.

H_4: Per capita expenditure has a negative effect on the number of divorce cases.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs an explanatory quantitative approach aimed at analyzing the effect of economic factors on the number of divorce cases in Central Java Province. The quantitative approach is applied because the study tests hypotheses regarding causal relationships between independent and dependent variables using numerical data and inferential statistical analysis techniques (Taherdoost, 2022). The analysis focuses on the effects of Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) per capita, the open unemployment rate, the poverty rate, and per capita expenditure on the number of divorce cases at the regency/municipality level.

The research area covers all 35 regencies/municipalities in Central Java Province, with an observation period of six years, from 2019 to 2024. The data used are secondary data obtained from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) of each regency/municipality in Central Java Province. The combination of the time dimension (time series) and the regional dimension (cross section) forms panel data with a total of 210 observations. This data structure supports the analysis of changes over time as well as differences in characteristics across regions (Zyphur et al., 2020).

Data collection was conducted using a documentation technique by compiling data officially published by BPS and relevant to the research variables (Sulung & Muspawi, 2024). The dependent variable in this study is the number of divorce cases recorded in each regency/municipality. The independent variables include GRDP per capita, the open unemployment rate, the poverty rate, and per capita expenditure. The operational definitions and measurements of each variable are presented in Table 2.

Table 2.
Operational Definitions and Measurement of Variables

Variable	Operational Definition	Unit	Source
Number of Divorces	Number of divorce cases officially recorded in religious courts at the regency/municipality level	Cases	BPS
GRDP per Capita	GRDP per capita at current prices reflecting the level of community income	Million rupiah	BPS
Open Unemployment	Percentage of the working-age population that is unemployed and actively seeking employment	Percent (%)	BPS
Poverty Rate	Percentage of the population with expenditures below the poverty line	Percent (%)	BPS
Per Capita Expenditure	Average per capita expenditure of the population as an indicator of welfare	Rupiah	BPS

Data analysis was conducted using panel data regression through three estimation approaches: Pooled Least Squares (PLS), Fixed Effects Model (FEM), and Random Effects Model (REM) (Baltagi, 2021). The selection of the best model was carried out in stages. The Chow test was used to choose between PLS and FEM, while the Hausman test was employed to determine the more appropriate model between FEM and REM. Simultaneous model significance was tested using the F-test, while the partial effects of each independent variable were analyzed using the t-test. All data processing and analysis were performed using EViews 13 software. The empirical model of the study is formulated as follows:

$$NDC_{it} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Log}\,(GRDP)_{it} + \beta_2 OUR_{it} + \beta_3 POV_{it} + \beta_4 \text{Log}\,(PCE)_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

In this equation, NDC_{it} denotes the number of divorce cases in regencies/municipalities i in year t. The variable $\log(GRDP)_{it}$ represents gross regional domestic product (GRDP) per capita, OUR_{it} indicates the open unemployment rate, POV_{it} represents the poverty rate, and $\log(PCE)_{it}$ denotes per capita expenditure. Furthermore, ε_{it} is the error term, β_0 is the constant, while β_1 to β_4 are the regression coefficients of the respective independent variables. The natural logarithmic transformation is applied to GRDP per capita and per capita expenditure to reduce potential heteroskedasticity and to facilitate elasticity interpretation in the model estimation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Estimation Results

This section presents the results of panel data regression analysis estimated using three approaches: Pooled Least Squares (PLS), the Fixed Effects Model (FEM), and the Random Effects Model (REM). The model selection process was conducted using the Chow Test and the Hausman Test, the summary of which is presented in Table 3.

Table 3.
Summary of Panel Data Estimation Results Using PLS, FEM, and REM

Variable	Regression Coefficient		
	PLS	FEM	REM

Constant (C)	23.896	12.154	14.018
Log(GRDP)	−0.090	0.207	−0.025
OUR	0.083	−0.032	−0.036
POV	0.044	0.001	0.045
Log(PCE)	−1.133	−0.585	−0.460
R^2	0.344	0.909	0.091
Adjusted R^2	0.332	0.890	0.074
F-Statistic	26.914	45.113	5.148
Probability (F)	0.000	0.000	0.001
Model Selection Tests:			
1. Chow Test: Cross-section F (34,171) = 31.328; Probability = 0.000			
2. Hausman Test: χ^2 (4) = 18.794693; Probability = 0.001			

Source: Central Statistics Agency (BPS), processed data (2026).

