

The Incapability to Establish a Household as a Consequence of Child Marriage

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Abstract

This study aimed to describe the factors that encouraged child marriage in the Lintau Buo Utara Sub-district and find out the problems that arose from the marriage. Unlike adult couples, it is difficult for children to make complex adjustments towards marriage. This research is a field study in the form of qualitative. The type of research used in this study is descriptive analytics. The primary data were obtained through interviews with 7 (seven) child-married couples and from the Religious Affairs Office of Lintau Buo Utara. The collected data were then analyzed using Hurlock's theory of social adjustment in marriage and Miles and Huberman's interactive model. The results of this study showed that the lack of knowledge about marriage that was intertwined with other social problems resulted in the unreadiness of children to undergo marital relations. The unreadiness of children in marriage also affected their social conditions, which included facing difficulties in adjusting themselves and having emotional disturbances. This social reality suppressed the psychology of children because there was no emotional maturity before marriage.

Keywords: *Child unreadiness, child marriage, adjustment, emotional maturity.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguraikan faktor-faktor yang mendorong terjadinya perkawinan anak di Lintau Buo Utara serta mengetahui bentuk persoalan yang timbul karena perkawinan tersebut. Tidak mudah bagi anak untuk melakukan penyesuaian-penyesuaian yang kompleks sebagaimana yang diadaptasi oleh pasangan dewasa. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian lapangan dalam bentuk kualitatif. Adapun jenis penelitian ini adalah deskriptif-analitis. Data primer diperoleh melalui wawancara terhadap 7 (tujuh) pasangan kawin anak, Kantor Urusan Agama Kecamatan Lintau Buo Utara. Data yang sudah terkumpul kemudian akan dianalisis menggunakan teori Hurlock tentang penyesuaian sosial dalam perkawinan dengan menggunakan model interaktif Miles dan Huberman. Hasil penelitian ini menemukan bahwa minimnya pengetahuan tentang perkawinan yang berkelindan dengan persoalan sosial lainnya berakibat pada ketidaksiapan anak menjalani relasi perkawinan. Ketidaksiapan anak dalam perkawinan diketahui telah mempengaruhi kondisi sosial anak yang diantaranya adalah sulit melakukan penyesuaian diri dan gangguan emosi. Realitas sosial ini telah menekan psikologi anak karena tidak adanya kematangan emosi anak sebelum menikah

Kata Kunci: Ketidaksiapan anak, perkawinan anak, penyesuaian diri, kematangan emosi.

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Introduction

Child marriage is defined as a registered or unregistered marriage before the age of 18. A report from a developing country showed that almost 1 in 4 teenage girls is married or engaged at the age of 15-19. Worldwide, 8% out of 20-24-year-old women get married before 15 years old, and 1 in 4 women get married before age 18. It means in developing countries, 15%-42% of women undergo child marriage¹.

Efforts to prevent child marriage under the age of 18 have also been initiated by an international non-government organization, Girls Not Brides, to end child marriage around the world. This organization actively criticizes the practice of child marriage in tradition and culture that occurs in several countries.² Prevention of child marriage is also in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030 to end child marriage³.

Indonesia, as a developing country, is also considered to have similar problems regarding child marriage. The previous study found that some child marriages in Indonesia occurred through marriage dispensation, which is regulated in the Indonesian law system.⁴

Marriage rules in Indonesia have been regulated through Law Number 16 of 2019 on the amendment of Law Number 1 of 1974, which stipulates that marriage may only occur

when the prospective groom and bride are 19 years old. The state provides relief through marriage dispensation for the youth who wish to marry while constrained by age issues, which the applicant's family can submit to a religious court office.⁵ This policy has no significant differences from the previous marriage law (before revision). However, the state has regulated it through the Supreme Court Regulation Number 5 of 2019 concerning guidelines for adjudicating applications for marriage dispensation so that the judicial process must be in the children's best interests.

For those children to be ready and understand the risks they may take in early-age marriage, then a judge is obligated to give advice to the parents, guardians, and prospective groom and bride themselves in the process of marriage dispensation case trial to provide an understanding of the risks as following: 1) the possibility of discontinuation of education, 2) sustainability of children in taking 12 years of compulsory education, 3) unpreparedness of the child's reproductive organs, 4) economic, social, and psychological impacts on the children, and 5) potential for discord and domestic violence.⁶

Ideally, the prospective groom and bride who decide to keep going during marriage dispensation must understand the risks.⁷ If they are forced or intentionally do the above actions for various reasons and backgrounds, they can be categorized as not

¹Durgut, S. and Kisa, S., 'Predictors of marital adjustment among child brides', *Archives of psychiatric nursing* 32, no. 5 (2018): 670-676

² Evenhuis M. , Burn J., Just Married, Just a Child: Child Marriage in the Indo-Pacific Region (Melbourne: Plan International, 2014), 44

