

The Role of the Office of Religious Affairs in the Prevention of Underage Marriage in the perspective of Maqashid Syariah

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ABSTRACT

This study discuss role of the Office of Religious Affairs in preventing underage marriages from the perspective of *maqashid syari'ah*. This study used qualitative approach with a case study methodology. Both primary and secondary data were utilized in this study, employing data collection techniques such as observation, in-depth interviews, and written document analysis. The findings of this study show that the role of the religious office in preventing underage marriages involves the implementation of two preventive activities, namely, religious study sessions (*majelis ta'lim*) and the formation of mosque youth groups. The role of the office in preventing underage marriages should be further enhanced, advocating for the optimal implementation of religious study programs and the formation of mosque youth groups in prevention efforts. The challenge factors include insufficient funding and a lack of community attention. From the *maqashid syari'ah* perspective, the role of the office in preventing underage marriages does not align with the Sharia objectives in preserving lineage (*hifz nazhl*). This misalignment arises because the office role falls short of regulating marriages in accordance with the dictates of *Sharia* and the Marriage Law regarding age regulations. Implications of this study call for the necessity of enhancing the office role in preventing underage marriages to align with *maqashid syari'ah* universally.

ARTICLE INFORMATION

Keywords:

Underage married, maqasyid syariah, religious court

1. Introduction

Islam, as a comprehensive religion, encompasses all aspects of life, addressing every

conceivable issue with its values. It imparts teachings on how to establish a tranquil and happy marriage, one that, though simple, is full of charm. Islam also regulates marriage to ensure that humanity procreates in a healthy and lawful manner, heading towards a blissful life in both this world and the hereafter. The interaction between husband and wife is placed under the umbrella of parental and paternal instincts, aiming to cultivate positive growth and yield fruitful outcomes. Marriage serves as a means to unite men and women, providing a path for human reproduction and the preservation of life once both spouses are ready to fulfill their positive roles in achieving the goals of marriage (Lee & George, 2008). As stated by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), it is a way to foster a happy home, uphold honor, foster brotherhood, and distance oneself from immoral conduct.

Marriage is a sacred event in the lives of human beings since the creation of the earth and all that it contains. It signifies the union between two individuals, a man and a woman, in forming and constructing a small social unit known as a family. Therefore, marriage holds a high position in the Islam, as stipulated in the regulations outlined in the Quran, the holy book of Islam. Marriage also serves as a means for Muslims to build a family, have offspring, and continue life in accordance with prevailing norms, including religious, legal, and cultural norms (Killawi et al., 2018).

Many parents from poor families think that by marrying off their children, even though they are minors, it will reduce the family's economic burden and it is possible to help the family's economic burden without thinking about the positive or negative impacts of the marriage of their underage children. This condition ultimately raises the aspect of abuse of power over the economy by viewing that children are a family property/asset and not a mandate from God who has the rights over himself and the most heinous is to use religious terminology.

One thing that must also be a common concern is to prioritize the best interests of children in providing the right to education, the right to grow and develop, the right to play, the right to get protection from violence, all forms of exploitation, and discrimination. And the most important thing is to place the child's position in the child's own world to develop according to the

child's developmental age. Therefore, the age limit for carrying out marriage is determined, namely 19 years for men and 16 years for women. It is even recommended that marriage be carried out at the age of about 25 years for men and 20 years for women. However, in very compelling circumstances, marriage under the minimum age limit as stipulated in the Marriage Law is possible after obtaining dispensation from the Court at the request of the parents

Marriage has the intention that husband and wife can form an eternal family, so an action that results in the dissolution of a marriage must really be considered carefully (Muslih, Nurdin, & Marzuki, 2020). This provision is intended to prevent repeated marriages and divorces, so that husbands or wives truly respect each other. In line with the development of human life, a problem arises in society, namely pregnancy before marriage. Children commit adultery because of the internal factors in the family, namely the lack of parental supervision or parental attention and affection for children (Kochanska, Aksan, & Koenig, 1995). In addition, external factors, namely from environmental factors or sociological factors may cause children to fall into "free and uncontrolled relationships."

After the child is pregnant before marriage, the parents are embarrassed and consequently they hastily marry off their child even though she/he is still under the legal age limit. When a girl is pregnant because of the free and uncontrolled relationship, it is a form of responsibility that must be borne by the boy. The girl and her family have the right to demand the boy to married her because she is already pregnant. In relation to the fetus conceived by girls who were pregnant before marriage causes gossip in society and it will disgrace the girl's family. Hence, the judge based on a sense of justice and propriety for each party and as well as for the social values of the community issue a dispensation for the marriage of underage children.

