

Reinterpreting the Boundaries of Maturity through the Concept of “Capable Adolescents” in Efforts to Prevent Early Marriage in Polewali Mandar Regency: Analysis of Islamic Law

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Abstract

Early marriage remains an urgent socio-legal issue with multidimensional impacts on health, education, and family resilience, particularly in Polewali Mandar Regency, which has the highest rate of teenage marriage in Indonesia. One of the main factors behind this phenomenon is the ambiguous interpretation of the concept of “capable adolescents” as a threshold of maturity, which is often narrowly understood only through biological indicators without considering psychological, social, and economic readiness. This study aims to reinterpret the meaning of “capable adolescents” within the framework of Islamic law and assess its relevance to contemporary social realities in efforts to prevent early marriage. The research method used is a normative juridical approach supported by a sociological approach, through a study of classical and contemporary Islamic legal sources, analysis of legislation, and interviews with adolescents who married at an early age, the community, and religious leaders. The results of the study show that although Islamic law traditionally determines maturity based on signs of puberty and interprets the term *syabab* (adolescent/youth) as the ability to bear the responsibilities of marriage physically, financially, and socially, these criteria have proven to be insufficient in the current social context. This study emphasizes that maturity must also include mental readiness, intellectual and emotional maturity (*rushd*), as well as spiritual and social competence. This comprehensive approach is in line with the provisions of Marriage Law No. 16 of 2019, which sets a minimum age for marriage, thereby strengthening the preventive framework in curbing the practice of early marriage. A more holistic reinterpretation of the concept of “capable adolescents” is an important basis for strategies to prevent early marriage through the synergy of Islamic law, positive law, the role of the family, and educational institutions in building public awareness of the importance of age readiness and maturity before marriage.

Keyword: Capable Adolescents; Maturity; Early Marriage; Islamic Law.

Abstrak

Perkawinan dini masih menjadi persoalan sosial-hukum yang mendesak dengan dampak multidimensional terhadap kesehatan, pendidikan, dan ketahanan keluarga, khususnya di Kabupaten Polewali Mandar yang mencatat angka pernikahan usia remaja tertinggi di Indonesia. Salah satu faktor utama yang melatarbelakangi fenomena ini adalah penafsiran yang ambigu terhadap konsep "remaja yang mampu" sebagai batas kedewasaan, yang sering kali dipahami secara sempit hanya melalui indikator biologis tanpa mempertimbangkan kesiapan psikologis, sosial, dan ekonomi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mereinterpretasi makna "remaja yang mampu" dalam kerangka hukum Islam serta menilai relevansinya dengan realitas sosial kontemporer dalam upaya pencegahan pernikahan dini. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan yuridis normatif dengan dukungan pendekatan sosiologis, melalui kajian sumber hukum Islam klasik dan kontemporer, analisis peraturan perundang-undangan, serta wawancara dengan remaja yang menikah usia dini, masyarakat, dan tokoh agama. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun hukum Islam secara tradisional menentukan kedewasaan berdasarkan tanda-tanda baligh dan menafsirkan istilah syabab (remaja/pemuda) sebagai kemampuan untuk memikul tanggung jawab pernikahan baik secara fisik, finansial, maupun sosial, kriteria tersebut terbukti tidak cukup dalam konteks sosial saat ini. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa kedewasaan juga harus mencakup kesiapan mental, kematangan intelektual dan emosional (rushd), serta kecakapan spiritual dan sosial. Pendekatan komprehensif ini sejalan dengan ketentuan Undang-Undang Perkawinan Nomor 16 Tahun 2019 yang menetapkan batas usia minimal perkawinan, sehingga memperkuat kerangka preventif dalam menekan praktik pernikahan dini. Reinterpretasi yang lebih holistik terhadap konsep "remaja yang mampu" menjadi dasar penting bagi strategi pencegahan perkawinan dini melalui sinergi hukum Islam, hukum positif, peran keluarga, dan lembaga pendidikan dalam membangun kesadaran masyarakat tentang pentingnya kesiapan usia dan kedewasaan sebelum menikah.

Kata Kunci: Remaja yang mampu, Kedewasaan, Perkawinan Dini, Hukum Islam.

Introduction

Marriage is a social institution that plays a fundamental role in shaping human life because it involves interrelated social, cultural, economic, and legal dimensions. However, the practice of early marriage remains a serious problem in Indonesia, particularly in regions with relatively low levels of education and legal awareness. According to data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) 2024, the child marriage rate in Indonesia remains quite high, reaching 8.06% in 2022, 6.92% in 2023, and 5.9% in 2024, although it has shown a downward trend over the past decade.¹ West Sulawesi Province even ranked eighth highest with a child marriage rate of 11.70%. Polewali Mandar Regency had the highest number of child marriages, with 17,630 cases, followed by Mamuju (11,287), Majene (6,857), Central Mamuju (6,068), and Mamasa (5,654).² This phenomenon is not only caused by poverty or low education, but also influenced by cultural factors and misinterpretations of religious

¹ Badan Pusat Statistik, "Proporsi Perempuan Umur 20-24 Tahun Yang Berstatus Kawin Atau Berstatus Hidup Bersama Sebelum Umur 18 Tahun Menurut Provinsi (Persen), 2024," [bps.go.id/id, 2025, https://www.bps.go.id/id/statistics-table/2/MTM2MCMY/proporsi-perempuan-umur-20-24-tahun-yang-berstatus-kawin-atau-berstatus-hidup-bersama-sebelum-umur-18-tahun-menurut-provinsi.html](https://www.bps.go.id/id/statistics-table/2/MTM2MCMY/proporsi-perempuan-umur-20-24-tahun-yang-berstatus-kawin-atau-berstatus-hidup-bersama-sebelum-umur-18-tahun-menurut-provinsi.html).

