

## The Role of the Office of Religious Affairs and Community Leaders in Preventing Early Marriage in East Palu District

Priagung Sukri<sup>1\*</sup>, Marzuki Marzuki<sup>2</sup> & Fatimawali Fatimawali<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Islamic Religious Education Study Program State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup> State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia

\*Corresponding Author: Priagung Sukri, E-mail: [priagungsukri83@gmail.com](mailto:priagungsukri83@gmail.com)

### ARTICLE INFO

### ABSTRACT

Volume: 2

### KATAKUNCI

Early Marriage, Community Leaders, & Office of Religious Affairs.

Early marriage is a marriage performed by one or both bride and groom who have not yet reached the age specified by Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage. East Palu District, Palu City is one of the areas where people still practice early marriage, even from 2020-2022 cases of early marriage in the sub-district have increased. Based on this reality, the formulation of the problem is: what are the factors that have caused the increase in early marriages in East Palu District? What is the role of the Office of Religious Affairs and community leaders in preventing early marriage in East Palu District? And what are the obstacles experienced by the Office of Religious Affairs and community leaders in preventing early marriage in East Palu District? This research is a field research that uses a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques in this study through observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis techniques used are data reduction, data presentation, and data verification. The results of the study show that the factors causing early marriage in East Palu District are: Lack of parents' role in educating children, promiscuity, the urgent economic situation of parents, parents' awareness that is still lacking regarding the age limit for marriage. The efforts of the KUA and community leaders to prevent early marriage include: holding counseling and outreach, tightening administration, fostering sakinah families, and appealing to community leaders and parents to take part in preventing early marriage. The obstacles experienced by KUA and community leaders in preventing early marriage are the lack of people who pay attention when counseling and outreach are carried out, parents who are in a hurry to marry off their children.

### 1. Introduction

The Office of Religious Affairs (hereinafter referred to as KUA) is the frontline work unit that carries out some of the duties of the Ministry of Religion in the field of Islamic Religion at the sub-district level. It is said to be the foremost unit, because the KUA has direct contact with the people in each of its sub-districts. The KUA is tasked with carrying out managerial training, sakinah families, social worship, halal food, partnerships, zakat, waqf, pilgrimage, and family welfare. (Departemen Agama RI, 2004)

The reality of early marriage as mentioned above also occurs in East Palu District. According to data from the KUA of East Palu District, in the last three years, cases of early marriage in East Palu District have increased. In 2016 there were 8 cases of early marriage, then increased to 12 cases in 2017, and increased again from 12 cases to 14 cases in 2018.

<sup>1</sup> **Priagung Sukri** is a Student of Islamic Family Law Study Program at Postgraduate School, State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia. This paper was presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Islamic and Interdisciplinary Studies (ICIIS) 2023, as a presenter, held by the Postgraduate School State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia.

Based on these data, this clearly indicates that public awareness is still lacking to marry at the ideal age according to the Marriage Law. Therefore, the role of the government, in this case the KUA, must be maximized to overcome this problem. Apart from the role of the KUA, in this case the KUA of East Palu District, the participation of community leaders is clearly needed in preventing early marriage. Community leaders such as religious leaders, traditional leaders, and organizational leaders in East Palu District who have a special place in the hearts of the community, where their advice or advice is accepted by the community.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 General Terms of Marriage

Marriage according to language comes from Arabic which is called by two words namely *al-jam'u* dan *al-dhamu* which means gathering. (Ahmad Warson Munawwir, 1997) The meaning of marriage is contract or bond, because in a marriage process there is an agreement (statement of submission from the woman's side), and kabul (a statement of acceptance from the male side). In addition, marriage can also be interpreted as intercourse. (Abd. Rachman Assegaf, 2005)

Meanwhile, according to Syarak, marriage is a handover contract between a man and a woman with the aim of mutually satisfying each other and forming a *sakinah* household ark and a prosperous society. (H.M.A. Tihami dan Sohari Sahrani, 2013)

