

ANALYSIS OF VILANALYSIS OF MENTAL READINESS FOR EARLY MARRIAGE IN CIAMIS REGENCY

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Abstract

This study aims to reduce the increasing rate of early marriage in Ciamis Regency. The research employs a qualitative method, conducting interviews at the Ciamis Religious Court with prospective brides and grooms applying for marriage dispensations. Data analysis was performed to understand the mental readiness of adolescents regarding early marriage. The findings indicate that the mental readiness of marriage dispensation applicants is at a threshold between ready and unready. Many young couples are still trapped in the adolescent developmental phase, where the need for immediate gratification outweighs long-term planning. This is evident from the reasons for marriage, which are often triggered by economic factors, education, and unintended pregnancy, without due consideration for the mental and emotional preparedness required to face domestic conflicts. These findings support the understanding that marriage is not merely about the solemnization of the *ijab Kabul* but necessitates comprehensive mental and financial readiness.

Keywords : Mental readiness, Early marriage, Married.

A. INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a ceremony of binding vows celebrated or performed by two people with the intention of formalizing the marriage bond according to religious, legal, and social norms (Justiantini & Mustofa, 2020). Wedding ceremonies vary widely according to ethnic, religious, cultural, and social class traditions. Early marriage occurs to avoid slander or extramarital sex (Al Adawiah et al., 2025). Some parents also marry off their teenage children for economic reasons.

By marrying off a daughter, it means that the burden on parents in supporting the child is reduced, because the daughter will become her husband's responsibility after marriage (Adam A, 2020). Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 1 of 1974, Article 7 regulates the minimum age limit for marriage where marriage is only permitted if the man has reached the age of 19 years and the woman has reached the age of 16 years. Meanwhile, based on health science, the ideal age for biological and psychological maturity is 20 to 25 years for women, then 25 to 30 years for men. This age is considered the best time to get married, because it is mature and can think maturely on average.

According to the Indonesian Ministry of Health (2011), adolescents are divided into early adolescence, namely 10-13 years, middle adolescence 14-16 years and late adolescence 17-19 years. Meanwhile, according to WHO, adolescence is a period of growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, from the age of 10-19 years. And the purpose of marriage is to form a happy, prosperous and eternal family based on the One Almighty God. To realize this noble goal, among other things, it must be supported by physical or material readiness and spiritual maturity (mental) of each prospective bride and groom.

For a young man, the age at which to enter marriage and family life is generally based on his physical and mental maturity, as well as his ability to shoulder the responsibilities of a husband in his household. This is the standard that young men should adhere to, unless there are other factors that require hastening their marriage to protect them from sins that would have worse consequences. For a young woman, the age at which to marry is determined by the possibility of a quick pregnancy and first birth. This age must take into account her physical and spiritual maturity, which will enable her to carry out her duties as a wife and mother to the best of her ability.

Islamic law teaches that one of the main requirements for the validity of a sharia is that the person concerned has reached puberty. Therefore, a man who has not reached puberty cannot legally perform the qabul (acceptance of marriage) in a marriage contract. It is important to note that in carrying out the marriage contract, the prospective groom must say qabul (acceptance of marriage). Marriage is important for humans, because through marriage a person will achieve balance in life both biologically, psychologically and socially. Meanwhile, mentally and spiritually, those who are married are better able to control their emotions and control their sexual desires. Emotional maturity is a very important aspect for maintaining the continuity of a marriage. The success of a household is largely determined by the emotional maturity of both husband and wife. In essence, marriage is not only a bond that aims to legalize biological relationships, but also to form a family that requires the parties to marry to be independent in thinking and resolving problems within the marriage.