The Chow Test is used to determine the most appropriate estimation model between PLS and FEM. The null hypothesis (H_0) of the Chow Test states that the appropriate model is PLS, while the alternative hypothesis (H_a) states that the appropriate model is FEM. H_0 is rejected if the p-value or the empirical significance of the F-statistic is less than or equal to α. Furthermore, the Hausman Test is used to select the appropriate estimation model between FEM and REM. The null hypothesis (H_0) of the Hausman Test states that the appropriate model is REM, while the alternative hypothesis (H_a) states that the appropriate model is FEM. H_0 is rejected if the p-value or the empirical significance of the chi-square statistic is less than or equal to α.

The results in Table 3 show that both the Chow Test and the Hausman Test indicate FEM as the best estimation model. This is reflected in the F-statistic probability value of 0.000, which is less than 0.01, and the chi-square statistic probability value of 0.001, which is also less than 0.01. Therefore, subsequent analysis uses the FEM estimation results presented in Table 4 and Table 5.

Hypothesis Testing

The F-test is a statistical test used to assess the significance of the simultaneous effect of all independent variables on the dependent variable in a regression model. Baltagi (2021) states that the F-test aims to examine whether all regression coefficients in the model are jointly equal to zero, and thus can be used to evaluate the statistical existence of the model. In this study, since there are four independent variables, the null hypothesis (H_0) is formulated as $\beta_1 = \beta_2 = \beta_3 = \beta_4 = 0$, meaning that the model does not exist. Conversely, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) states that at least one regression coefficient is not equal to zero. H_0 is rejected if the probability value of the F-statistic is less than or equal to α.

Table 4.
Summary of the Best Model: Fixed Effects Model (FEM)

$NDC_{it} = 12.154 + 0.207Log(GRDP)_{it} - 0.032OUR_{it} + 0.001POV_{it} - 0.585Log(PCE)_{it}$			
(0.560)	(0.114)	(0.984)	(0.017)**
$R^2 = 0.909$; Durbin–Watson = 2.148; F-Statistic = 45.113; Probability (F) = 0.000.			

Notes: Values in parentheses indicate t-statistic probabilities. ** significant at α = 0.05.
Source: Central Statistics Agency (BPS), processed data (2026).

Based on Table 4, the FEM is statistically significant with an F-statistic probability value of 0.000, which is less than 0.01. This indicates that the model is suitable for explaining the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Simultaneously, Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) per capita, Open Unemployment, Poverty, and Expenditure per capita have a significant effect on divorce. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.909 indicates that 90.9 percent of the variation in divorce can be explained by these four independent variables, while the remaining 9.1 percent is explained by other variables outside the model.

Table 5.
Results of the Effect Significance Test (t-test)

Variable	Coefficient	Sig. (t)	Criteria	Conclusion
Log(GRDP)	0.207	0.560	> 0.10	No effect
OUR	−0.032	0.114	> 0.10	No effect
POV	0.001	0.984	> 0.10	No effect
Log(PCE)	−0.585	0.017	< 0.05	Negative effect at α = 0.05

Source: Central Statistics Agency (BPS), processed data (2026).

The effect validity test or t-test is used to examine the significance of the partial effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable. The null hypothesis (H_0) in the t-test states that $\beta_i = 0$, meaning that the i-th independent variable does not have a significant effect on the dependent variable. The alternative hypothesis (H_a) states that β_1 and β_4 are negative, meaning that GRDP per capita and Expenditure per capita have a negative effect on divorce, while β_2 and β_3 are positive, meaning that Open Unemployment and Poverty have a positive effect on divorce. H_0 is rejected if the p-value or the empirical significance of the t-statistic is less than or equal to α.

The results in Table 5 show that of the four variables tested, only one variable has a significant effect on divorce, namely Expenditure per capita (PCE), with a t-statistic probability value of 0.017, which is less than 0.05. Thus, Expenditure per capita has a negative effect on divorce, while GRDP per capita, Open Unemployment, and Poverty do not show a significant effect.

The Expenditure per capita variable has a regression coefficient of −0.585 with a logarithmic-linear relationship specification. This means that every 1 percent increase in Expenditure per capita is followed by a decrease in the number of divorces by approximately 0.006 cases. This pattern indicates that an increase in household economic capacity plays a role in strengthening family stability and reducing the risk of divorce.