³ Lahaling, H., Lasori, S.A., Makkulawuzar, K., Yunus, Y., & Salam, S., 'Children's Rights In The Context Of Child Marriage In Gorontalo Province', *SASI* 28, no. 2 (2022): 234-243

⁴Fahadil Amin Al Hasan and Deni Kamaluddin Yusup, 'Dispensasi Kawin Dalam Sistem Hukum Indonesia: Menjamin Kepentingan Terbaik Anak melalui Putusan Hakim', *Jurnal Al Ahwal* 14, no. 1 (2021): 86-98

⁵Ashabul Fadhli and Arifki Budia Warman, 'Alasan Khawatir Pada Penetapan Hukum Dispensasi Kawin Di Pengadilan Agama Batusangkar', *Jurnal Al Ahwal* 14, no. 2(2021): 146-158

⁶ Supreme Court regulation Number 5 of 2019 concerning guidelines for adjudicating applications for dispensation for marriage, Article 12 Paragraph (2)

⁷ Muhammad Azinardkk, 'Early Marriage in Women and the Risk of Low Birth Weight', *UNNES Journal of Public Health* 11, no. 1 (2022): 75-81

ready for marriage.⁸

This practice of unreadiness of a child in a marital relationship (due to lack of knowledge regarding the risks of early-age-marriage) can be found in Tanah Datar Regency, precisely in Lintau Buo Utara Sub-district, which is located around 49 KMs from the downtown. To illustrate, a river (Batang Sinamar River) passes through one of its villages called Teratai Village. Irrigation from this river reaches Solok City and Sawahlunto City. As a sub-district that has been developed recently, the uneven distribution of government infrastructure, such as schools, contributes to high school students' reluctance (including the parents') to continue their education to a higher level. Lack of education that causes children to drop out of school or not be interested in continuing their education has become a common phenomenon of early marriage.⁹

Not going to school and not having regular beneficial activities are everyday phenomena in Lintau Buo Utara's society. Activities such as going to the field to herd livestock or helping parents work are the daily routines children no longer carry out in school. For girls, this condition is very likely for them to be married at a young age. In other words, girls are in a vulnerable position to get married at a young age.¹⁰ Some parents want their children to get married soon due to the economic factors on which the families live in poverty. Parents marry their daughters off to men who are considered well-off. They hope the marriages will help ease the economic

burden of the parents.

In the case of premarital sex, the reason for getting married will be more substantial without considering the readiness and limitations of the child.¹¹, especially if there is a pregnancy¹². When such a case is submitted as a marriage dispensation application, the child's chances of obtaining a marriage license will be more significant than other reasons. Judges of the Religious Courts consider that marrying off children while pregnant is intended as an effort to protect the integrity of the child.¹³.

Hoko Horii, in his research, states that child marriage that occurs in Indonesia is closely related to efforts to control children's sexual behavior. The reluctance to discuss sex issues with children is an indicator that children's relationship with their opposite sex is the reason for immediate marriage.¹⁴. Mestika Lumbantoruan et al. mention that this type of marriage influences the welfare of the family and society.¹⁵. Meanwhile, boys who think they can earn money and settle down marry their female friends for different reasons. However, the judges of Batusangkar Religious Court had different viewpoints towards this condition; they perceived those boys' income needed more because it could only fulfill their basic needs.

⁸PutriRahyu and Ahmad Muzhaffar, 'Perempuan dan Pernikahan Anak Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam', *Jurnal Musawa* 21, no. 1 (2022): 41-51

⁹ Dian Lutfiani, 'The Darkest Phase for Family: Child Marriage Prevention and Its Complexity In Indonesia', *Jurnal JILS* 4, no. 2 (2019): 241-258

¹⁰Ashabul Fadhli, *Menikah Muda di Indonesia; Suara, Hukum dan Praktik* (Jakarta: PustakaYayasanObor Indonesia, 2018), 163

¹¹ Grijns M., , Limijaya S., , Restuningrum N.H., et al., 'Pernikahan Anak Di Sukabumi Jawa Barat: Diri Dan Agensi Anak Perempuan', *Journal Perempuan* 21, no. 1 (2016): 9-33

¹² Nurul Ilmi Idrus, 'Problematizing the Minimum Age of Marriage: The State and Local Perspective on Marriage Dispensation in South Sulawesi', *Humaniora* 34, no. 2 (2022): 159-171

¹³ Hoko Horii, 'Legal Reasoning for Legitimation of Child Marriage in West Java: Accommodation of local norms at Islamic Courts and the Paradox of Child Protection', *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 12, no. 3 (2020): 501-523

¹⁴ Hoko Horii, 'Child Marriage as a 'Solution' to Modern Youth in Bali', *SAGE Journals* 20, no. 4 (2020): 282-295

¹⁵Mestika Lumbantoruan, dkk., 'Faktor-Faktor yang Berhubungan Dengan Pernikahan Usia Dini Pada Remaja Putri di KecamatanTanjung Rejo Percut Sei Tuan Tahun 2017'. *Reproductive Health* 2, no. 2(2017): 64-77.