2. Literature Review

1.1 The Role Office of Religious Affairs (KUA)

The Office of Religious Affairs is a departmental institution responsible for executing certain tasks of the Department of Religion at the district and city levels in the field

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of Islamic Affairs for Sub-District Regions (Ulutas, 2010). Consequently, individuals adhering to Islam have their marriages deemed valid only when conducted according to Islamic law. In carrying out its duties, the Office of Religious Affairs functions as an organizer of statistics, documentation, correspondence, archiving, marriage registration, reconciliation, mosque management, zakat (charitable giving), waqf (endowment), social worship, population affairs, and the development of a harmonious family, in accordance with policies set by the Director General of Islamic Community Guidance based on prevailing regulations (Irama, Fakrulloh, & Redi, 2023).

The core task of the Ministry of Religious Affairs is to organize and implement certain government functions in the religious field. Part of these responsibilities involves executing policies in the realm of worship, one of which is outlined in Law No. 22 of 1946 regarding the registration of marriage, divorce, and reconciliation. To carry out marriages for Muslims, it has been established that marriage is conducted by a marriage registrar (*pegawai pencatat nikah* or PPN), commonly referred to as a "*penghulu*." Therefore, to enhance this service, Government Regulation No. 16 of 1994 on the functional position of civil servant employees, including the *penghulu*, is included in the category of functional positions at Level 1 in the religious field.

1.2 Definition of Underage Marriage

Underage marriage can be interpreted as a union involving individuals who have not yet reached the legal age stipulated by the law (Prettitore, 2015). Underage marriage, commonly referred to as child marriage, occurs when an individual enters into matrimony before attaining the age of 19 for males and 19 for females. In this context, individuals who are unmarried and have not yet reached the age of 19, regardless of gender, are prohibited from entering into matrimony. This prohibition is grounded in essential considerations, leading the government to enforce restrictions on marriages at an early age. However, under specific circumstances, the government grants dispensation to couples intending to marry at a young age (Katz & Katz, 1978).

An Islamic religious counselor elucidated that to proceed with an underage marriage, couples must complete the N1 document from

their local administration and obtain a certificate from the local authority (Worthington Jr et al., 2003). Rather than immediately formalizing the marriage, they are required to submit a request for an annulment, seeking a referral to the religious court. The religious court subsequently approves and issues an official document, following which the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) can validate the marriage. This underscores the collaboration between various governmental institutions. According to Marriage Laws, underage marriages can be conducted under specific considerations and regulations, provided the conditions outlined in the law are met. As explained in the preceding section, couples can request marriage dispensation, and if the prerequisites are fulfilled, the marriage is considered valid according to religious and governmental regulations.

Reference is in the Quran, Surah An-Nisa (4):4, wherein Allah states:

وَأْتُوا النِّسَاءَ صِدْقَتهُنَّ حَالاً مَّعْرُوفًا فَإِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْمَحْضَةَ فَأَسْفَاكُوهُنَّ بِأَمْرٍ يَأْمُرُ بِهَا

Translation: "And give to the women (whom you marry) their Mahr (obligatory bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage) with a good heart, but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it, and enjoy it without fear of any harm (as Allah has made it lawful)".

1.3 Definition of Maqashid Syari'ah

Etimologically, Maqashid Shariah is a composite term derived from two words, "*maqashid*" and "*al-shariah*." "*Maqashid*" is the plural form of "*maqsud*," "*qasd*," "*maqsid*," or "*qusud*," stemming from the verb "*qasada*," "*yaqsudu*," with various meanings indicating a direction towards a goal. *Shariah*, etymologically, signifies the path to the source of water, metaphorically representing the path towards the essence of life (Azhar Rosly, 2010). Terminologically, *Shariah* refers to the sacred texts (*al-nusus al-muqaddasah*) of the Quran and the *muttawir* Sunnah, entirely untouched by human thought. In terminology, *Maqashid Shariah* can be interpreted as the values and meanings set as goals and intended to be realized by the legislator of the Shariah (Allah SWT). This is

behind the creation of Shariah and laws examined by mujtahid scholars from Shariah texts (Derigs & Marzban, 2008).

