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Reactualization of The Role and Function of Islamic Religious Counselors in Minimizing Early Marriage

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Abstract

This research aims to determine the strategies by Islamic Religious Counselors in reducing the number of early marriages in the Wara district. The author chooses qualitative research with an empirical approach to Islamic law to analyze social reality in depth. This approach was chosen because the authors wanted to explain an in-depth analysis of Islamic religious extension officers' role in carrying out informative, educative, consultative, and advocative functions in early marriage cases. The subjects in this study were two functional Islamic religious instructors, five non-civil servant Islamic religious instructors, and one BP4 mediator. The object of this study is the role of religious instructors in carrying out professional functions in cases of early marriage. The study results showed that the Islamic Extension Counselors in Wara District performed well because they carried out informative and educative roles and functions, consular and advocative functions as extension agents consistently by conducting direct counselling to the community. The strategies undertaken to reduce the number of early marriages are counselling to prevent underage marriages, rejecting underage brides, socializing the importance of formal education to adolescents, and approaching parents to maximize their role in educating children.

Keywords: Re-actualization, the Role and Function, Islamic Religious Counselors, Early Marriage

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui strategi yang dilakukan oleh Penyuluh Agama Islam dalam mengurangi angka pernikahan dini di Kecamatan Wara.Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan hukum Islam yang bersifat empiris. Pendekatan ini dipilih karena penulis ingin menjelaskan penelitian secara mendalam mengenai peran penyuluh Agama Islam dalam menjalankan fungsi informatif dan edukatif, konsultatif dan fungsi advokatif untuk kasus pernikahan dini. Subjek dalam penelitian ini adalah dua orang penyuluh Agama Islam fungsional (PAIF), empat orang penyuluh Agama Islam Non PNS (PAI-Non PNS), satu orang mediator BP4. Objek dalam penelitian ini adalah peran dan fungsi penyuluh agama dalam menjalankan fungsi profesi untuk kasus pernikahan dini. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Penyuluh Agama Islam yang ada di Kecamatan Wara memiliki kinerja yang baik karena mereka menjalankan peran dan fungsi informatif dan edukatif, fungsi konsulati dan advokatifnya nya sebagai penyuluh secara konsisten dengan melakukan penyuluhan langsung kepada masayarakat. Sedangkan strategi yang dilakukan untuk mengurangi angka pernikahan dini adalah dengan penyuluhan pencegahan pernikahan di bawah umur, menolak calon pengantin di bawah umur, melakukan sosialisasi pentingnya pendidikan formal kepada remaja dan melakukan pendekatan kepada orangtua agar memaksimalkan perannya dalam mendidik anak.

Kata Kunci,:Reaktualisasi, Peran dan Fungsi, Penyuluh Agama Islam, Pernikahan Dini.

Introduction

Religious counselors, civil and non-civil servants under the Ministry of Religion of the Indonesian Republic, have duties, responsibilities, and authority to conduct religious guidance and development counselling through religious language. All activities carried out by religious counselors related to spirituality to people who need spiritual assistance in their environment. Religious counselors provide spiritual services in various counselling, such as worship guidance, marriage guidance, etc. One of the Religious Counselors whose role is most important in a Muslim-majority society is the Islamic Counselor². The increasingly advanced era of digitalization has made the spread of Islamic teachings more advanced. The growing development of the deployment also requires human resources to develop it. One profession that plays an essential role in spreading Islamic teachings is Islamic Religious Extension. In addition to carrying out his primary duties as a Religious Extension Officer, he also holds many positions in the scope of religious activities.³

Based on the Decree of the Director General of Islamic Community Guidance Number 504 of 2022 concerning Guidelines for Islamic Religious Instructors, which is a reference in carrying out the duties of Islamic Religious Instructors I the 2020-2024 service period which was established on June 4, 2022, explains that the main task of Islamic Religious Instructors is to carry out Islamic guidance and counselling development through religious language to the target group according to the policies stipulated by the Director General of Islamic Community Guidance, Ministry of Religion. There are four functions of Islamic Religious Instructors: informative and educative, consultative, and advocative. ⁴

Islamic religious counselors are structural officers and have a valuable field function. They not only master the role structurally but rather the role and function. Concerning the function of Islamic religious instructors, the main tasks carried out by the two types of Islamic religious instructors remain the same, namely, carrying out Islamic guidance and counselling activities as well as community development and development in the language of religion towards an Islamic society. The problem currently being faced by religious instructors is the increasingly intense challenge of da'wah, both internal and external.⁵

¹ Bimas Islam, *Buku Penyuluh Agama Islam Non PNS* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama RI, 2017), h. 20.