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This study found several social reasons for encouraging children in Lintau Buo Utara to get married immediately. It was assumed that the children's desire to marry was not accompanied by an adjustment of the role in responding to taking the 12-year compulsory education. The possibility of stopping children's education due to marriage is because of the unreadiness of the children's reproductive organs, the economic, social, and psychological impact on the children, as well as the potential for disputes and even domestic violence.

These children thought all these preparations and adjustments were expected to be instantly obtained after marriage. This is in line with Hurlock's statement.¹⁶ Social adjustment is an essential phase in a child's development. Hurlock emphasizes that adjustment in marriage is influenced by age, gender, length of marriage, employment status, form of marriage, unrealistic expectations, education level, number of children, no age gap between spouses, acquaintances before marriage, social support, environment, physical, positive emotions, religiosity, and the possibility of acquiring new skills and information, and lack of preparation for marriage and child marriage.¹⁷

This research is a field study.¹⁸ The type of research used in this study is descriptive analysis. It was conducted systematically by taking field data.¹⁹ The location was in Lintau Buo Utara Sub-district, Tanah Datar Regency. This sub-district was

chosen as the research location because there was a tendency from the surrounding community to marry off children under the age set by the marriage law. This information was confirmed by the judges of Batusangkar Religious Court, which was then developed into an investigation of village 1, village 2, and village 3. Through the analytical descriptive method, this research tried to explore and understand the dynamics of child marriage that has developed in the Lintau Buo Utara Sub-district, the related factors that encouraged child marriage, and find the form of problems that arose due to the unreadiness of children in marriage.

The primary data were obtained through observation and deep interviews with the informants, who were rich in context.²⁰ The subjects were 14 adolescents (7 child marriage couples). Additional information was obtained from the local people and the Religious Affairs Office of Lintau Buo Utara Sub-district to reach a deeper understanding. Secondary sources, which were about marriage dispensation case statistics from 2019-2021 in Batusangkar Religious Court, were also used to strengthen the findings and analysis. These case statistics generally showed the common tendency of how child marriage is carried out through the process of marriage dispensation cases.

Then, Miles and Huberman²¹ An interactive model was used in this research for data analysis. This model uses four stages: the first stage is data obtained, the second stage is data reduction, the third stage is data display, and the last stage is conclusion or verification. Therefore, the obtained data were chosen based on the theme and specific scheme to

¹⁶ Hurlock, E. B., *Psikologi Perkembangan Suatu Pendekatan Sepanjang Rentang Kehidupan* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2011), 206.

¹⁷ Durgut, S. and Kisa, S. Predictors of marital adjustment among child brides. *Archives of psychiatric nursing*.

¹⁸ Lexy, J. Moelong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Rosdakarya, 1991), 3.

¹⁹ Suharismi Arikunto, *Dasar-Dasar Research* (Bandung: Tarsoto, 1995), 58.

²⁰ Haris Herdiansyah, *Metodologi untuk Ilmu-ilmu Sosial* (Jakarta: Salemba Humanika, 2012), 11-15.

²¹ Miles, B. Mathew and Michael Huberman, *Analisis Data Kualitatif Buku Sumber Tentang Metode-metode Baru* (Jakarta: UIP, 1992), 90.

provide clear pictures of children's unreadiness in marriage in Lintau Buo Utara Sub-district. The data from the documentation study were shown in the form of a table. Meanwhile, the interview result was written in the form of narration. After that, data interpretation and conclusion were made.

Discussion

Based on the information from the judges of the Batusangkar Religious Court, there were several child marriages in several villages in the Lintau Buo Utara Sub-district.

This information was confirmed by the instructor of the Religious Affairs Office, who said that the Lintau Buo Utara Sub-district has a high marriage dispensation rate, especially in villages 1, 2, and 3. The people who live in these three villages have a dominant tendency to carry out underage marriages, either through an unregistered marriage or marriage dispensation. Generally, based on the case statistics recorded by Batusangkar Religious Court, there has been an increasing number of marriage dispensations every year from 2019-2021, as shown in the following table:

Table 1.

Marriage Dispensation Case Statistics from 2019-2021 in Batusangkar Religious Court

2019		2020		2021	
Registration Month	Number of Cases	Registration Month	Number of Cases	Registration Month	Number of Cases
January	1	January	4	January	8
February	-	February	6	February	6
March	2	March	3	March	8
April	3	April	2	April	1
May	3	May	3	May	3
June	1	June	6	June	8
July	1	July	7	July	5
August	-	August	4	August	3
September	1	September	2	September	7
October	7	October	2	October	5
November	6	November	4	November	5
December	2	December	2	December	4
Total Case	27	Total Case	45	Total Case	63

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The data shows that the number of applicants for marriage dispensation in 2018 is much lower than in 2019. In terms of the reasons stated in the legal determination of the marriage dispensation, the forms of reasons for getting married have also started to vary since 2019-2020²². This number has increased since 2020 as there was a change in the age limit for females from 16 to 19 years old. The decision of the Constitutional Court to raise the child marriage age to 19 years was due to changes to the new marriage law and Supreme Court Regulation Number 5 of 2019, which was passed on October 14, 2019. This validation aims to prevent child marriage, but it has been challenging to implement. Hence, Tanah Datar Regency, which had already received many requests for a marriage dispensation, got more requests instead due to the age limit change.