Firstly, Islamic law is derived from divine revelation and is intended for humanity. Therefore, it continually confronts social changes. In such a position, whether Islamic law, whose primary sources (the Quran and Sunnah) were revealed centuries ago, can adapt to social changes remains a question. The answer to this question can only be provided after a thorough examination of various elements of Islamic law, with one of the most crucial elements being the theory of Maqashid Shariah.

Secondly, from historical perspective, attention to this theory has indeed been given by Prophet Muhammad (SAW), his companions, and subsequent generations of mujtahid scholars.

Thirdly, the knowledge of Maqashid Shariah is the key to the success of mujtahids in their *ijtihad*, as every issue in human interactions can be referred back to the foundation of legal goals. The essence of the Maqashid Shariah theory, based on the above explanation, is that Maqashid Shariah aims to realize goodness and avoid evil, or to bring benefit and prevent harm. The term equivalent to the essence of Maqashid Shariah is "*maslahah*" because the establishment of laws in Islam must lead to *maslahah*. It should be noted that Allah SWT, as the legislator of the Shariah, did not create laws and rules arbitrarily. Instead, laws and rules were created with specific purposes and intentions. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, as cited by Khairul Umam, stated that the purpose of the Shariah is the well-being of humans in this world and the hereafter. The Shariah is entirely just, full of mercy, and contains wisdom. Every law deviating from justice, mercy, and wisdom is not a provision of the Shariah. Scholars from both the *salaf* and *khalaf* unanimously agree that every Shariah law must have a reason (*illah*) and a goal (*maqashid*) for its application. The purpose and reason are to build and preserve the well-being of humans. According to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, as mentioned in Jasser Auda, the Shariah is a policy for life in this world and the hereafter. The Shariah encompasses justice, peace, policy, and goodness.

Discussing Maqashid Shariah or the goals of Islamic law is a significant topic in Islamic law that has not escaped the attention of scholars and experts in Islamic law. Some scholars place it in the realm of *ushul al-fiqh*, while others consider it

a separate subject, expanding it into the philosophy of Islamic law. Upon careful examination of all the commands and prohibitions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in the Sunnah formulated in *Fiqh*, it becomes apparent that each one has a purpose, and none are without significance. All of them possess profound wisdom, serving as a mercy for humanity (Ghofar Shidiq, 2021).

According to the statement of al-Shatibi, it can be said that the essence of Maqashid Shariah or the goals of law is the well-being of humanity. Al-Shatibi's emphasis on Maqashid Shariah generally originates from the content of Quranic verses indicating that God's laws contain benefits (Moh. Mukri, 2014). The study of the theory of Maqashid Shariah in Islamic law is crucial.

3. Methodology

This study uses qualitative methods. In qualitative research, the use of theory is only a guide so that the research focus is in accordance with the facts in the field (Nurdin & Pettalongi, 2022; Nurdin, Stockdale, & Scheepers, 2016). The data was collected through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and written document analysis at the research site (Rusli, Hasyim, & Nurdin, 2021; Rusli & Nurdin, 2022). The object of this research is underage marriage religious court Palu city.

The interviews involved five religious court staff who know the cases of underage marriage within the district. We also interview five figures from the Department of Religious Affairs. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The results of the transcripts were consulted with the participants to obtain their consent (Nurdin, Scheepers, & Stockdale, 2022). The data analysis technique in this research used a deductive thinking technique, which can be interpreted as a research procedure that produces deductive data from the interviews and field notes. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis from Strauss and Corbin (1998). The analysis started with open, axial, and selective coding. The final result of the data analysis is themes found from the data.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Overview of the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in South Palu District

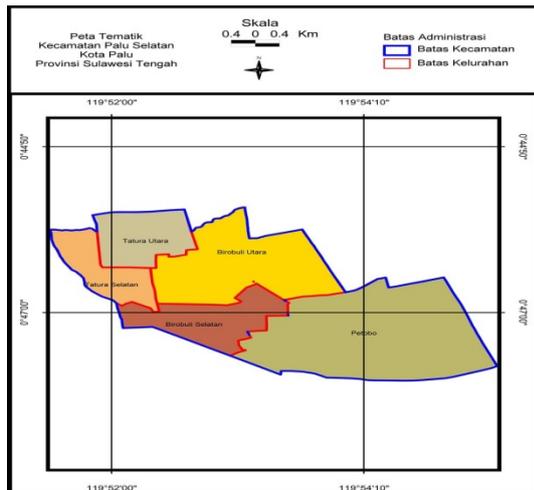


Figure. 1 Map of the Working Area of the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in South Palu District

The presence of the aforementioned jurisdiction aims to instill the goals of Islamic law among the Islamic population residing in the South Palu District. In this regard, the Provincial Religious Affairs Office, Regional Religious Affairs Office (Residency Level), and District Religious Affairs Office (District Level) serve as extensions of the Ministry of Religious Affairs Section B, specifically the Division of *Penghulu*, Mosques, Waqf, and Religious Courts.