² Syamsuddin, Efektivitas Peran Penyuluh Agama Islam dalam Penerapan Hukum Perkawinan Islam di Masyarakat Pedesaan (Studi Kasus di Kecamatan Mare Kabupaten Bone). (Jurnal Ar-Risalah, Januari – Juni, 2017), h. 99.

³AbdulBasit, *Tantangan Profesi Penyuluh Agama Islam dan Pemberdayaannya*. (Jurnal Dakwah, XV,No.1, 2014), h. 157.

⁴Keputusan Direktur Jenderal Bimbingan Masyarakat Islam Nomor 298 Tahun 2017, Hal. 12

⁵ Wawancara dengan Muh. Arif, S.Ud, Penyuluh Agama Islam Non-PNS Kantor Urusan Agama Kecamatan Wara, 12 November 2020.

Challenges arise from various forms of modern society's activities, such as behavior that always wants entertainment and tourism in a broad sense which is now increasingly opening opportunities for the emergence of social problems. Such as the occurrence of vulnerability, gaps, unrest, and instability. Many people are easily provoked to commit deviant acts, such as acts against the law and violence, which are increasing daily. There are so many problems that exist in today's society, especially those that occur to Muslims themselves, so it requires qualified abilities from religious instructors, both the ability to master theories and methods, as well as mastery of communication media which are currently being used more and more. By the community so that the method of providing religious understanding to the community is not only focused on the pulpit media, but religious instructors can guide the form of direct counselling. Wara District is one of 9 Districts in Palopo with a high number of marriage events. There were 510 recorded marriages from 2019 to June 2022. Of the number of marriages, only 17 were underage marriages (Early marriage), a percentage of around 3.33%. This percentage is low. The details of the marriage events in Wara District are in tabular form.

Table. 1.

Number of Marriages in Wara District in 2019 -2022

| Years | Number of Marriages | Number of Early Marriages |
|-------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 2019 | 168 | 6 |
| 2020 | 128 | 4 |
| 2021 | 135 | 4 |
| 2022 | 79 | 3 |

Source; Archives of KUA Wara Data for 2019-2022

Marriage has an age limit. Regarding the age limit for marriage, so far, no rule has been found in fiqh discourse (Islamic jurisprudence) that limits it. The fuqaha only stated that the measure of the permissibility of underage women for intercourse is that they need to be ready to engage in sexual activity. ((e^{i})) with all ((e^{i})) nsequences, such as pregnancy, childbirth, and breastfeeding, marked by puberty's arrival. Following the words of (e^{i}) 0 marriage is very vulnerable to family conflicts. Various problems, such as they do not have psychological, economic, and educational maturity, are problems that lead to divorce. The results of research reinforce this by Rahman and Nasrin that Marriage at a young age is low monthly income, stress, cases of high school dropouts, the occurrence of domestic violence, high chances of maternal death, low schooling, and low reproductive health rights.

⁶Yusuf Hanafi, *Kontroversi Pernikahan Anak di Bawah Umur* (Bandung: Mandar Maju, 2011), h. 12

⁷ Sri Hartanti dan Triana Susanti, "Usia Ideal Menikah dalam Islam; Tafsir Al-Qur'an Surat An-Nisa Ayat 6 dan An-Nur Ayat 32", *Journal of Sharia and Islamic Economics*. Vol. 2 No. 2, Oktober 2021, 28-35.

The primary legal basis for marriage is the Koran. Many verses in the Qur'an talk about marital problems, one of which is found in the Qur'an Surah al-Nisa' 4; 3:

"and if you are afraid that you will not be able to do justice to (the rights of) orphaned women (if you marry them), then marry (other) women you like: two, three or four. then if you are afraid that you will not be able to act fairly, then (marry) only one, or the slaves you have. that is closer to not doing wrong." (Q.s al-Nisa': 3).

Marriage is generally done by adults regardless of profession, religion, ethnicity, poor or rich, living in a village or in a city. Nevertheless, only some people who already have physical and mental abilities will find a partner according to what they want. In human life, marriage is not temporary but for life. Unfortunately, not everyone can fully understand the essence and purpose of marriage, which is to achieve true happiness in the household. The age limit for getting married is essential. Marriage requires psychological maturity. The age of marriage that is too young can result in an increase in divorce cases due to a lack of awareness to be responsible in married life husband and wife.⁸