The purpose of marriage in religion is not only to have children but also to fulfill religious guidance in order to establish a harmonious, prosperous and happy family. Harmony in exercising the rights and obligations of family members. Prosperity means the creation of physical and spiritual peace due to the fulfillment of physical and spiritual life needs, so that happiness arises, namely affection between family members. Someone who has entered into a physical and spiritual bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife with the aim of forming a family, whether done legally or according to custom/belief can also be said to be married. If a marriage is performed by someone who is relatively young, it can be said to be an early marriage. The relatively young age referred to is the age of puberty, namely between the ages of 10-19 years. Therefore, a teenager between the ages of 10 and 19 who has entered into a physical and spiritual union as husband and wife with the intention of starting a family is said to be in an early marriage or young marriage. Or it can be said that a young marriage is a marriage in which one or both partners are under 18 or are currently attending high school. Therefore, a marriage is considered early if both or one of the partners is still under 18 (still a teenager).

Theoretically, adolescence is a time of storm and stress, where individuals are searching for self-identity and emotional stability. According to the theory of psychosocial development (Erikson in Alfina et al., 2026), adolescents are in the stage of identity versus role confusion. Marriage at this stage forces adolescents to prematurely jump into the intimacy versus isolation stage. As a result, role clashes occur between the desire to explore themselves and the heavy responsibilities of being a head of the family or a housewife. Mental unpreparedness in dealing with domestic conflict, managing finances, and raising children becomes a ticking time bomb that increases the risk of divorce later in life.

In Ciamis Regency, various factors contribute to early marriage. Besides economic factors, which remain a traditional reason, pressure from social and cultural norms that dictate "it's better to marry young than to commit adultery" remains strong among rural communities. Furthermore, advances in information technology, not matched by a good understanding of sexual literacy, also contribute to the rise in unwanted pregnancies (KTD), which often lead to forced marriages to maintain family honor. In such situations, mental preparedness is often neglected as the primary focus shifts to fulfilling legal requirements and restoring social status.

Mental readiness is not just about courage, but also includes the ability to control emotions, problem-solving skills, and the cognitive maturity needed to understand the long-term consequences of decisions made. Young couples are more vulnerable to post-marital stress, the loss of precious youth, and the risk of domestic violence if they are not mentally prepared. Considering the consequences, ranging from mental health problems to the poor quality of the next generation, it is crucial to conduct a comprehensive study on how early marriage participants in Ciamis perceive and perceive their mental readiness. This study aims to describe the psychological reality of early marriage participants in Ciamis Regency through a qualitative approach. By understanding their mental dynamics through group counseling and interviews at the Ciamis Regency Religious Court, it is hoped that the results of this study can provide a foundation for the community to avoid choosing to marry as teenagers.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Muhyi (in Shufiyah, 2018), marriage signifies readiness to assume various new responsibilities as a wife and husband. Therefore, within a marriage, each person has the responsibility to fulfill their respective rights and obligations, both for the wife and the husband. A successful marriage can be seen from the readiness of the husband and wife to shoulder their respective responsibilities (Shufiyah, 2018). Marriage is not just about a man and a woman living together, but rather about how two different people can unite their hearts and minds, creating a long-lasting family of happiness and well-being.

Girls are generally the most vulnerable victims of early marriage, a condition that affects girls physically, who are not yet ready for pregnancy and childbirth. In the Indonesian context, marriage is regulated by the state through Marriage Law No. 1 of 1974. In this context, marriage is defined as a physical and spiritual bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife with the goal of forming a happy and peaceful family.

Erik Erikson (1902–1994), who explained human development throughout the lifespan, from birth to old age, divided human development into eight stages. Adolescents (ages 12–18) are in the Identity vs. Role Confusion stage.

According to Fadilah (2021), early marriage is a marriage that occurs during adolescence, before adolescence, or just after adolescence. In Indonesia, although the law strictly prohibits early marriage, cases of early marriage often increase every year. Besides inherent traditional factors, parental coercion, economic and social factors, or even worse, premarital pregnancy, are often the reasons why early marriages occur. Marrying at an early age is not permitted, considering that marriage means taking on new duties and responsibilities, such as taking care of a family, being responsible for raising children, and ensuring a decent life for children. These are all not easy things to do, especially if done at an age that is not appropriate. It is feared that if a woman is already carrying out household duties at an early age, her mental health will be affected. For a woman, early marriage even carries the risk of miscarriage at a young age or the death of the mother and child.