² Tim Warta Kominfo SP Polewali Mandar, "Cegah Pernikahan Dini, Sosialisasi Pencegahan Pernikahan Anak," [polmankab.go.id, 2024, https://polmankab.go.id/Front/kegiatan/detail/1714621042831-cegah-pernikahan-dini-sosialisasi-pencegahan-pernikahan-anak](https://polmankab.go.id).

beliefs about adulthood. Furthermore, the practice of early marriage has been proven to hinder government programs to reduce stunting rates. A World Health Organization (WHO) report showed that early marriage significantly contributes to the high prevalence of stunting in Indonesia, including in West Sulawesi, where it has reached 35% in the past four years.³ Socially, this phenomenon has widespread impacts on gender inequality, limited access to education, and increased divorce rates and intergenerational poverty.

Normatively, the state has intervened legally through Law Number 16 of 2019 concerning Amendments to Law Number 1 of 1974, which sets the minimum marriage age at 19 for both men and women.⁴ This legal reform is intended to protect children's rights and ensure the physical and psychological readiness of prospective brides and grooms.⁵ This principle aligns with the *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, which emphasize the protection of life (*hifz al-nafs*), intellect (*hifz al-'aql*), and lineage (*hifz al-nasl*).⁶ However, this policy has not been fully effective due to legal loopholes in the form of marriage dispensations, which are often exploited to legitimize early marriage. In social practice, some communities still measure maturity solely in biological terms, such as menstruation and *ihtilam*, without considering psychological and social aspects. This concept contradicts the spirit of Islam, which emphasizes a balance between physical and spiritual maturity and social responsibility. Therefore, it is necessary to redefine the concept of maturity by prioritizing the paradigm of "capable adolescents", namely, individuals who are mature intellectually, mentally, and socially in carrying out domestic life.

From an Islamic legal perspective, scholars emphasize that the requirements for a valid marriage depend not only on biological characteristics but also on intellectual maturity and the ability to bear social responsibilities.⁷ The hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) narrated by Imam Bukhari states, "*O young men, whoever among you can*

³ Intihatun Munawaroh and Abdul Aziz Ahmad, "Pengaruh Indeks Pembangunan Manusia, Pertumbuhan Ekonomi, Rumah Layak Huni, Fasilitas Kesehatan Dan Pernikahan Dini Terhadap Prevalensi Stunting Di Indonesia," *EKONOMIKA45 : Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen, Ekonomi Bisnis, Kewirausahaan* 12, no. 2 (2025): 1762–86, <https://doi.org/10.30640/ekonomika45.v12i2.4684>.

⁴ Nahdiyanti, Yunus Ahyuni, and Qamar Nurul, "Implementasi Perubahan Kebijakan Batas Usia Perkawinan Terhadap Perkawinan Di Bawah Umur," *Journal of Lex Generalis* 2, no. 1 (2021): 116–28, <https://doi.org/10.52103/jlg.v2i1.313>.

⁵ Redwan Yasin et al., "Guardian's Responsibility For The Welfare Of Children In Marriage: A Study According To Islamic Law," *Malaysian Journal of Syariah and Law* 12, no. 3 (2024): 778–89, <https://doi.org/10.33102/mjssl.vol12no3.765>.

⁶ Vera Siska, Muhammad Darwis, and Zulfahmi Nur, "Relasi Suami Istri Perspektif Maqashid Syari'ah Mewujudkan Keluarga Sakinah, Mawaddah, Wa Rahmah," *Al-Furqan: Jurnal Agama, Sosial, Dan Budaya* 4, no. 3 (2025): 560–69, <https://publisherqu.com/index.php/Al-Furqan/article/view/2351>.

⁷ Yuni Harlina, "Tinjauan Usia Perkawinan Menurut Hukum Islam (Studi UU No. 16 Tahun 2019 Perubahan Atas UU No. 1 Tahun 1974 Tentang Perkawinan)," *Hukum Islam* 20, no. 2 (2020): 219–38, <https://doi.org/10.24014/jhi.v20i2.9786>.

afford it, let him get married, for it is more effective in lowering the gaze and guarding chastity, and whoever cannot, then he should fast." The meaning of *ba'ah* in this hadith, according to Junaidi (2024), does not only mean physical readiness, but also financial and moral readiness in managing household life.⁸ This is in line with Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, which states that adolescence is a stage of self-identity formation where individuals face psychosocial crises that must be resolved to achieve personality maturity.⁹ Therefore, maturity in Islam is not only about puberty, but also *rushd*, namely, the maturity of thought and action as emphasized in Q.S. An-Nisa': 6. According to Quraish Shihab's interpretation, the word *rushd* reflects intellectual and spiritual maturity capable of acting appropriately and being morally and socially responsible. Thus, the concept of maturity in Islam has a multidisciplinary dimension that balances spiritual, psychological, and social aspects.