The prevalence of early marriage practices in society makes the role and function of Islamic religious instructors interesting to discuss in this study. How is the performance of Islamic Religious Counselors in minimizing early Marriage in Wara District? What are the roles and functions of Islamic Religious Counselors in minimizing early Marriage in Wara District? What strategies are carried out by the Islamic Religion Counselor in reducing the number of early marriages in Wara District? So this research wants to know the performance, roles, and functions, as well as the strategies used by Islamic Religious Extension Workers in minimizing early Marriage in Wara District. The implications of this research are expected to enrich the body of knowledge regarding marital problems from the perspective of religion and Islamic law regarding efforts to reduce the number of early marriages. In addition, it is hoped that this can be input and consideration for Islamic Religion Counselors who work in the Office of Religious Affairs to reduce the number of early marriages related to their functional roles, namely informative function, consultative function, educative function, and advocative function.

Research conducted by Abdul Basit explains that the challenges faced by Islamic religious educators in Indonesia are clearly mapped, the emergence of liberal and fundamental Islamic movements, where their presence clashes one

⁸Agus Mahfudin & Khoirotul Waqi'ah, "Pernikahan Dini dan Pengaruhnya terhadap Keluarga di Kabupaten Sumenep Jawa Timur, "Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam Volume 1, Nomor 1, April 2016; ISSN: 2541-1489 cetak)/2541-1497 (online); 33-49

community with another. Therefore, as an extension of the government through the Ministry of Religion, the Islamic Religious Counselor profession is expected to be an antidote to movements that divide society in particular and the Indonesian nation in general. In addition, Hasan Dau's research, Rizal Darwis, shows that the existence of the Penghulu in North Gorontalo Regency has a huge role in minimizing the occurrence of divorce. This success is due to the existence of practical communication efforts by the Penghulu with troubled families and the desire of the troubled parties to solve their problems amicably. In

From the research above, the presence of Islamic Religious Counselors is crucial. Their presence not only functions as a social institution but their function and role have a significant role in coaching amid society. The role is a dynamic aspect of position (status). If a person carries out his rights and obligations according to his position, he plays a role. The difference in roles and positions is for the sake of science. The two cannot be separated. Since there is no role without a role and a role without a position, they are interdependent. Roles are the general expectations about the appropriate behaviors that people with a particular role should perform.

There are at least three functions of the Religious Extension Officers, which they must play in carrying out their duties, namely: (1) Informative and educative function, namely as a preacher who is obliged to preach his religious teachings, convey religious information and educate the public as well as possible following the teachings of his religion. (2) Consultative function; namely participating actively and participating in solving problems faced by the community, both personal, family, environmental, and community problems with guidance and solutions from religious teachings. (3) Advocative function, namely having a moral and social responsibility to carry out advocacy activities for the inmates against various threats, disturbances, obstacles, and challenges that are detrimental to society's faith, worship, and morals. 13

Method

This research is qualitative research with an empirical approach to Islamic law. The steps and designs of empirical legal research follow the patterns of social science research, especially sociology. Therefore it is not

⁹AbdulBasit, "Tantangan Profesi Penyuluh Agama Islam dan Pemberdayaannya. *Jurnal Dakwah*, XV, No.1 (2014) h. 157.

¹⁰ Hasan Dau, Rizal Darwis, "Eksistensi Penghulu dalam Meminimalisir Perceraian di Kabupaten Gorontalo Utara. *Jurnal Al-Mizan* Vol. 15 No. 2, 201 ISSN 1907-0985 E ISSN 2442-8256. Hal. 268

 $^{^{11}}$ Soerjono Soekanto, *Sosiologi Suatu Pengantar*, (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2012), h. 210

¹² Sarlito Wirawan Sarwono, *Teori-Teori Psikologi Sosial*, (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 1995), h. 99-100.

¹³ Dudung Abdul Rohaman dan Firman Nugraha, *Menjadi Penyuluh Agama Profesional (Analisis Teoritis dan Praktis)*, (Bandung: LEKKAS, 2017), h. 9.

wrong to say that this empirical legal research can also be called "socio-legal research." 14

The subjects in this study were two functional Islamic Religion instructors (PAIF), four Non-PNS Islamic Religion extensionists (PAI-Non PNS), and one BP4 mediator who served at KUA Wara District. In addition to the six research subjects above, the authors interviewed three beneficiary community members from activities carried out by religious extension workers and BP4 to serve as research informants. The object of this study is the role and function of religious instructors in carrying out professional functions for cases of early marriage in the Wara sub-district, Palopo. At the same time, the data collection techniques in this study used interviews, observation, and documentation. The data analyst used is an interactive analysis from Miles and Huberman, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and data verification or conclusion. Data analysis is carried out continuously and continuously until complete data is obtained.