Unfortunately, many applicants applied for a marriage dispensation to Batusangkar Religious Court due to inappropriate backgrounds, such as premarital pregnancy or inappropriate attitudes toward running a relationship or so-called *condo* by the local people. *The condo* is a term Lintau Buo Utara's community uses to describe an inseparable young couple who show inappropriate attitudes based on religion and local values. Thus, their relationship invites slander in society.

Besides, several interrelated factors were found which then encouraged the practice of child marriage in the Lintau Buo Utara Sub-district as follows:

Lack of Understanding of Marriage Law

Based on the study conducted in the previous research, it was found that the society of Lintau Buo Utara Sub-district needed a higher understanding of marriage law. It took

a lot of work for the informants to answer aspects of the questions regarding the legal marriage pillars, technical implementation of marriage, and the age limit.²³

This ignorance was found in the interview process with the brother-in-law of couple A and B, who were married through a marriage dispensation. They even admitted that A's parents gave data or identity forgery. Through the marriage dispensation submitted by A's parent to Batusangkar Religious Court, it was found that the marital status of A and B during the submission process was single or never married before. According to A's parents, the submitted status was to simplify the legal process. A's parents were worried that if they told the truth that A and B had ever carried out an unregistered marriage before and had a two-year-old child, it would complicate the registration process. Thus, they considered telling a lie as justification to avoid legal issues.

That action resulted in a new problem: the child still needs administrative requirements such as birth and family certificates. A and B required more courage to apply for a birth certificate due to a lack of information concerning administration, and they were also afraid of being caught carrying out an unregistered marriage previously. Hence, they became ignorant of the child's future because they did not understand marriage Fiqh.

Economic Issues

Djamilah and Reni Kartikawati²⁴ They discussed this in their research about the impact of child marriage and that such

²³Ashabul Fadhli and Ummil Khairiyah, "Pemahaman Masyarakat Di Kecamatan Lintau Buo Utara Tentang Hukum Perkawinan Sehubungan Dengan Terjadinya Perkawinan Anak". *JurnalHumanisma* 2, no. 2 (2018): 84-100.

²⁴Djamilah and Reni Kartikawati, 'Dampak PerkawinanAnak di Indonesia', *JurnalStudi Pemuda* 3, no. 1 (2014): 1-16.

²²Ashabul Fadhli and Arifki Budia Warman, 'Alasan Khawatir'.

marriage often results in a new poverty cycle. Children who get married between 15 and 18 usually need more time to be ready for financial matters. Even though they work, most cannot earn enough money to fulfill family needs. Then, it causes children to be financially dependent on their parents for long, especially from the boys' side. As a result, parents have a double burden. Besides caring for the family, parents must inevitably support their children's families.

For instance, C and D were another child marriage couple, C was a cattle herder or so-called *manggilo taranak* by the local community. He could only have a regular income sometimes because he only got the wages after working for several days. The money he earned could not fulfill his life with D. C's and D's families were also considered poor. To illustrate, when they had to apply for marriage dispensation to Batusangkar Religious Court, D's family did not have money for transportation, so their relatives paid all costs needed during the trip and expenses during the trial.

In short, the insufficient economy as household capital was not considered an essential issue for A and B or C and D, as did the other children and their families. As long as there was a desire from the two children to get married, such as C and D, then a marriage could be arranged. However, the issue of economic hardship, common among early-age marriage couples, was never discussed.

Even though a groom said he had an occupation, the money he earned could only fulfill basic daily needs. Most grooms needed proper jobs to settle down; they usually worked as fieldhands, fruit pickers, or village transport drivers. A few of them already had regular income, but the issue was related to their young age. This condition usually occurred to the boys.

Dating

To illustrate, E and F were friends, but they became closer since they met each other intensively and communicated well. The families did not know they had a relationship. They admitted it when they had already gone too far in dating (having premarital sex). Moreover, the local society also sneaked on them because they often went out together. They finally dared to ask the family to arrange a marriage.

The premarital sex they had is analogous to *dulu bajak dari pado kabau* by society, it means a girl is already pregnant before married. This term always greatly tarnishes the name of a tribe, even though not all the tribe's members have ever done the same thing. Based on the information from E's and F's families, they finally officially got married in the Religious Affairs Office of Payakumbuh City.