The social reality in Indonesia shows that there is no concrete definition of adulthood comprehensively, as maturity is determined by a combination of biological, social, psychological, and economic factors.¹⁰ Factors such as low education, limited knowledge about reproductive health, the culture of arranged marriages, and economic pressures contribute to the practice of early marriage. Furthermore, a lack of communication between parents and children regarding sexuality is a significant factor exacerbating the situation.¹¹ This emphasized that the disconnect between generations creates space for misunderstandings and immature decisions, including regarding marriage. As a result, many adolescents marry without sufficient mental and emotional preparation, potentially facing domestic conflict, domestic violence, and mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety. UNICEF (2023) also emphasized that adolescents do not yet have the full capacity to manage emotions and make complex decisions.¹² Therefore, efforts to prevent early marriage

⁸ Junaidi, "Makna 'Al-Ba'ah' Dalam Hadis Ibnu Mas'ud," muslim.or.id, 2024, <https://muslim.or.id/101259-makna-al-baah-dalam-hadis-ibnu-masud.html>.

⁹ Najrul jimatul Rizki, "Teori Perkembangan Sosial Dan Kepribadian Dari Erikson (Konsep, Tahap Perkembangan, Kritik & Revisi, Dan Penerapan): Erikson's Theory of Social and Personality Development (Concept, Developmental Stages, Critiques and Revisions, and Applications)," *Epistemic: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan* 1, no. 2 (2022): 153–72, <https://doi.org/10.70287/epistemic.v1i2.13>.

¹⁰ Rosmita, Andi Nur Afifah, and Nasaruddin, "The Position of the Guardian in Marriage Perspective of the Hanafi and the Al-Shafi'i Madhhab," *Mazahibuna: Jurnal Perbandingan Mazhab* 4, no. 2 (2022): 152–72, <https://doi.org/10.24252/mh.vi.30969>.

¹¹ Matthijs Kalmijn, "Discrepancies in Parents' Perceptions of Adult Children's Well-Being: Evidence from Mother–Father–Child Triads," *Journal of Family Studies* 30, no. 5 (2024): 838–860, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2024.2335493>.

¹² Fuad Ardiansyah, Yeni Witdianti, and Rina Handayani, "Helping Adolescents to Thrive (HAT) Penguatan Fasilitator Dalam Mendukung Kesehatan Mental Dan Perkembangan Remaja Tanah Papua," *Jurnal Abdimasa Pengabdian Masyarakat* 8, no. 2 (2025): 1–8, <https://e-journal.unimudasorong.ac.id/index.php/jurnalabdimasa/article/view/3818>.

must be carried out multidimensionally, involving family education, socialization of laws based on the *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, and strengthening the role of social and religious institutions. This effort is an integral part of developing the quality of human resources in facing the 2030 demographic bonus and ensuring the creation of a healthy, intelligent, and highly competitive generation.

A study on early marriage and the protection of women's rights shows that most previous studies have focused on the legal-formal aspects without thoroughly examining the social and spiritual maturity of prospective partners. A study by Abi Hasan, et. al. (2021) revealed that early marriage often leads to unequal rights between men and women due to a lack of physical, psychological, and financial readiness.¹³ Research by Dewi Khusna (2020) emphasized the importance of a minimum age for marriage as an effort to ensure biological and psychological readiness. However, this approach fails to address the essence of maturity from an Islamic legal perspective, which demands intellectual maturity (*rushd*) and moral awareness.¹⁴ Furthermore, Dinda Rachma Aditya, et. al. (2025),¹⁵ Amina Akbar, et. al. (2025)¹⁶ and Basir, et. al. (2025)¹⁷ highlighted that socio-cultural factors such as poverty, family pressure, and low legal literacy contribute to the practice of early marriage in rural areas. A study by Mohd Khudry Mz, et. al. (2025) showed that emotional unpreparedness contributes significantly to the rising divorce rate at a young age,¹⁸ while Ane Fany Novitasari, et. al. (2024) emphasized the need to reconstruct society's understanding of the concept of maturity in marriage law.¹⁹ Therefore, this study positions itself critically by presenting the concept of "capable adolescents" as a new, more comprehensive paradigm, integrating physical, psychological, financial, social, and spiritual readiness as a single indicator of maturity, in line

¹³ Abi Hasan, Achmad Musyahid, and Asman Asman, "Dualism and Unworthy Legal Practice: The Marginalization of Women's Rights in Sirri and Early Marriages," *Asy-Syir'ah: Jurnal Ilmu Syari'ah Dan Hukum* 56, no. 1 (2022): 149–71, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajish.v56i1.1006>.

¹⁴ Dewi Khusna, "Eksistensi Batas Usia Minimal 19 Tahun Bagi Perempuan Dalam Perkawinan," *Negara Dan Keadilan* 9, no. 1 (2020): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.33474/hukum.v9i1.6927>.