In the Qur'an it has also been explained about marriage, which is contained in Q.S. Az-Zariyat (51):49 (Departemen Agama RI, 1989)

وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

Terjemahnya:

*"And everything We have created in pairs so that you may remember the greatness of Allah."*

### 2.2 Purpose and Wisdom of Marriage

The purpose of marriage in Islam is to fulfill religious instructions in order to establish a harmonious, prosperous and happy family. Harmonious in carrying out the rights and obligations as a family member. Prosperity means the creation of inner and outer peace due to the fulfillment of the needs of life both physically and mentally, so that happiness arises, namely affection between families.. (Asmin, 1986)

Apart from that, the purpose of marriage in Islam is also to fulfill the demands of human nature and needs, legally to have a relationship between a man and a woman in order to create a happy family based on love to obtain legitimate offspring in the surrounding community, by following the provisions provisions stipulated by law. (Soemiyati, 1986)

The details of the purpose of marriage in Islam are as follows (Chairul Djihad, 2011):

- a. Follow the sunnah of Rasulullah saw.
- b. Maintaining morals, chastity of morals and establishing a bond of affection between husband and wife towards a *sakinah*, *mawadah*, and mercy family.
- c. To meet the basic demands of human instincts.
- d. To fortify noble morals and maintain self-respect.
- e. Find peace of mind, peace of mind, and feelings.
- f. Inherit.
- g. Making husband and wife and family members closer to Allah swt. and stay away from His prohibitions.

In Chapter II Article 3 of the Compilation of Islamic Law it is emphasized that "Marriage aims to create a household life that is *sakinah*, *mawadah* and mercy." Furthermore, Article 7 (1) of the Marriage Law states that the purpose of marriage is to form a happy and eternal family. Thus, husband and wife need to help and complement each other, in order to achieve a prosperous family both spiritually and materially.

The wisdom of marriage is (Tihami and Sohari Sahrani, 2010):

- a. Marriage is the best and most suitable natural way to channel and satisfy the sex instinct. With marriage, the body becomes fresh, the soul becomes calm, the eyes are protected from seeing what is forbidden, and the feeling of calm enjoys something valuable.
- b. Marriage is the best way to make children noble, multiply offspring, preserve human life, and maintain destiny which is very concerned by Islam.
- c. The instincts of fatherhood and motherhood will grow to complement each other in a living atmosphere with children and feelings of kindness, love and affection will also grow, which are good qualities that perfect one's humanity.
- d. Realizing the responsibilities of having a wife and husband, and being responsible for children can lead to a diligent and earnest attitude in strengthening one's talents and character. He will work fast, because of the encouragement of responsibility and carry out his obligations.
- e. The division of tasks, where one takes care of the household, while the other works outside to earn a living, in accordance with the boundaries of responsibility between husband and wife in handling their duties.
- f. Marriage can produce, among other things: family ties, strengthening the longevity of love between families, and strengthening community relations, which is indeed sanctioned by Islam, supported and supported. Because a society that supports and loves one another is a strong and happy society.

### 2.3 Impact of Early Marriage

In general, early marriage has various impacts, both positive and negative, including:

- a. Avoid things that are not desirable

Family life guarantees the perpetrators to avoid immoral acts, both immoral eyes because they look at the opposite sex who are not their legal partner, immoral hands because they are making out with other women or men, and other immoral things, because the biological need to do these things already exists in the husband or his wife. More than that, having a family can also abstain from adultery, because turbulent lust has found its channel legally to the husband or wife.

- b. Impact on Education

Someone who has married at a young age, his desire to continue school will be difficult to achieve because the learning motivation possessed by early marriage actors will begin to decline because of the many responsibilities that must be borne after marriage. In other words, early marriage is one of the inhibiting factors for the process of education or learning.

- c. Impact on Psychology

Psychologically, children are not ready and do not understand how to build a good household. This certainly can be a trigger for a child's psychological disturbance, because there are so many responsibilities that he has to bear at a young age. When he is unable to carry out this responsibility, then it becomes something he constantly thinks about that causes him to become depressed.