Maintaining Family Honor

It began when G and H became closer since the beginning of senior high school; they motivated each other to study well. Yet, one day, they had premarital sex. After that, H often felt sick and got abdominal pain, which made her absent from school. Her parents took her to the local community health center, and the general practitioner discovered that H was pregnant. The doctor diagnosed that there was a slight abnormality in H's uterus, which caused the fetus in her womb to not be saved. It was perhaps because H covered up the pregnancy.

The fact that H was pregnant finally spread to the relatives of H and G, which triggered anger and curses due to the shame, especially H's family. They worried if the neighbors knew what had happened. Thus, they asked for G's family's responsibility. Luckily, G's family was willing to take

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responsibility by marrying G and H off. Thus, they got married through a marriage dispensation they obtained from Batusangkar Religious Court Office.

Drop out of school

Limited educational facilities are one factor that prevents students from continuing their education. In Lintau Buo Utara Sub-district, the senior high school is located far away from Village 1, Village 2, and Village 3. Hence, the children there commonly do not pursue their education to senior high school, including a couple with initials I and J. They had to not continue their education for many reasons, mainly due to the location; they would have spent more expenses on boarding rooms and daily needs if they had chosen to go to school. Moreover, dropping out of school was also a sign for the parents that their children were already at the proper age for marriage.

Moreover, after conducting more investigations, it was found that limited educational facilities were not the only reason for the children dropping out; lack of motivation from parents or family also played a significant role. The parents did not consider higher education as a necessity. They perceived that education was just only about the ability to read and write. In other words, gaining literacy was already enough for them, especially for girls, because they assumed that girls were only for doing chores and taking care of their households; A and B or G and H were examples of this.

The unreadiness of a couple towards their marriage is due to their incomplete development as a child. So that they are not ready to step into married life. Take K and L as an example; they did not understand their responsibilities as a married couple. L was a wife but still played outside with her friends;

her parents did her chores. Meanwhile, her husband, K, who was supposed to earn money, always went to a café to drink coffee instead. He did not understand his responsibilities as well.

This condition happened not only to K and L but also to M and N. M was the oldest son in a low-income family; since his household's needs were increasing daily, M often asked for money from his parents. Most people think marriage should have lightened the parents' burden, but M even added to his parents' responsibilities after the wedding. On the other hand, N, as a wife, already used to do chores like cooking, washing dishes, and buying groceries. N could do that not because she was an adult but due to her condition as an orphan with younger twin siblings. She had to take a role as a mother.

On the other side, when it came to caring for babies, M and N, I and J showed different attitudes. They could not care for babies; thus, their parents cared for them, especially N's and J's mothers, by bathing the baby, buying milk, and taking the baby to see a doctor or midwife. It also happened because N's and J's parents did not trust their daughters to do it. Parents' insecurity about their children taking care of their household proved that the child was not worthy of taking on the responsibilities of being a mother.

Lack of Adjustment and Emotional Maturity

Unreadiness in child marriage encourages children to choose, accept, and decide to undergo early-age marriage in a limited capacity in multiple aspects. Early-age marriage weakens their personal, social, economic, psychological, and knowledge readiness. The weakness and incompetence in the children begin to appear when the children find out that they will marry or be married off in the administrative process of marriage

dispensation submission and after the wedding. The condition of the children gets worse when they face the environmental and social demands after marriage, and the unreadiness of children to adjust themselves step by step before marriage. Hurlock²⁵ says that age is a supporting factor in success and compatibility in marriage. Adjustment is a psychological characteristic in marriage to achieve harmony. People who adapt well will better know and accept their strengths and weaknesses, understand themselves more, have emotional stability, and can balance between demands from within and the environment. This adjustment aspect is essential in shaping the satisfaction and well-being of a partner.²⁶ Difficulties in adapting to child marriage relations can be described through several problems that arise due to unpreparedness, as follows:

²⁵Hurlock, E. B. (2011). *Psikologi Perkembangan Suatu Pendekatan Sepanjang Rentang Kehidupan* (Jakarta: Erlangga),

²⁶Durgut, S. and Kİsa, S., 'Predictors of Marital Adjustment Among Child Brides', *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing* 32, no. 5 (2018):

Table 2.
 Grouping of The Unreadiness of Children in Marriage

No	Child Marriage Couple		Occupation	Form of Marriage	Reason to Marry	Problems that Arise Due to Unpreparedness
	A	B				
1	A	B	Unemployed	Dispensation	1. Had done premarital sex 2. Had a child after unregistered marriage	1. Falsifying marital status 2. Economic issues 3. Difficulty adapting to marriage life
2	C	D	Cattle Herder	Dispensation	Had done premarital sex	1. Incapable of building a household 2. Incapable of earning money for living 3. Depended on parents 4. Difficulty adapting to marriage life
3	E	F	Unemployed	Dispensation	Had done premarital sex	1. Incapable of earning money for living 2. Difficulty adapting to marriage life
4	G	H	Unemployed	Dispensation	Had done premarital sex	1. Drop out of school 2. Economic issues 3. Miscarriage due to uterine abnormality
5	I	J	Unemployed	Dispensation	Had done premarital sex	1. Drop out of school 2. Incapable of building a household 3. Incapable of taking care of baby 4. Depended on parents 5. Difficulty adapting to marriage life
6	K	L	Unemployed	Dispensation	Had done premarital sex	1. Childish 2. Incapable of building a household 3. Incapable of earning money for living 4. Difficulty adapting to marriage life
7	M	N	Unemployed	Dispensation	Had done premarital sex	1. Incapable of building a household 2. Incapable of earning money for living 3. Incapable of taking care of baby 4. Depended on parents 5. Difficulty adapting to