¹⁵ Dinda Rachma Aditya, Devi Lusany, and Muhammad Yusuf Rangkuti, "Pernikahan Dini Dan Dispensasi Nikah Di Desa Ngemplak: Studi Empiris Tentang Kesejahteraan Sosial Dan Pendidikan Anak," *Innovative: Journal Of Social Science Research* 5, no. 2 (2025): 1171–83, <https://doi.org/10.31004/innovative.v5i2.17867>.

¹⁶ Amina Akbar, Subhash Guriro, and Muhammad Kamil Lakho, "Exploring Early Marriage in Rural Sindh: Socio-Cultural Factors and Effects on Women' Health and Education," *Journal of Social Horizons* 2, no. 2 (2025): 28–33, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15528851>.

¹⁷ Basir et al., "The Impact of Adolescent Marriage on Child Stunting: Socio-Cultural Dynamics and Policy Implications in Rural Communities," *EcoVision: Journal of Environmental Solutions* 2, no. 1 (2025): 15–30, <https://doi.org/10.61511/evojes.v2i1.2025.1753>.

¹⁸ Mohd Khudry Mz, Ramlah Ramlah, and Halimah Dja'far, "Dampak Pernikahan Dini Dan Hubungannya Dengan Tingkat Perceraian (Studi Di Kecamatan Ranah Pembarap, Kabupaten Merangin)," *Innovative: Journal Of Social Science Research* 5, no. 2 (2025): 1381–95, <https://doi.org/10.31004/innovative.v5i2.18354>.

¹⁹ Ane Fany Novitasari et al., "The Importance of Maturity in Marriage From an Islamic Legal Perspective," *Journal of Legal Studies* 33, no. 47 (2024): 99–108, <https://www.cceol.com/search/article-detail?id=1240611>.

with the objectives of the *maqāshid al-syarī'ah* to safeguard the soul, mind, and offspring. Thus, this study provides theoretical and practical contributions to strengthening efforts to prevent early marriage through a synergy between Islamic law, positive law, and public social awareness.

The purpose of this study is to determine the facts of early marriage that occurs in Polewali Mandar Regency, to determine the understanding of the Polewali Mandar community regarding the need to comprehensively understand the meaning of "capable teenagers" so that it becomes the limit of maturity in marriage; and also to determine the perception of the community in Polewali Mandar regarding the meaning of teenagers reviewed from the perspective of Islamic Law. This study can contribute to science, especially in the field of law, and provide benefits in the problems of early marriage. This study is expected to contribute ideas for researchers who will further examine the main issues discussed.

Research Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach with a juridical-empirical (socio-legal) approach oriented toward an in-depth understanding of the social practices and normative basis of Islamic law regarding the minimum age for marriage. This approach combined two main dimensions: phenomenological and normative Sharia. The phenomenological approach was used to understand the experiences, awareness, and social actions of the community regarding the practice of early marriage in Polewali Mandar Regency. This approach emphasized how individuals—especially adolescents, families, and community leaders—interpret the phenomenon of early marriage within their social, economic, and cultural contexts. Meanwhile, the normative-sharia approach was used to examine Islamic legal provisions derived from the al-Qur'an, hadith, principles of *ushul fiqh*, and the views of classical and contemporary scholars, to determine the normative legitimacy of the concept of "capable adolescents" (*al-fata al-qādir*).

The data sources for this study consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through field observations and in-depth interviews with key informants such as adolescents, parents, religious leaders, traditional leaders, and relevant local government officials. Secondary data was obtained through documentation and literature review, including analysis of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) books, interpretations, laws and regulations, and relevant previous research findings. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive-analytical and interactive techniques, following the Miles and Huberman model, which

included three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing and verifying conclusions. Triangulation of sources and methods was applied to ensure the validity of the findings. Through this combination of normative and empirical analysis, the study sought to uncover a comprehensive understanding of the meaning of "capable adolescents" from an Islamic legal and social perspective, and to offer a new conceptual framework for preventing early marriage in Indonesia.

Results and Discussion

1. Facts about Early Marriage in Polewali Mandar Regency

Polewali Mandar Regency was identified as having the highest rate of early marriage in West Sulawesi as of mid-October 2023. Indeed, after researchers interviewed several teenagers at SMAN 1 Tinambung, many of their closest friends, relatives, and neighbors had engaged in early marriage and chosen to drop out of school and continue their lives relying on their husbands' jobs. The data from Radio Republik Indonesia, West Sulawesi, stated that Polewali Mandar Regency had the highest rate of early marriage in West Sulawesi as of mid-October, with 86 cases. 60 were female and 22 were male. Meanwhile, only Mamasa Regency had no cases of early marriage from January to August 2023, according to data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs of West Sulawesi.²⁰ Polewali Mandar Religious Court Clerk, Saripa Jaman, explained that several factors contributing to early marriage in Polewali Mandar Regency include parents' concerns that their children, who have reached puberty, will not be able to adapt well, and premarital pregnancies, which lead to marriage as a solution. The level of public understanding and awareness of the negative impacts of this marriage can vary depending on factors such as cultural context, education, access to information, and awareness of social issues.