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Based on the focus of the article's problem, namely understanding adolescents' mental readiness for early marriage in Ciamis Regency, this study is more appropriate to use a descriptive qualitative method with a case study design. This method was chosen because the issue of mental readiness cannot be explained simply through numbers, but rather requires a deeper understanding of the subject's experiences, considerations, social pressures, and how the subject interprets the decision to marry early. A qualitative approach is used when researchers want to understand the phenomenon from the perspective of the participants, while a qualitative descriptive approach allows for the presentation of a complete picture that is close to the informant's real experience. The case study design is also relevant because the research focuses on a bounded context, namely adolescent couples or marriage dispensation applicants in Ciamis Regency, so that economic factors, education, premarital pregnancy, and mental readiness can be analyzed contextually. Thus, this method is most appropriate to answer the research problem raised in the article.

Data collection techniques in this study were conducted through in-depth semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation studies. In-depth interviews were used as the primary technique because they were able to explore subjective experiences, psychological conditions, reasons for early marriage, and the forms of mental readiness or unpreparedness felt by informants. Non-participant observation was used to capture the interactions, expressions, and dynamics that emerged during the counseling process or when informants explained their experiences. Documentation was used to complement the field data, for example through marriage dispensation files, supporting data from religious courts, and policy documents or literature related to early marriage. The combination of these three techniques is crucial so that the data obtained is not only narratively rich, but also contextually stronger and can confirm each other.

The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, which involves deliberately selecting informants based on criteria that best align with the research objectives. This technique is relevant because not everyone has direct experience with the phenomenon being studied, so researchers need to select informants who can truly provide rich and in-depth information. Primary informants can be teenagers or couples applying for marriage dispensation at the Ciamis Regency Religious Court, while supporting informants can include parents, religious court officials, or parties involved in the counseling process. The number of informants does not have to be determined rigidly from the outset, but is adjusted according to the principle of data saturation, which occurs when the information obtained becomes repetitive and no longer yields substantive new findings. This approach aligns the sampling process more

closely with the characteristics of qualitative research, which emphasizes data depth over the number of respondents.

The most appropriate data analysis technique is interactive analysis, which includes data condensation, data presentation, and drawing and verifying conclusions. In the initial stage, researchers select, focus, and simplify data from interviews, observations, and documentation into meaningful units relevant to the research theme. The next stage is data presentation in narrative form, a matrix, or groupings of themes such as economic factors, social pressure, education, premarital pregnancy, and emotional maturity. Afterward, researchers draw tentative conclusions and continuously verify them by comparing data sources to ensure consistent and accountable interpretations. To strengthen the credibility of the findings, this study can also utilize triangulation of sources and techniques, so that the analysis results do not rely solely on a single type of data.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher will explain the results of a study related to the analysis of mental readiness for early marriage in Ciamis Regency. The research was conducted through group counseling and interviews at the Ciamis Regency Religious Court.

Factors of Marriage in Adolescence

Based on interviews, couples' mental readiness for marriage dispensation requests hovers between readiness and insecurity. Many young couples are still trapped in the adolescent phase of development, where immediate gratification is more important than long-term planning. This is evident in the reasons for marriage, which are often driven by economic factors, education, and premarital pregnancy, often without considering and considering mental and emotional readiness to face marital conflict.

The first factor contributing to teenage marriage is economic factors. Low family economic status can be a factor in early marriage for young girls. Early marriages are common in poor families, where families are unable to support their children and choose to marry them off to lessen the family's financial burden. After marriage, the girl is no longer the responsibility of her family; instead, her husband covers all her needs.