- d. Biological Impact

Biologically, the reproductive organs in young children are still in the process of reaching maturity so they are not ready to have sex with the opposite sex, especially if they get pregnant and then give birth. Extensive tear and infection that will harm his reproductive organs will be a psychological trauma for him. Besides that, according to dr. Merry Amelya PS, Sp. OG, reproductive organs that are still immature if forced to have sex will cause psychological trauma, this condition can also cause high blood pressure and miscarriage in the fetus. According to him, if it's too early, the tissues around the female area are not completely ready to receive sexual stimulation. Meanwhile, biologically, women are considered ready to accept sexual relations at the age of 18 and over.

- e. Dampak bagi kesehatan

In terms of health, women who become pregnant at a very young age have several impacts on themselves and their babies. Generally, there are four pregnancy health conditions that often arise as a result of early marriage, namely:

- 1) First, high blood pressure. A person may experience preeclampsia, which is a condition in which a person has serious pregnancy complications characterized by high blood pressure, protein in the urine, and signs of damage to other organs. Treatment must be continued to control blood pressure and prevent complications, but at the same time this can also interfere with the growth of the baby in the womb.

- 2) Second, anemia. Getting pregnant at a young age can also cause anemia, due to the lack of iron consumed by pregnant women. Anemia during pregnancy can increase the risk of premature babies and difficulties during childbirth. Very severe anemia during pregnancy can also have an impact on the development of the baby in the womb.
- 3) Third, babies born prematurely and LBW. The incidence of premature birth increases in pregnancies at a very young age. These premature babies generally have low birth weight (LBW) because they are actually not ready to be born at less than 37 weeks of gestation. Premature babies are at risk for suffering from respiratory, digestive, vision, cognitive, and other problems.
- 4) Fourth, the mother dies in childbirth. According to the National Health Service, women who are pregnant and give birth under the age of 18 are at risk of dying during childbirth. The reason is, at this young age their bodies are not yet physically mature and ready to give birth. In addition, their narrow pelvis because they are not fully developed can also be the cause of babies dying during childbirth.

### **3. Methodology**

The type of research used is qualitative research, namely by using field research instruments. While the method used in this research is descriptive method, which is a method that is directed to solve factual problems by describing or describing research results (Sudarmin danim, 2002). The research location is in KUA Kecamatan Palu Timur, data collection techniques are observation, interviews, and documentation (Abdurahman Fhatoni, 2006), data analysis techniques in this study consist of three types, namely: data reduction, data presentation, data verification (Emzir , 2011).

### **4. Results and Discussion**

#### *4.1 Factors Causing the Increase in Early Marriage in East Palu District*

##### a. The Role of Parents

The role of parents is very important in the formation of the child's character and soul. The character, attitude, and mindset of children depend on how parents educate them. The lack of the role of parents in supervising and educating children is one of the dominant factors in the practice of early marriage. According to Hj. Sutomo as a religious leader in East Palu District, the lack of instilling morals and basic religious values by parents in their children is the main factor causing the increase in early marriages. Because when children don't accept or even don't get moral education and basic religious values from their parents, then children easily fall into promiscuity which can trigger pre-marital pregnancies.

##### b. Promiscuity

Pirnady as Head of the KUA of East Palu District said that the cause of promiscuity was not only the minimal role of parents in caring for and educating children, but self-control of the children themselves was also very necessary. Because sometimes in reality, even though the parents have educated and cared for the child as best they can to avoid unwanted things, if the child does not have strong self-control, then he still wants to do things that deviate, and he always have a reason and a way to do that. The most common deviation is pre-marital pregnancy, which has triggered an increase in cases of early marriage in East Palu District