Based on interviews with informants, he stated that early marriage impacts physical and psychological health, impacts the future of the household, and significantly impacts a child's education. Based on an interview with Muhsini, he stated:

*"Yes, so we've also conducted socialization in schools, especially third-grade high school students, regarding the dangers and risks of early marriage. The reason it's still being done today is because I see it as the influence of today's children's cell phones and their social life."*²¹

As is known, the role of education in life has a very large influence. Therefore, school becomes the main goal in socializing the importance of knowledge about the nature of

²⁰ M Rusdiansyah Hamzah Taufik, "Polman Tertinggi Angka Pernikahan Dini," Radio Republik Indonesia, 2023, <https://rri.co.id/daerah/401059/polman-tertinggi-angka-pernikahan-dini>.

²¹ Muhsinin (56 years old), Imam of Al-Hurriyah Tinambung Grand Mosque, *Interview*, December 10, 2024.

marriage. There are couples who marry at a young age and do not continue their education because they are too lazy to think about schoolwork, lazy to wake up in the morning, often late to school which ultimately makes them abandon their intention to continue their education. There are also children with economic limitations who prefer to work and marry. This is justified by some parents.

2. The Understanding of the Polewali Mandar People regarding the Meaning of Capable Adolescents as the Limit of Maturity in Marriage.

In this modern era, determining the threshold of maturity for marriage is a crucial issue. Many parents anticipate their children's marriage as soon as possible, either to ensure they have children or to fear their children will commit adultery before marriage.²² As we know, marriage isn't just about legitimizing sexual intercourse; both parents must understand that marriage is a lifelong challenge. Therefore, a mature attitude is needed to manage a household and produce healthy offspring. Therefore, those who are physically and psychologically mature will make careful considerations before deciding to marry.

Looking at the legal age limit for marriage, Law Number 16 of 2019 states that marriage is only permitted for men and women who are 19 years old.²³ With this change in the age limit, the Polewali Mandar Regency government, specifically the Ministry of Religious Affairs, has planned various programs to prevent early marriage. As stated in an interview with the Religious Affairs Office registrar of Alu District, Mr. Muad Kadir, who stated:

*"According to the Marriage Law, marriage is only permitted if the person is 19 years old, so for that reason, we as registrars are currently implementing two programs from the Ministry of Religion, namely the MOU collaboration between the Ministry of Religion and the National Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN) and conducting socialization of Guidance for School-Age Adolescents (BRUS)."*²⁴

According to him, the implementation of these changes has resulted in a slight decrease in the proportion of early marriages in Polewali Mandar Regency. This decrease stems from parents' increasing understanding of the importance of education for their children. Furthermore, the Guidance for School-Age Adolescents (BRUS) program is being implemented almost weekly in several areas and villages. However, this initiative has not been entirely successful, as many still ignore the warnings regarding the change in the marriage age limit.

²² Ayu Darisah, "Strategi Perlindungan Anak Pada Kasus Pernikahan Usia Dini (Studi Di DP3A Provinsi Aceh)" (UIN Ar-Raniry Pascasarjana Hukum Keluarga, 2023), <https://repository.ar-raniry.ac.id/id/eprint/31892/>.

²³ Mughniatul Ilma, "Regulasi Dispensasi Dalam Penguatan Aturan Batas Usia Kawin Bagi Anak Pasca Lahirnya UU No. 16 Tahun 2019," *AL-MANHAJ: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pranata Sosial Islam* 2, no. 2 (2020): 133–66, <https://doi.org/10.37680/almanhaj.v2i2.478>.

²⁴ Muad Kadir (45 years old), Head of the Alu Subdistrict Religious Affairs Office, *Interview*, December 6, 2024.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) program has been implemented in almost all ministries of religious affairs, collaborating with the National Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN). However, due to its impact on health, leading to stunting, which can impact the future of marriages, the Polewali Mandar Regency government has been working to encourage the public to marry at the ideal age. Regarding the implementation of the revised marriage law, Sudirman also stated:

*"Indeed, in society, it's sometimes not fully implemented. This is due to many influencing factors, one of which is technology, which is why the marriage age restriction doesn't follow the regulations."*²⁵

The technological factors are problems currently plaguing teenagers, especially young men in Polewali Mandar Regency, such as:

- a. Addiction to social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and other digital content. This is what makes teenagers highly dependent on today's sophisticated technology. This can interfere with the development of adolescents' social skills, willingness to interact directly, and maturity in decision-making.
- b. From childhood, they are exposed to social media, which is not always positive and educational. From my observations, many young children are already adept at using YouTube and finding content they enjoy. Few parents forbid this, because if the child becomes fussy and continues to disrupt their work, they will not hesitate to give the child a cell phone to calm them down.
- c. Lack of parental supervision and understanding can give teenagers the freedom to engage in immature or risky behavior. For example, a marriage can be carried out due to accidents involving young men and women.

However, there are also positive impacts from the use of technology that facilitate adolescents in the educational sphere. For example, the use of the internet in teaching and learning processes at schools and universities. However, adolescents must be supervised in their use, as they can become overly focused and distracted, making them less productive in other activities. As we know, a capable adolescent has reached the limits of their abilities and responsibilities.²⁶ The meaning of a capable adolescent has not been fully understood by some members of the Polman community, due to the high rate of stunting resulting from early marriage. From the perspective of the Polewali Mandar people:

²⁵ Sudirman (40 years old), Community Leader, *Interview*, December 14, 2024.