The table above is the grouping of children's unreadiness in marriage. The above child-married couples are known to have married through a marriage dispensation permit from the Batusangkar Religious Court. It is difficult for early marriage couples to adjust to the dialectics of marriage they never expected before, as if the very young couples are trapped in a marital relationship.²⁷ Moreover, there is an opinion of scholars who allow marriage when teenagers have hit puberty.²⁸ This then places the children in a condition considered not ready for marriage.

None of the seven interviewed couples were capable and empowered. Four of the five risks of the judges' advice materials in the Supreme Court Regulation Number 5 of 2019 concerning guidelines for adjudicating applications for marriage dispensation in Article 12 Paragraph 2 were found in the lives of these couples. Marriage puts those children in conditions such as dropping out of school, the unreadiness of the children's reproductive organs to fertilize, and economic, social, and psychological impacts.

Missing the opportunity to get an education has been experienced by many children due to marriage, especially girls in Indonesia. School is no longer the focus and concern. Busyness in the domestic sphere has changed the flow of girls' lives so that they are able to think and interact more quickly like married adult women.²⁹ Meanwhile, the social, economic, and psychological impacts

on the children, as stated in point d, are a form of unreadiness felt by each of them. It means those couples were not ready to accept that the marital relationship is a dialectic to the status of new roles and tasks that must be carefully prepared.

Psychologically and physically, the children are not yet ready to carry out married life. Even though economically, a young man claims to be able to provide for his family because he already has a job, this readiness cannot be legitimized as appropriate for marriage. Nurul Ilmi Idrus emphasizes that, according to the findings at Maros Religious Court, marriage dispensation permissions had been given to prospective brides not because the men already got a job but because both bride and groom were under public surveillance. The behavior of the future brides and grooms was considered to have disturbed the community; hence, to avoid anger and criticism, the requests for dispensation of marriage were granted.³⁰

In the child age phase, children are still learning to develop their abilities and roles in social life. Based on children's growth, Berk (2009)³¹, Santrock (2009)³², and Papalia et al (2009)³³ Explain that school-age children (6-11 years old) are still trying to learn about bigger environments and cope with new responsibilities that resemble adult ones. Besides, they are still learning new skills such as reading, writing, calculating, self-understanding, morals, and friendship. This theory is justified by the findings in K's and L's lives. K and L's unpreparedness had some

²⁷Ade Dedi Rohayana, 'Gender Discrimination on Child Marriage in Indonesia: A Quantitative Research Using Bootstrap Approach', *JurnalMuwazah* 12, no. 2 (2020): 237-254.

²⁸Ahmad Asrori, 'Batas Usia Perkawinan Menurut Fukaha Dan Penerapannya Dalam Undang-Undang Perkawinan Di Dunia Muslim', *Al-Adalah* 12, no. 2 (2015): 807-826

²⁹Ridwan Arifin, Rodiyah and Fadhilah Rizky Afriani Putri, 'The Legal and Social Aspect for Underage Marriage Women's Education Rights in the Perspective of Human Rights: Contemporary Issues and Problems', *SAWWA: JurnalStudi Gender* 15, no. 2. (2020): 219-240.

³⁰Nurul Ilmi Idrus, 'Problematizing the Minimum Age of Marriage: The State and Local Perspective on Marriage Dispensation in South Sulawesi', *Humaniora* 34, no. 2 (2022): 159-171

³¹Berk, L.E., *Child Development*. 8th Ed (New York: Pearson, 2009), 32.

³²Santrock, J.W. *Life Span Development*. 13th Ed (Jakarta: Penerbit Erlangga, 2011), 246.

³³Papalia, D.E., Olds, S.W., & Feldman, R.D., *Human Development*. 11th Ed (New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2009), 443.

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destructive impacts on their domestic lives. Even though she was married, as a wife, she looked childish. L was always busy playing with her peers. Even the obligations of a wife in the household could not be carried out correctly. It also happened to her husband, K, who had limited knowledge and skills to provide for his household economy.

When understanding marriage law, A's and B's marriage is an example. Their parents thought that there would be no more problems after tricking the officers to get permission to marry off their children. As good citizens who should obey the law, A's and B's parents should have directed A and B to carry out marriage properly, justified in Fiqh, and strengthened through Marriage Law Number 16 of 2019. This is in line with the principle laid down by the marriage law that the prospective husband and wife must be mature in mind and body to realize the purpose of marriage properly.