##### c. Urgent Economy

According to Dr. Rosna A. Dawaradji as Chair of the PKK in East Palu District, the urgent economic situation of parents is one of the factors why the practice of early marriage has increased in the last 3 years in East Palu District. According to him, it is very wrong for parents to assume that by marrying off their daughters even though they are still underage, it can reduce their economic burden, because their daughters are no longer responsible for providing a living. In reality, the opposite happened. In some cases, it is the parents who continue to bear most of the living expenses of their daughter and the child's husband. This is due to their young age which causes them difficulty getting jobs to make ends meet

#### *4.2 Efforts Taken by KUA and Community Leaders in Preventing Early Marriage in East Palu Districts.*

##### Counseling and dissemination of marriage law

Counseling and outreach regarding the Marriage Law carried out by the KUA of East Palu District was the most frequently carried out effort. In this case, the KUA of East Palu District provides counseling to prospective brides who will register regarding marriage matters and an overview of sakinah, mawadah, and grace marriages. That marriage is not a trivial matter, but a sacred bond that is carried out once in a lifetime. Not only that, the East Palu District KUA is also trying to socialize the Marriage Law, especially regarding the marriage age limit contained in Article 7 (1) that the marriage age limit for men is 19 years, and 16 years for women. This socialization was delivered through formal and non-formal activities such as weddings, counseling courses for brides and grooms, and religious lectures, as well as social media.

b. Strengthening Administrative Services

In administrative services, especially those related to people who want to register a marriage, the KUA of East Palu District always checks the files of the prospective bride and groom carefully. If anyone is found to have falsified their age or what is commonly known as 'stealing their age', the KUA of East Palu District will not hesitate to reject their files. This is done to tighten administrative services to prevent an increase in the number of early marriages in East Palu District.

c. Sakinah Family Development

Individually, coaching is carried out in the form of giving advice directly face to face between the coach and the bride and groom. This individual coaching is done if the bride and groom are only a pair. Sakinah family development in groups is carried out through taklim assemblies, and religious events related to marriage. Through fostering a sakinah family, it is hoped that advice about marriage will not only be heard, but also practiced seriously and consistently so that the purpose and nature of a marriage can be achieved.

d. Appeal to Community Leaders and Parents

In preventing the practice of early marriage, the KUA of East Palu District also appealed to community leaders and parents to take part in preventing early marriage because the problem of early marriage is not just a one-sided problem, early marriage is a problem for all parties, especially parents. When early marriage occurs, the quality of the next generation of the nation also influences, because the perpetrators of early marriage are children who are still young. What they should do at a very young age is learn, be creative, develop their interests and talents so that they become the next generation of quality. Therefore, the role of community leaders and parents is needed in preventing the widespread practice of early marriage.

#### 4.3 Obstacles experienced by KUA Community Leaders in Preventing Early Marriage in East Palu District.

a. Lack of Community Participation in Extension and Outreach Activities

In carrying out counseling and outreach activities, community participation is of course very much needed. Because the target or target of these activities is the community itself. Pirnady, as the Head of the KUA of East Palu District, said that when the counseling activities were held, there were very few people who came. Even when the activity was held, the people who attended paid little attention to what the instructor said. Even so, officials from the KUA still feel grateful to the community because there are still people who are aware of how important the age limit is in carrying out marriages, even though the number is not much.

b. The Existence of Marriage Dispensation as a Way to Facilitate Child Marriage

The marriage dispensation regulated in the Marriage Law is sometimes a reason for parents to continue to marry their children who are still under age. According to Hj. Sutomo, the marriage dispensation issued by the local court is one way to make it easier for parents to marry off their children who are underage. This is not just a theory, but there are facts that are happening in the field, especially in East Palu District itself. This could be a boomerang for the government. Because the government itself wants the increase in the practice of early marriage to be reduced, but the existence of a marriage dispensation can actually be one of the factors that can increase the number of cases of early marriage, and become an obstacle in preventing early marriage.

c. Unavoidable Marriage Due to Pre-Marriage Pregnancy

One of the obstacles experienced by KUA and community leaders in preventing early marriage is the case of pre-marital pregnancies which must be married off immediately, because if not, then this will be a disgrace for the perpetrators of pre-marital pregnancy and their families, especially both parents. Traditional Leader of East Palu District, Hj. Amrullah said that he once accompanied an Imam of a mosque in marrying off a child due to pre-marital pregnancy. As the saying goes, 'rice has turned to mush', so does the parable of a child who is pre-marital pregnant, so it cannot be prevented from having a marriage, instead it must be expedited before the child's belly gets bigger.