²⁶ Rully Wahyudi, "Kontrol Sosial Orang Tua Terhadap Dampak Penggunaan Smartphone Pada Anak Remaja Di Mangkupalas Kecamatan Samarinda Seberang," *Ejournal Sosiatri-Sosiologi* 8, no. 1 (2020): 231–44, <https://ejournal.ps.fisip-unmul.ac.id/site/?p=1350>.

a. In terms of responsibility:

Early marriage is considered by some to be a playful affair because the couple is not yet mature enough and is unable to fulfill the responsibilities that come with marriage.²⁷ Becoming an adult is a training exercise that every individual must undergo. Based on an interview with Nurfadillah, a participant in early marriage, Nurfa said:

*"When my husband's family came to our house and directly told my father that their son wanted to marry me, my parents were immediately shocked because my father thought they were from France and just visiting. He explained that he wanted to marry because it was a religious requirement, and my mother-in-law also liked to see it. But my father politely refused, saying I was still in school and too young to get married."*²⁸

The interviews revealed that parents generally understand that it is unnatural for underage children to marry, as they are not physically and psychologically ready. This indicates that Nurfadillah's parents felt some concern. However, a few days after the meeting, Nurfadillah's parents finally agreed to the marriage. Nurfadillah's reasons for accepting the marriage were as follows:

*"Yes, I think this is my destiny, with my new life sacrificing school, and I'm sure there's wisdom behind this marriage."*²⁹

From Nurfadillah's statement, it is known that the 16-year-old child stated that she was ready to take the risks that she would experience later.

b. Emotional Maturity

This classification of capable adolescents assumes they have a more mature understanding of social and emotional relationships.³⁰ They are able to maintain healthy relationships, communicate effectively, and show empathy towards others. Looking at the emotional maturity of adolescents/youth in Polman Regency, according to the author's interviews and observations, informants stated that the average adolescent in Polman has an unstable level of emotional control. As stated in an interview with Mr. Muad, the marriage registrar, who stated:

*"I think people under 18 are not yet able to control their emotions, especially when it comes to feelings of affection or love. I have seen that happen a lot, my son,—divorces due to infidelity. So, as parents, we must be discerning and choose a man who will become our life partner, preferably one who is more mature or established."*³¹

²⁷ Bayu Irianti, Dede Gantini, and Siti Saadah Mardiah, *Remaja Dan Kesehatan (Pencegahan Stunting Sejak Dini)* (Sleman: Deepublish, 2024).

²⁸ Nurfadillah (17 years old), Early Marriage Perpetrator, *Interview*, December 20, 2024.

²⁹ Nurfadillah (17 years old), Early Marriage Perpetrator, *Interview*, December 20, 2024.

³⁰ Lucky Akbar, "Gambaran Kecerdasan Emosional Remaja Akhir Di Desa Bogem Kecamatan Gurah Kabupaten Kediri" (IAIN Kediri, 2024).

³¹ Muad Kadir (45 years old), Head of the Alu Subdistrict Religious Affairs Office, *Interview*, December 6, 2024.

c. Social Contribution

Young people who are able to do this have the opportunity to play an active role in society. They have the skills and knowledge to participate in social, economic, or political activities that benefit their communities.³² Based on the results of an interview with Mr. Sudirman S.P., as a Civil Servant who also has a position in his regional area, he said that:

*"If you look at the contribution of today's youth, it's quite minimal because today's children are so mobile that they're so dependent on their phones. So, with today's increasingly sophisticated technology, the children, especially the teenagers I see in Polman, are less enthusiastic about community activities. But it is different from children who organize and form communities. It is through their communities that children usually participate in community activities. For example, the activities designed by the village head's Lekopa'dis mother. Because the village head is close to the youth, they are involved in the village head's work program."*³³

Mr. Muhsinin also responded by stating:

*"Regarding the social contribution of young people in Polewali Mandar, it is still very lacking, son."*³⁴

From Mr. Muhsinin's statement above, it can be concluded that there is a lack of enthusiasm among young men and women for community activities that prevent them from easily socializing with others.

d. Financial

Economically capable adolescents, according to Islam, are those who are able to fulfill their financial responsibilities towards the family they are raising.³⁵ When someone marries, they have sufficient means of livelihood to meet their family's needs. Based on an interview with Nurul, a participant in an early marriage, she stated:

*"My parents still support me financially because I have not cheated on my husband yet. Before I married him, I worked as a mechanic in France. I'm also planning to start a business at home and sell it online."*³⁶

Nurul's explanation reveals that she was not yet financially prepared and was simply pursuing her activities as a seventh-grade student at MAN Majene.

After analyzing the various challenges facing the Polewali Mandar Regency people in preventing early marriage, here are several points to consider when reconstructing the meaning of a capable teenager:

³² Ratna Riyanti, Amir Luthfi, and Dian Rohana, "Peran Generasi Muda Dalam Pendidikan Politik Untuk Meningkatkan Partisipasi Politik," *Themis: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 1, no. 1 (2023): 26–31, <https://doi.org/10.70437/themis.v1i1.330>.

³³ Sudirman (40 years old), Community Leader, *Interview*, December 14, 2024.

³⁴ Muhsinin (56 years old), Religious Leader, *Interview*, December 21, 2024.