With the issuance of Minister of Religious Affairs Decree (KMA) Number 517 of 2001 on the Organization of District Religious Affairs Offices, the KUA is established within the districts. It is accountable to the Head of the Department of Religious Affairs at the Regency/City level, coordinated by the Head of the Section for Islamic Affairs/Community Guidance and Islamic Institutional Affairs. The KUA is led by a Head who is tasked with executing some of the duties of the Department of Religious Affairs at the Regency/City level concerning Islamic affairs in the district.

As a result, the existence of the District Religious Affairs Office is officially recognized, backed by a robust legal foundation, and is an integral part of the governmental structure at the district level.

Roles and Functions of KUA:

- a. Implementing a portion of the Department of Religious Affairs' tasks at the regency/city level in the field of Islamic affairs within the district.

- b. Aiding in the execution of government tasks at the district level in the religious domain.
- c. Being responsible for the implementation of tasks assigned to the District Religious Affairs Office.
- d. Coordinating the activities and facilitating sectoral and cross-sectoral activities in the district. This includes recording marriages, managing and nurturing mosques, zakat, waqf, the treasury, and social worship, population affairs, and family development under the guidance of KUA. Coordinating the tasks of supervising Islamic religious teachers, Islamic religious counselors, and coordinating/collaborating with other relevant institutions in relation to the implementation of the sub-district Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) tasks.
- e. Functioning as PPAIW (Waqf Pledge Deed Registrar).

Through Decree Number 18 of 1975 in conjunction with Decree Number 517 of 2001 and Government Regulation Number 6 of 1988 concerning the structuring of the District Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), explicitly and clearly outlined are the duties of KUA, namely:

- a. Implementing some of the tasks of the Ministry of Religious Affairs at the Region/City level in the field of Islamic religious affairs within the district. In this regard, KUA organizes documentation and statistics activities, correspondence, letter management, archiving, typing, and household affairs;
- b. Coordinating sectoral and cross-sectoral activities in the sub-district and implementing them. For this purpose, KUA carries out the registration of marriages, manages and nurtures mosques, zakat, waqf, baitulmaal, and social worship, as well as population affairs and the development of a harmonious family. (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, p.25-28)

The implementation of the Tasks are as follows:

1. Structuring the internal organization of KUA
2. Documentation and Statistics
3. Family Guidance and Marriage Services
4. Management of Mosques, Zakat, and Waqf
5. Animal Sacrifice Services
6. Astronomy and Observation Services.
7. Social, Educational, and Hajj Worship Services

The tasks of KUA Head:

- a. Leading the execution of KUA tasks and formulating the vision, mission, policies, targets, programs, and activities of the Sub-District Religious Affairs Office.
- b. Assigning tasks, directing, guiding, coordinating, and supervising the implementation of tasks within KUA.
- c. Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of subordinates' tasks.
- d. Providing services and guidance in administrative matters
- e. Providing services and guidance in the field of marriage, reconciliation, Sakinah Family.
- f. Providing services and guidance in the field of zakat, waqf, and social worship.
- g. Providing services and guidance in the field of religious related and worship places data.
- h. Providing services and guidance in the field of muslim partnerships and sharia development.
- i. Providing services and guidance in the field of Hajj and Umrah.
- j. Analyzing and solving issues arising within KUA.
- k. Undertaking efforts for the development and enhancement of service quality in KUA.
- l. Studying and assessing/correcting the reports on the implementation of tasks by subordinates.
- m. Collaborating with relevant institutions.
- n. Perform other tasks assigned by superiors.
- o. Reporting on the progress and implementation of tasks.

Tasks of Financial and Administrative Staff:

1. Preparing budget plans, receiving, recording, and depositing funds to the Regency Ministry of Religious Affairs.
2. Preparing documents and work records.
3. Receiving marriage fees.