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research that has been done, the conclusions that can be obtained are as follows:

a. The factors causing the increase in early marriages in East Palu District are:

- 1) Lack of parental role in supervising and educating children.
- 2) Free association that has an impact on pre-marital pregnancy or married by accident.

*The Role of the Office of Religious Affairs and Community Leaders in Preventing Early Marriage in East Palu District*

- 3) The urgent economic situation caused by the thoughts of parents who assume that by marrying off their daughters, even if they are still underage, can reduce their economic burden.
  - 4) The lack of awareness of parents about the age limit for marriage.
- b. The efforts made by KUA and community leaders in preventing marriage are as follows:
- 1) Conduct counseling and socialization of the Marriage Law.
  - 2) Tighten administrative services, especially in marriage registration.
  - 3) Sakinah family development which is carried out through courses for prospective brides, both individually and in groups.
  - 4) Give advice to community leaders and parents to take part in preventing early marriage.
- The efforts made by community leaders in preventing early marriage are:
- 1) Participate in socializing the Marriage Law through lectures and religious activities.
  - 2) Approaching the community about the negative impacts of early marriage.
  - 3) Give advice on the importance of morals and education to parents and children.
  - 4) Become a mediator in preventing early marriage.
- c. The obstacles experienced by KUA and community leaders in preventing marriage are:
- 1) Lack of community participation in outreach and outreach activities.
  - 2) The existence of a marriage dispensation as a way to facilitate child marriages carried out by parents.
  - 3) Marriages that cannot be prevented or canceled due to pre-marital pregnancy, must even be rushed so as not to become a disgrace to themselves and their families.

## References

- Asmin. (1986). *Status Perkawinan Antar Agama Tinjauan dari Undang-Undang Perkawinan No. 1/1974*. Jakarta: PT Dian Rakyat.
- Assegaf, Abd. Rachman. (2005). *Studi Islam Kontekstual Elaborasi Paradigma Baru Muslim Kaffah*. Yogyakarta: Gama Media.
- At-Tihami, Muhammad. (2004). *Merawat Cinta Kasih Menurut Syariat Islam*, (Surabaya: Ampel Mulia).
- Detikdotcom, Tim Redaksi. (2019). *Menikah di Usia Terlalu Muda ini Dampak Biologisnya*. Online di: <https://m.detik.com/health/berita-detikhealth/d-4201873/menikah-di-usia-terlalu-muda-ini-dampak-biologisnya>. Pada 20 Agustus 2023.
- Djihad, Chairul dkk. (2011). *Buku Panduan Keluarga Muslim*. Semarang: BP.4.
- Munawwir, Ahmad Warson. (1997). *Al-Munawwir (Kamus Arab-Indonesia)*. Surabaya: Pustaka Progressif.
- RI, Departemen Agama. (1989). *Alquran dan Terjemahnya*. Semarang: CV. TOHA PUTRA.
- RI, Departemen Agama. (2004). *Tugas-Tugas Pejabat Pencatat Nikah, Bimbingan Masyarakat Islam, dan Penyelenggaraan Haji*. Jakarta: Departemen Agama RI.
- Soemiyati. (1986). *Hukum Perkawinan Islam dan Undang-Undang Perkawinan*. Yogyakarta: Liberty.
- Tihami dan Sohari Sahrani. (2010). *Fiqh Munakahat*. Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada.
- Tihami, H.M.A. dan Sohari Sahrani. (2013). *Fikih Munakahat: Kajian Fikih Nikah Lengkap*. Jakarta: PT Rajagrafindo Persada.