³⁵ Moh Rifai, "Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Kualitas Ekonomi Keluarga Muslim," *PROFIT: Jurnal Kajian Ekonomi Dan Perbankan Syariah* 7, no. 2 (2023): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.33650/profit.v7i2.6401>.

³⁶ Nurul (16 years old), Early Marriage Perpetrator, *Interview*, December 26, 2024.

- a. Focusing on the primary factor within adolescents who believe they are ready for marriage and accept all its risks. These opinions often hinder the implementation of government programs to prevent early marriage. This is because they hold their own views, arguing that they are ready for the responsibilities and burdens they will face. When viewed from the perspective of a couple's ability to comply with the law, in Islamic jurisprudence theory, the various abilities and suitability of a person can be divided into several categories:

- 1) *Ahliyah al-Wujub*, the word "*ahliyyah*" itself refers to a quality that indicates a person's physical and intellectual perfection, whose actions can be judged by Islamic law.
- 2) *Ahliya al-Ada'*, which refers to the ability to carry out the law. This category is divided into three categories:
 - a) *Adim al-Ahliyah*, a child who is considered to have not yet reached puberty and is completely incompetent.
 - b) *Ahliyah al-ada' Naqisah*, a person who is competent but has not yet been charged with any obligations.
 - c) *Ahliyah al-Ada' Kamilah*, a person who has fully acquired the necessary skills.

Whether someone's *ahliyatul ada'* is perfect or imperfect depends on the condition of intelligence and maturity of the person. Based on the above theory, underage marriage is at the second point, namely not having perfect skills, and if that happens, rationally, it will be difficult for both of them to build a *Sakinah Mawaddah Warahmah* household (Satriani, 2021).

- b. Changing the meaning of puberty from biological to social. This is because many Polewali Mandar people use puberty as a benchmark for marriageable age. According to Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), puberty primarily refers to an individual's ability to produce semen, impregnate, and menstruate for women deemed ready to become pregnant. However, other Islamic jurisprudence experts also emphasize the importance of psychological and social maturity in determining puberty. Therefore, a social approach can interpret puberty as achieving social maturity by linking it to an understanding of values, responsibilities, and the adolescent's readiness to obey religious rules and avoid prohibitions.
- c. By understanding the impact of social media on teenagers, parents, teachers, and the government can provide guidance that will help teenagers use social media responsibly and with an open mind.

- d. The Counseling Information Center (CIC) could be a solution to reducing the incidence of early marriage in Polewali Mandar Regency. Through the CIC, we can provide information and counseling on reproductive health, children's rights, and the negative impacts of early marriage.
- e. Promoting gender equality and educating adolescents about the importance of balanced and fair relationships between partners. This will help them avoid unhealthy relationships and understand the importance of building relationships based on mutual respect and trust.

3. Islamic Legal Perspective on the Meaning of Capable Adolescents as the Limit of Maturity in Marriage

Early marriage is a marriage between two people, one or both of whom are still categorized as children or adolescents under the age of 19.³⁷ This is in line with Child Protection Law Number 23 of 2002, which states that marriages under the age of 18 are considered early marriages. The story referring to early marriage is based on a hadith from Aisha r.a., narrated by Muslim:

"From Aisha that the Prophet married her when she was six years old, but had intercourse with her when she was nine years old."

Textually, in understanding this hadith, some scholars believe that a marriage contract performed with a child aged 6 years or older is valid, as the child is considered mature physically and mentally. However, in practice, it only involves the contract and does not involve sexual intercourse. According to Bukhari and Muslim, the hadith about Aisha's age when she was married to the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) is merely hearsay. As a mere suggestion and a sign, marrying at the age of six is not a commandment.³⁸ The hadith does not specify a minimum age for marriage for men or women. Scholars believe that the age of marriage refers to a person's relationship and capacity to act, as marriage is a legal act that requires full responsibility and carries certain obligations. This is the primary requirement that parents must validate to ensure that their children who wish to marry have the full capacity and capability to navigate married life.

From the perspective of *maslahah*, the enactment of the Law's reform is at the level of *darurriyah*, namely protecting the safety of offspring, protecting the safety of life, and

³⁷ Shiferaw Gelchu Adola and Dessalegn Wirtu, "Effects of Early Marriage among Women Married before Reaching 18 Years Old (Qualitative Study Approach)," *Frontiers in Sociology* 9 (2024): 1412133, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2024.1412133>.

³⁸ Nur Ihdatul Musyarafa and Subehan Khalik, "Batas Usia Pernikahan Dalam Islam; Analisis Ulama Mazhab Terhadap Batas Usia Nikah," *Shautuna: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Perbandingan Mazhab* 1, no. 3 (2020): 703–22, <https://doi.org/10.24252/shautuna.v1i3.15465>.

protecting the safety of mind.³⁹ By looking at what happened to Mrs. Risnawati, who married at the age of 17, she lost two children at once. The first child died at 5 months in the womb, and the second child was born but died due to his weak physical condition.⁴⁰ Now Mrs. Risnawati has a 10-year-old son, but his height is very far compared to children his age. From Mrs. Risnawati's story, it can be recognized that experts now acknowledge that this early marriage has a negative impact, so that in Islamic law, it violates the rules on protecting offspring itself. Then, early marriage often occurs because women have become pregnant without a legal marriage, under Islamic law, the baby does not receive lineage from its biological father, so it can have an impact on the status of marriage guardian, inheritance, and nafaqah with the man who caused the birth.