Tasks of Marriage and Reconciliation Administrative Staff:

1. Reviewing applications for marriage and reconciliation.
2. Filling the NB form, preparing marriage schedules and conceptualizing marriage intention announcements (Pedoman Pegawai pencatat nikah, 2004)

Vision, Mission, and Objectives of KUA South Palu District

Vision is described as the goals to be achieved or aspirations that will materialize in the future (Sutrimo penembangan sasaran, 2015). In other words, vision can be likened to the hopes to be achieved in the future, whether by individuals, groups, communities, or institutions. Vision, when conceptualized for the long term, tends to be permanent, emphasizing consistency in principles, particularly the consistency of institutions, agencies, or organizations. Typically, the structure of vision statements involves clearer and more concise statements (Galan susdarwana , 2021).

On the other hand, the meaning of mission is the stages to be implemented in achieving the manifestation of what is expected from the vision's goals (Purnomo, Pengembangan sasaran, 2021). Typically, missions are oriented toward a relatively short period and adapt to contemporary issues.

Preventing marriages according to the Marriage Law, as stated in Article 13 of Law Number 16 of 2019 concerning Marriage, which states: "Marriage can be prevented if there are individuals who do not meet the requirements to proceed with the marriage." Marriage can be carried out if one or both parties meet the requirements for marriage.

In this regard, based on the author's observation, underage marriages are not advantageous for the couples and are highly prone to problems, which they may not be able to handle. Emotional maturity and readiness are required to realize the desired married life.

4.2 The Role of the Religious Affairs Office (KUA) in Preventing Underage Marriages

According to Article 2, Paragraph 1 of Law No. 16 of 2019 marriage is valid if conducted according to the laws of each respective religion and belief. Marriage is a religious directive for those capable of promptly adhering to it. Through marriage, immoral behavior can be reduced, and individuals can safeguard themselves from acts of adultery. Therefore, marriages imbued with values and aimed at realizing a family life characterized by tranquility, love, and mercy need to be regulated by specific conditions and requirements to achieve the goals of the marriage. Based on the conducted research, the fundamental manifestation of the Role of the South Palu District Religious Affairs Office in preventing underage marriages includes the

implementation of preventive activities through religious initiatives, such as religious study groups (*majelista'lim*) and the formation of mosque youth groups. These activities encompass the following:

1. Religious Study Groups (*Majelista'lim*)

Religious study groups conducted by Islamic religious counselors at the South Palu District Religious Affairs Office in preventing underage marriages are carried out in several mosques under the guidance of the Islamic religious counselors of the KUA. These activities occur weekly, although the prevention of underage marriages is not the main focus but rather a part of the overall content. Furthermore, these initiatives are not widely implemented, restricted to selected mosques under the guidance of Islamic religious counselors in the South Palu Sub-District.

Observations by the researchers indicate that the implemented program activities for preventing underage marriages at the South Palu District Religious Affairs Office are still insufficient. Data on underage marriages can be observed through rejection records, official records at the Religious Affairs Office, and data collected by the researcher within the jurisdiction of the South Palu District. The data can be seen in the table below:

Table 1.

Rejection Records of the prospective brides or grooms under the age of 19 at the Office of Religious Affairs

No.	Name	Year
1.	An. Dina Indah Dirayati	2020
2.	Moh. Andi irham	2020
3.	Irgiaguesti	2020
4.	Geraldo Wijaya	2020
5.	Eki srifanda	2020
6.	Devianti	2020
7.	Nabilah putri	2020
8.	Muhhamaad Fadhel	2020
9.	Aco	2020
10.	Nadia tirta	2020
11.	Fitriani masung	2020
12.	Muhamaadrifal	2020
13.	Muhamaaddimasdavid	2020
14.	Masriani	2020
15.	Nadiaa	2020
16.	Siti Fatima	2020
17.	Yolanda	2020

18.	Sundari	2020
19.	Putri angreni	2020
20.	Fahrul bin nurdin	2020
21.	Vani kumalasari bin ahmadyani	2020
22.	Alan	2020
23.	Winda	2020
24.	Budiansyah	2020
25.	Fardianti	2020
26.	Musdalifa	2020
27.	Sri fandaningsih	2020
28.	Rahmadan	2020
29.	Reskyzulfikri	2020
30.	Siti nurhiya	2020
31.	Dinda febriana	2020
32.	Gitalis	2021
33.	Arif muhandar	2021
34.	Neoxihena	2021
35.	Fara septiani	2021
36.	Pingky	2021
37.	Sri utari	2021
38.	Mutiara syamrah	2021
39.	Raditiahsyaputra	2021
40.	Nabila	2021
41.	Ismyd,s. Tarsu	2021
42.	Moh. Aprizalsaputra	2021
		42

From Table 1 it can be discerned that a total of 42 individuals represent the data on rejected marriage applications due to the prospective brides or grooms not reaching the age of 19 at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in the South Palu District. Based on the research data discovered in the South Palu District, there are 24 cases of underage marriages, distributed across five neighborhoods within the jurisdiction of the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in the South Palu District. The individuals involved in these cases have an average age below 19 years.