Meanwhile, the adolescent period (11 to 18 years old) leads to the process of sexual maturity, building independence, setting personal values and goals, and trying to find self-identity. Hence, children cannot place themselves as adults and carry out adult duties such as getting married and building a family. In H's case, it was found that she was not physically ready yet, especially regarding her reproductive organs. Thus, an abnormality was found in her uterus, which caused a miscarriage. Children are still at the stage of learning to be responsible and to discover their identities. Hence, they are not yet economically, socially, and psychologically independent. Therefore, providing education to children in the form of negotiating ideas about sexuality and shaping the awareness of

reproductive health will save them more.³⁴.

In addition, lack of independence in the capacity of husbands was found not only in K's case but also in all cases of early-age husbands because they had an obligation to provide income for their families. Subjects A, C, E, G, I, K, and M were all husbands who were economically incapable; they even depended on their parents to support their households. Take couples A and B as an example; the cost of applying for a marriage dispensation was Rp. 350,000, was paid by their relatives. Besides helping them pay the application, the relatives also spent transportation expenses from Lintau Buo Utara Sub-district to Batusangkar City. C is another example of this; he depended on his parents to buy the daily needs of his household. Ideally, a newlywed can provide for his life, but C still depends on his parents.

On the other side, when it comes to girls, this is in line with the findings of previous studies, which conclude that when girls marry at a young age, they are exposed to the risk of early pregnancy,³⁵ poor reproductive health³⁶, heavy childcare burdens, denial of one's right to education, and marital instability. Interaction factors among certain religions, sociology, psychology, economics, and culture affect the risk of early marriage in young girls.³⁷.

³⁴ Hoko Horii, 'Child Marriage as a 'Solution' to Modern Youth in Bali', *SAGE Journals* 20, no.4 (2020): 282-295

³⁵ Singgih Susilodkk, 'Investigation of Early Marriage: A Phenomenology Study in the Society of Bawean Island, Indonesia', *Journal of Population and Social Studies* 29, no. 1 (2021): 544-562

³⁶ Suiqiong Fan and Alissa Koski, 'The Health Consequences Of Child Marriage: A Systematic Review Of The Evidence', *BMC Public Health* 22, no. 309 (2022): 1-17

³⁷ Shaud, S., and Asad, S., 'Marital Adjustment, Convergent Communication Patterns, And Psychological Distress In Women With Early And Late Marriage', *Current Psychology* 39, no. 6 (2020): 2326-2333

In addition, early marriage also causes an increased risk of various health problems such as unplanned pregnancy, maternal death, infant mortality, and sexually transmitted infections.³⁸ Moreover, it can also increase the risk of being infected by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), as well as psychological problems. Qamar & Harris Tustin³⁹ State that before the age of 15, girls are not physically or cognitively mature enough to make decisions regarding family and related parties' consent to marriage, sexual relations, or reproduction. In addition, based on puberty, there are variations in physical readiness and cognitive maturity for individuals who are 15-17 years old.

Immature cognitive development can make feelings or emotions overpower common sense, which allows teens to make unwise choices such as drug abuse and risky sexual activity. This condition could be found in couples G and H and I and J. The communication and relationship they had built since they were in school encouraged G and H and I and J couples to step into more serious relationships as married couples. Moreover, the local culture also supports that dropping out of school and or no longer continuing school to higher education is a sign for parents to marry off their children.

The following problems lie in emotional development. Adolescence is an age of emotional instability, which sometimes results in the decision to marry in a hurry without going through careful consideration. Teenagers always fantasize about something fun and sometimes unrealistic. Immature

consideration for deciding to marry can be found in all subjects. For instance, G and H, a couple who had had sex before marriage, triggered H's parents to ask G to marry immediately without careful consideration. Likewise, couples A and B chose to undergo unregistered marriage and had a child before finally making it official at the Lintau Buo Utara Religious Affairs Office. They falsified their marital status and applied for a married dispensation to Batusangkar Religious Court Office. The purpose of doing that was to avoid making it complicated during the marriage dispensation submission process.

Social development in the child phase is more directed towards closeness to groups of playmates; children begin to learn how to communicate well and show enthusiasm and concern for others. However, they cannot be considered socially mature because they still interpret social things from their own perspectives.⁴⁰

A married male is considered an adult in his environment even though he is still a child. This judgment confuses young grooms with their new identity and status as husbands. They will find it difficult to identify themselves in society, so in the end, they experience an identity crisis, which in turn can endanger their future development. Confusion about the new status attached to a groom as an individual with a family is part of the husband's unpreparedness to care for commitments in the household. The choice to stop or no longer continue education and then change with the persistence of the heart to get married immediately is not balanced with emotional stability in decision-making.