Table 6.
Summary of Effect Magnitudes and Regional Constants

Regency/City	Regional Effect	Regional Constant
Cilacap	1.147	13.302
Banyumas	0.987	13.141
Purbalingga	0.261	12.415
Banjarnegara	0.345	12.499
Kebumen	0.458	12.613
Purworejo	−0.240	11.914
Wonosobo	0.180	12.334
Magelang	0.139	12.293

Boyolali	−0.122	12.032
Klaten	−0.134	12.020
Sukoharjo	−0.260	11.894
Wonogiri	−0.169	11.985
Karanganyar	−0.258	11.896
Sragen	0.039	12.194
Grobogan	0.614	12.768
Blora	−0.108	12.047
Rembang	−0.505	11.650
Pati	0.458	12.612
Kudus	−0.773	11.381
Jepara	0.143	12.297
Demak	0.373	12.527
Semarang	−0.146	12.008
Temanggung	−0.349	11.805
Kendal	0.380	12.533
Batang	0.028	12.182
Pekalongan	0.049	12.203
Pemalang	0.887	13.042
Tegal	0.785	12.939
Brebes	1.151	13.305
Magelang City	−2.020	10.135
Surakarta City	−0.810	11.345
Salatiga City	−1.090	11.065
Semarang City	0.644	12.798
Pekalongan City	−1.103	11.050
Tegal City	−0.980	11.175

Source: Central Statistics Agency (BPS), processed data (2026).

Table 6 shows that the region with the highest regional constant value is Brebes Regency, amounting to 13.305. This indicates that, after accounting for the effects of GRDP per capita, Open Unemployment, Poverty, and Expenditure per capita, Brebes Regency tends to have a higher number of divorces compared to other regencies and cities in Central Java Province. Following Brebes Regency, regions with relatively high regional constant values are Cilacap Regency and Banyumas Regency, which also show a tendency toward above-average divorce rates compared to other regions.

Conversely, the lowest regional constant value is found in Magelang City at 10.135. This indicates that, under the influence of the same variables, the number of divorces in Magelang City tends to be lower than in other regencies and cities in Central Java Province. In addition to Magelang City, several other regions with relatively low regional constant values are Pekalongan City, Salatiga City, and Tegal City, reflecting a tendency toward lower divorce rates compared to other regions.

Discussion

The research findings indicate that the number of divorce cases across regencies and municipalities in Central Java Province during the 2019–2024 period is significantly influenced by per capita expenditure (PCE). In contrast, Gross Regional Domestic Product

(GRDP) per capita, the open unemployment rate (OUR), and the poverty rate (POV) do not exhibit a significant effect. This condition suggests that divorce dynamics in Central Java are more responsive to real economic well-being at the household level than to aggregate macroeconomic indicators. Stability of consumption and the ability to meet daily needs play a more decisive role in sustaining households than overall regional economic performance.

Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) per capita does not affect the number of divorce cases; therefore, Hypothesis 1 is rejected. This finding indicates that improvements in average regional economic welfare do not automatically lead to a reduction in household conflict or decisions to divorce. Theoretically, GRDP per capita is an aggregate macroeconomic indicator and thus does not reflect income distribution inequality or economic stability at the household level. From a welfare economics perspective, non-inclusive economic growth may raise average income without improving the well-being of vulnerable groups. Consequently, the influence of GRDP per capita on family stability becomes limited. This result is consistent with Alola et al. (2020) as well as Adilkhanova and Aliyev (2024), who find that GRDP per capita has no direct relationship with divorce rates. This argument reinforces the view that divorce decisions are more strongly influenced by economic pressures experienced directly by couples rather than by regional economic growth indicators alone. Therefore, policies aimed at increasing GRDP should be accompanied by social interventions and the strengthening of family institutions so that the benefits of economic growth are tangibly felt in household life (Stanfors et al., 2025).

The open unemployment rate also does not have a significant effect on the number of divorce cases; thus, Hypothesis 2 is rejected. This result indicates that fluctuations in regional unemployment do not necessarily represent direct experiences of job loss or income instability faced by couples. Within the framework of family stress theory, economic pressures that trigger household conflict are micro-level in nature and highly dependent on individual experiences, particularly the position of the primary breadwinner. The open unemployment indicator is aggregate and does not distinguish between unemployment duration, employment sectors, or household adaptation strategies in response to job loss. This finding is consistent with Koç and Şahpaz (2023), who state that regional unemployment does not always correlate with increased divorce rates. Accordingly, this study emphasizes that the impact of unemployment on divorce is individual and situational. Employment policies therefore need to be accompanied by income protection measures and psychosocial support for affected workers in order to maintain family resilience (Solaz et al., 2020).