The second factor is the education of young women who marry at an early age, on average they have a low education, such as the equivalent of elementary or junior high school graduates. Many girls who cannot continue their education due to economic factors as well. Parents are unable to pay for their children's schooling so they prefer to marry their daughters and assume that girls do not need to go to college because in the future they will only take care of the household and their living expenses are covered by their husbands, basically the child's job is to be responsible for their schooling and education is something important, The high level of education will affect a person's mindset, especially women, in facing life's problems, and women who have high knowledge will be more valued. Conversely, the low level of knowledge and education of young women can affect their mindset, teenagers will think about things that do not need to be thought about in their lives at that age, young women who have low knowledge, will focus more on getting married young.

Essentially, a child's responsibility is to take care of their schooling, and education is crucial. A high level of education will influence a person's mindset, especially women, in facing life's challenges. Women with a high level of education will be more respected. Conversely,

low levels of knowledge and education in adolescent girls can influence their mindset, leading them to think about things that shouldn't be considered in their lives at that age. Adolescent girls with low levels of education will focus more on getting married young. The third factor, according to Idris et al. (2023), is the role of mass media, which is considered to have a significant influence on the lives of adolescents today, especially the influence on adolescents engaging in premarital sex.

Pregnant outside of marriage, this is explained by their clients who have had sexual relations outside of marriage, as a result the woman became pregnant and asked for responsibility for the man's actions, and there were also women who were pregnant but had a miscarriage but they still demanded that the man be held responsible.

Mental Readiness of Teenagers Who Marry Early

Putri et al. (2020) state that adolescence is a period in which, first, individuals develop from the first appearance of secondary sexual characteristics to sexual maturity. Second, individuals experience psychological development and identification patterns from childhood to adulthood. Third, a transition occurs from complete socioeconomic dependence to a relatively more independent state. (Dariyo, 1999).

Based on the results of prospective brides and grooms who underwent counseling and interviews at the Ciamis Regency Religious Court, the psychological impact of underage brides and grooms can have several implications that need to be considered. Very young brides and grooms often haven't reached the emotional maturity necessary for married life, which can result in an inability to manage stress and conflict. Significant stress and pressure often arise from the demands of their new roles as husband or wife, household responsibilities, and social and cultural expectations that they may not be ready to handle.

Furthermore, adolescence is a crucial period for psychological development and identity formation. Early marriage can disrupt this process, hindering personal growth and the achievement of an individual's potential. Underage brides and grooms are also at higher risk of mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, and trauma. The pressure of changing roles and responsibilities too early can be a heavy burden for those who are not psychologically prepared (Nasution et al., 2025).

Psychological readiness includes the ability to anticipate and deal with various situations that may arise in marriage. Underage brides and grooms often lack sufficient life experience to develop this readiness. Mental readiness is a factor that influences the level of stress experienced by prospective brides and grooms. The higher the mental readiness, the lower the stress level. However, a lack of mental readiness can lead to more severe stress, depression, and anxiety. The physical and mental maturity of each prospective bride and groom is also very important in determining the success of a marriage. A lack of physical and mental maturity can lead to more severe stress, depression, and anxiety. (Utami Gancar Amrih et al., 2023).

E. CONCLUSION

Based on research on mental readiness for early marriage in Ciamis Regency, couples' mental readiness for marriage dispensation requests is on the verge of being ready or not. Many young couples are still trapped in the adolescent developmental phase, where the need for immediate gratification is more dominant than long-term planning. This is evident in the

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reasons for marriage, which are often triggered by economic factors, education, and premarital pregnancy. The psychological well-being of underage brides and grooms can have several implications that need to be considered. Very young brides and grooms often haven't reached the emotional maturity necessary for married life, which can result in an inability to manage stress and conflict. Significant stress and pressure often arise from the demands of their new roles as husband or wife, household responsibilities, and social and cultural expectations that they may not be ready to handle.

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