Table 2.

Research Findings on Marriages Below the Age of 19 in the Area of the Office of Religious Affairs in the South Palu Sub-District.

No.	Sub-District	Prospectives Bride/Groom	Year of Marriage	Age When Marriage
1.	Taturaselatan	2. Anisa/Marsel 3. Winda/ Alan	2020 2020	18/17yo 18/17yo
2.	Tatura Utara	1. Nur Zulfianti Andi 2. Nadia Tirta	2021 2020	16/16yo 18 yo
3.	Birobuli Utara	1. Haykal/cantika 2. Ayren Anugraha/ Syahrul Syaputra	2021 2022	17/15 yo 15/17yo
4.	Birobuli Selatan	1. Aliya Nova/Moh Ilham 2. Resta Permadani/Moh. Fadil 3. Nur hijrah 4. Indri rahmawati/Ibnu hidayat	2022 2019 2019 2019	17/16yo 16/17yo 17yo 17/18yo
5.	Petobo	1. Fajar/Silfani 2. Sri utari 3. Wardini 4. Nabila Raditiyasyaputra	2020 2021 2021 2022	17/18yo 18yo 18yo 16/17yo

4.3 Review of Maqasid Sharia on the Existence and Factors of the Role of the Religious Affairs Office in Preventing Underage Marriages

The Islamic objective of honoring principles of honor is exemplified in the concept of *Qadzaf*. Etymologically, *Qadzaf* means to cast with force and intensity. In the context of Islamic jurisprudence, accusing a married person (whether male or female) of engaging in illicit relations or denying the lineage of a child to its father is termed *Qadzaf*. Islamic Sharia establishes *Qadzaf* as the act of undermining the honor of a married man or woman by accusing them of adultery without presenting conclusive evidence. Islam demands stringent proof in such cases, which is inherently challenging to produce. The religion requires four just and unbiased witnesses to testify that they personally observed the act of adultery without any doubt. Honor is a fundamental principle highly regarded in Islam, as it enables humans to live dignified lives on Earth. This is particularly evident in cases of *Qadzaf*, where the preservation of honor is paramount.

Islamic Sharia prescribes two sanctions for those involved in *Qadzaf*:

- Original sanctions of a temporal nature, specifically physical punishment, administered through eighty lashes.
- Eternal sanctions regarding existence, which, according to the Hanafi school of thought, may render the individual's testimony inadmissible for their entire life unless they repent.

The basis for this problem is found in Q.S An-Nur verse 4:

وَالَّذِينَ يُمْنُونَ بِالْحَمْلِ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْفِسَادِ وَالَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْفِسَادِ وَالَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِالْحَقِّ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْفِسَادِ وَالَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِالْحَقِّ

Translation:

Those who accuse chaste women (of adultery) and fail to produce four witnesses, give them eighty lashes (each). And do not ever accept any testimony from them—for they are indeed the rebellious—

This writing straightforwardly presents the incongruence between the theory of Maqashid al-Shariah and the role of Office of Religious Affairs in preventing underage marriages in South Palu District. Therefore, in this context, the examination of Maqashid al-Shariah regarding the role of the KUA in preventing underage marriages in South Palu District is not in accordance.

5. Conclusion

The existence and the role of the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in preventing underage marriages involve the implementation of preventive activities, specifically through religious study groups (*majelis ta'lim*) and the establishment of mosque youth groups. However, discussions on underage marriages are only a part of the overall curriculum. The role of the KUA in preventing underage marriages should be further enhanced, encouraging the maximal implementation of religious study group programs and mosque youth group formations for prevention. Factors contributing to the limited role of the KUA in preventing underage marriages include insufficient funding and a lack of community attention. From the perspective of *Maqasid Sharia*, the existence and the factors contributing to the limited role of the KUA in preventing underage marriages do not align with *Maqasid Sharia*, particularly in safeguarding lineage (*hifznazhl*). This is because the KUA's role falls short in regulating marriages in accordance with the desired Sharia principles and the Marriage Law, particularly in determining the appropriate age for marriage.

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