The relationship between the poverty rate and the number of divorce cases also does not show a significant effect; therefore, Hypothesis 3 is rejected. This finding suggests that poverty, in isolation, does not have sufficient strength to drive divorce decisions without the presence of other triggering factors, such as prolonged conflict, domestic violence, or changes in economic roles between spouses. From the perspective of relative deprivation, economic pressure resulting from poverty is often chronic and internalized within household survival strategies, and thus does not always lead to family disintegration. The presence of social networks, extended family support, and social protection programs also plays a role in reducing the direct impact of poverty on divorce decisions. This result aligns with Amri et al. (2022) and Ramadhani et al. (2023), who show that the effect of poverty on

divorce is indirect and mediated by other factors, including women's income roles and households' capacity to manage conflict. Therefore, poverty alleviation efforts should be accompanied by family resilience strengthening programs and financial literacy initiatives so that improvements in economic welfare do not adversely affect marital stability.

In contrast to the other variables, per capita expenditure has a negative and significant effect on the number of divorce cases; thus, Hypothesis 4 is accepted. This finding indicates that household consumption capacity and purchasing power are key factors in maintaining marital stability. Within the framework of utility theory and quality of life theory, higher levels of expenditure reflect the fulfillment of both basic and non-basic needs, which contributes to increased life satisfaction and reduced domestic conflict. Relatively stable economic conditions also raise the economic costs of divorce, such as asset division and declines in living standards, thereby encouraging couples to preserve household integrity. This result is consistent with Aziz (2021), Sa'diah et al. (2023), and Apostolou (2025), who demonstrate that consumption stability functions as a protective factor against divorce. Accordingly, improvements in real economic welfare that are directly experienced by households constitute an effective policy instrument for reducing divorce rates at the regional level.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the increasing number of divorce cases in Central Java Province during the 2019–2024 period by positioning divorce as an interrelated social, legal, and economic issue. Divorce not only affects family stability but also has implications for the quality of human resources, social resilience, and the sustainability of regional economic development. On this basis, the study analyzes the influence of key economic variables—namely Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) per capita, the open unemployment rate, the poverty rate, and per capita expenditure—on the number of divorce cases at the regency and municipal levels.

The results of the panel data regression estimation using the Fixed Effects Model indicate that, simultaneously, economic variables have a significant effect on the number of divorce cases in Central Java Province. Partially, only per capita expenditure has a negative and significant effect on divorce. These findings suggest that improvements in real household economic welfare, as reflected in consumption capacity, play an important role in reducing the risk of divorce. In contrast, GRDP per capita, the open unemployment rate, and the poverty rate do not have a significant effect, indicating that aggregate macroeconomic indicators do not yet fully reflect the economic conditions directly experienced by households.

The policy implications of this study indicate that development strategies focused solely on macroeconomic growth and increases in average regional income are not sufficient to effectively reduce divorce rates. Development policies need to be directed toward improving real household welfare through strengthening purchasing power, ensuring consumption stability, and implementing responsive social protection schemes. With such an approach, efforts to reduce divorce can be integrated with inclusive and sustainable economic development strategies, oriented toward strengthening family resilience as the foundation of human resource development.

This study has several limitations. First, the use of aggregate data at the regency and municipal levels is not fully capable of capturing variations in economic conditions and the dynamics of relationships within households. Second, this study does not incorporate non-economic factors, such as spouses' education levels, age at marriage, women's income contributions, as well as social and cultural aspects, which potentially influence the relationship between economic conditions and divorce.

Future research is recommended to integrate social, demographic, and institutional variables and to utilize household-level microdata so that causal mechanisms can be analyzed more deeply. The use of methodological approaches such as dynamic panel models or spatial econometrics may also help identify long-term impacts and interregional linkages in divorce dynamics. Comparative studies across provinces or during periods of economic shocks could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between economic stability and family resilience.

Overall, this study affirms that divorce is a multidimensional phenomenon closely related to household economic welfare. Improvements in quality of life and consumption stability are important factors in maintaining the sustainability of the family institution and supporting economic development oriented toward social resilience. Therefore, integrating economic policy with family resilience policy is a strategic step to ensure that development is not only focused on economic growth but also on strengthening the social structure of society.

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