Cassini⁴¹ adds that individuals at the age of children usually have a winning

³⁸Shariyati, Joni Haryanto, and RirinProbowati, 'Trends of Early Marriage in Developing Countries: A Systematic Review,' *Jurnal Ners* 14, no. 3 (2019): 277-282

³⁹Mavra Qamar, Anne Harris, and Jordan LTustin, 'The association between child marriage and domestic violence in Afghanistan,' *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 37, no. 5-6 (2022): 2948-2961

⁴⁰Santrock, J.W. *Life Span Development*.

⁴¹Casmini, 'Pernikahan Dini (Perspektif Psikologi dan Agama)', *Jurnal Aplikasi Ilmu-ilmu Agama* 3, no. 1 (2002), 45-57.

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attitude, emotions seem excessive and even difficult to control, so there is a high possibility of family conflict. From the viewpoint of human development, when the tasks of individual development must take place, it will never be fulfilled. The possible result is that an immature or incompletely mature personality is formed. Children will look serious in making a living, but they are psychologically full of confusion that sometimes cannot be expressed to others.

Furthermore, there is research on girls that concludes that girls who are pregnant in immature uteri can be at risk of experiencing prolonged trauma and a crisis of self-esteem. Child brides will be psychologically burdened because they are required to have a heavier role than children their age. Unpreparedness to play a role as a wife, sex partner, mother, and part of society will have a negative impact on psychological well-being and personality development. In line with it, Durgut, S & Kisa, S.,⁴² states that age during marriage affects women's empowerment, household arrangement, and social status in the environment.

This unpreparedness showed that all subjects could not adjust to their new roles as husbands and wives. Adjustment is a person's way of dealing with or solving problems so that the expected results can be achieved. To achieve these results, individuals can face all obstacles with the right mechanism, not by self-defense or by running away.⁴³ It means that individuals who can adapt are the ones who can harmonize their demands with the demands of their environment so that stressful situations can be handled properly. Forced marriages or beyond the will of the

adolescents can be referred to as violence and discrimination against children⁴⁴. Ignoring children's rights in this context will also have an impact on the achievement of the SDGs⁴⁵.

Suhariyati⁴⁶ reveals child marriage has a significant influence on the development of a child. It means that every aspect of individual development, whether physical, emotional, intelligence or social, influences each other. This development follows a specific pattern or direction. Development occurs regularly so that the results of development from the previous stage are prerequisites for further development.⁴⁷. Therefore, unpreparedness has some impacts after marriage, such as difficulties in using skills, always relying on parents, and inconsistently carrying out the roles, as seen in couples I and J, K and L, M and N. They are the manifestations of individuals' failure to undergo a series of developmental processes in themselves.

Conclusion

Child marriage occurred in the Lintau Buo Utara Sub-district as a result of various reasons. Several factors encouraged the practice of child marriage in this sub-district, such as a lack of understanding of marriage law, economic issues, dating issues, the purpose of maintaining family honor and dropping out of school. It is undeniable that local traditions and culture contributed to the occurrence of child marriage. Due to the constraint on the age limit for

⁴²Durgut, S. and Kisa, S. Predictors of Marital Adjustment

⁴³Utami, Fajar Tri, 'Penyesuaian Diri Remaja Putri yang Menikah Muda', *Psikis Jurnal Psikologi Islami* 1, No. 1 (2015): 11-21.

⁴⁴ Hoko Horii, 'Legal Reasoning for Legitimation of Child Marriage in West Java: Accommodation of local norms at Islamic Courts and the Paradox of Child Protection', *Journal of Human Rights Practice* 12, no. 3 (2020): 501-523

⁴⁵ Lahaling, H., Lasori, S.A., Makkulawuzar, K., Yunus, Y., & Salam, S., 'Children's Rights In The Context Of Child Marriage In Gorontalo Province', *SASI* 28, no. 2 (2022): 234-243

⁴⁶Suhariyati, 'Trends of Early Marriage in Developing Countries: A Systematic Review', *Jurnal Ners* 14, no. 3 (2019): 277-282.

⁴⁷Farahdiba Thahura, 'Emotional Maturity Of Early Age Marriage's Woman', *Inspira* 1, no. 1, (2020): 19-24

marriage, the marriage permit for each couple must be submitted as a marriage dispensation application to Batusangkar Religious Court Office. Although that very young couple had different factors and reasons for getting married, they had the same thing in terms of unreadiness in marriage.

It was reflected in the problems in which these couples had the same tendencies, such as being incapable of building a household, incapable of supporting the family, still dependent on parents, having adaptation difficulties, having economic issues, dropping out of school, and being incapable of taking care of children.

Appalling conditions and discrimination have implications for children's lives related to the loss of children's rights in many aspects. The unpreparedness of children in marriage has a significant influence in terms of post-marital adjustment and new social interaction. To be able to make these adjustments, emotional maturity plays an important role. When they fail to meet the developmental demands, they will experience instability in new social roles after marriage. In order for adjustment in marital life to run well, ideally, the very young husband and wife should be psychologically mature.

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