In a hadith narrated by Imam Bukhari, the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) instructed young men who are about to marry to consider their abilities and readiness and not to marry if they are not ready. Instead, they should guard their looks and honor. Regarding the age limit for marriage, Islamic law does not explicitly stipulate this. Therefore, people assume that religion provides flexibility in determining the age of marriage. However, the al-Quran mandates that those who marry must be ready and capable.

If we refer to QS An-Nur/24:32 in the wording *wassalihin* (وَالصَّالِحِينَ) in the interpretation of *al-Maraghi*, it is interpreted as men and women who are able to marry and carry out their rights as a married couple, such as having a healthy physical and bodily condition, being financially capable, and so on. Regardless of the debate about the age limit for marriage, it is certain that the urgency of the requirements of *baliqh*, according to the opinions of the *fugaha*, is to provide a benchmark and guarantee that someone who wants to marry must have mature physical and psychological qualities. The legal basis regarding the issue of limiting the age of marriage is Surah An-Nisa verse/4:9. This verse does not directly state that marriage at a young age will produce offspring whose welfare is threatened. However, based on the empirical reality of the large number of underage marriages, it seems that many things deviate from the mission and purpose of marriage, namely, creating benefits in household life.⁴¹ In Q.S. An-Nisa verse 6 also emphasizes that orphans are tested until they reach adulthood, the age that is sufficient for marriage, and when they have shown maturity,

³⁹ Abdulloh Fuadi, Bustanul Arifin, and Burhanuddin Burhanuddin, "Pendekatan Mashlahah Mursalah Terhadap Konsep Siyash Syar'iyah Dalam Khi: Pembatasan Usia Nikah, Persetujuan Mempelai Dan Orang Tua, Dan Sanksi Pelanggaran," *Al-Wasilah: Jurnal Studi Agama Islam* 1, no. 1 (2025): 40–51, <https://ejournal.globalcendekia.or.id/index.php/jwasilah/article/view/45>.

⁴⁰ Risnawati (17 years old), Early Marriage Participant, *Interview*, January 10, 2025

⁴¹ Iwan Romadhan Sitorus, "Usia Perkawinan Dalam UU No 16 Tahun 2019 Perspektif Masalah Mursalah," *Nuansa* 13, no. 2 (2020): 190–99, <https://doi.org/10.29300/nuansa.v13i2.3506>.

then their property must be handed over to them. If the child has reached *rukhsah* (a state of maturity & full responsibility), the guardian is obliged to hand over the property to him. *Rushd* shows the maturity of mind and soul, so that orphans are able to be responsible and manage property and religious affairs properly. Then, according to the interpretation of Quraish Shihab, the word *rushd* in Q.S. An-Nisa verse 6 means the determination and straightness of the path, namely a person who has perfected his mind and soul and can act appropriately and is more mature in living his life. Thus, *rushd* is not only a matter of physical age, but also mental readiness, reason, and the ability to manage oneself.

Islam has indicated that the benchmark for marriage is maturity and maturity in married life. Therefore, if adjusted to current social conditions, child marriage during adolescence is not recommended because the majority of adolescents are unable to fulfill marital obligations, even though it is considered legal according to Islamic law. This is because marriage is not only about fulfilling lust, but it is also a responsibility that encompasses all aspects of physical, mental, and financial well-being. Determining maturity at the age of marriage is very important when scholars, Islamic legal experts, and other scientists still determine the limits of maturity in various ways.

Conclusion

This study confirms that the concept of maturity in Islamic law is not solely determined by biological signs such as puberty, but also encompasses aspects of intellectual maturity (*rushd*), mental maturity, and social responsibility. According to Islamic scholars, the term *syabab* (youth/adolescence) indicates a person's capacity to bear the moral, spiritual, and economic burdens inherent in married life. This understanding emphasizes that true maturity from an Islamic perspective is multidimensional, encompassing not just the physical ability to engage in sexual intercourse but also the readiness to fully fulfill family roles. Field research findings indicate that the majority of Polewali Mandar residents still adhere to the traditional understanding that someone who has reached puberty is fit to marry. This is rooted in a literal interpretation of religious texts and a lack of understanding of the *maqāṣid al-shari'ah*, which emphasize the welfare and protection of the soul and mind. In the modern social context, many adolescents lack the psychological, economic, and spiritual readiness to undertake the responsibilities of marriage, so the practice of early marriage often leads to household instability. The interpretation of Q.S. An-Nisa' (4):6, which emphasizes the concept of *rushd*, reinforces that intellectual maturity is an important indicator before someone is given legal and social responsibilities, including in marriage. Therefore, the minimum age limit of 19 years

as stipulated in Law Number 16 of 2019 aligns with the values of maqāṣid al-syarī'ah, which emphasizes the protection of offspring (hifz al-nasl), intellect (hifz al-'aql), and soul (hifz al-nafs). Therefore, the concept of "capable adolescents" must be interpreted as comprehensive capabilities-physical, mental, spiritual, and financial-so that marriage becomes an institution that brings benefits, not harm, to individuals and society.

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