Result and Discussion

The Performance of Islamic Religious Counselors in Minimizing Early Marriage in Wara District

From 2019 to 2022, the Wara District Office of Religious Affairs handled 375 marriage events (the table is presented in the background), and 17 of them were cases of early marriage. Suppose the percentage is around 4.5%. This figure is small when compared to marriage events in other districts. Early marriage events in 2019, there were only 6 cases out of 168 marriage events that occurred in Wara District. From the findings in the field, the number of Marriage cases in the Wara District was small because religious instructors in the Wara District Office of Religious Affairs directly went into the community to socialize the dangers and impacts of early marriage.

"Sebagai penyuluh agama Islam di wilayah Kecamatan Wara ini, selain melakukan pembinaan kepada orangtua melalui pengajian. Kami memang langsung membina anak-anak remaja. Melakukan penyuluhan tentang dampak dari pernikahan dini. Apalagi saat ini arus informasi dan digital kencang sekali. Sehingga kami sebagai penyuluh agama mencoba mengarahkan mereka untuk tidak terpengaruh melakukan hal-hal yang belum halal. Kami biasa melakukan workshop bahaya pernikahan dini meskipun tidak bisa dihindari bahwa ada saja muncul peristiwa pernikahan dini yang disebakan karena faktor pendidikan". 15

From 2020 to 2022 there were 8 early marriages at the Wara District Religious Affairs Office. A low level of education or not going to school anymore for a woman encourages her to get married quickly. People with low levels of

¹⁴Faisar Ananda Arfa dan Watni Marpaung, *Metodologi Penelitian Hukum Islam,*(Bandung, Citapustaka Media Perintis, 2010), h. 70

¹⁵Wawancara pribadi dengan Uztad TS selaku Penyuluh Agama Islam Fungsional Kantor Urusan Agama Kecamatannn Wara, Palopo 18 Oktober 2022

education tend to marry off their children at a young age, in line with what was expressed by uztadsah NS, one of the Islamic religious instructors at the KUA Wara District.

"Faktornya itu pendidikan, biasanya orangtua mendukung jika anak ingin berhenti sekolah, kalau sudah tidak sekolah terus kerja lalu mau kerja apa lagi kalau tidak menikah, jadi pilihannya yah menikah Rata-rata mereka itu pendidikannya di SMP atau SMA, kalau di jenjang perguruan tinggi masih jarang ditemukan kasus seperti itu". 16

The results of the author's interview with teenagers who were married at the age of 17, namely Youth I, are currently 19 years old. The teenager got married in November 2020; it has been two years since she was married, and she is now six months pregnant with her first child. He is the first child of two siblings; his younger sibling is currently studying at junior high school, and his parents work as farmers. The teenager I was last educated with was in high school; after graduating, he immediately worked in a shop. Not long after working, his parents introduced him to his husband because a teenager I and her husband, who are six years apart, have the same principle: they do not want to date and want to get married, so they decided to get married.

"Tidak suka ka' pacaran Pak, sudah pernah kerja jadi lebih baik langsung menikah mi saja. Saya lulus waktu masa corona dan sudah kerja walaupun ijazah belum keluar. Sebelumnya juga sudah kenal sama suami cuma tidak pernah ketemu terus dikenalkan sama ibunya suami".¹⁷

The reality in people's lives in Wara District is that there are still people who do not know about government policies regarding the prohibition of underage marriage, namely in the latest regulation, Marriage Law No. 16 of 2019, which requires that men and women be allowed to marry with a minimum age of 19 years, so below that prohibits prospective brides from marrying. This is as expressed by Uztad MIR, one of the Islamic religious instructors at KUA Wara District.

"Masyarakat itu ada yang kurang tahu tentang larangan pemerintah terkait undang-undang yang melarang menikah di bawah umur 19, jadi pas datang ke KUA mau daftar menikah umurnya masih kurang".¹⁸

The lack of public knowledge of the government's recommendations is a challenge for the Islamic Religion Counselors in Wara District, so their program and duty is to socialize it to the community. Furthermore, this is done by religious counselors through recitations in groups of taklim assemblies. Underage marriages are under government recommendations in the law on marriage no. 16 of 2019; it is stated that bridal couples may carry out marriages with a minimum age limit of 19 years. This marriage could be better compared to marriages that are old enough to increase child productivity and

¹⁶Wawancara pribadi dengan uztadsah NS selaku penyuluh Agama Islam fungsional KUA Kecamatannn Wara Palopo, 18 Oktober 2022.

¹⁷Wawancara pribadi dengan Remaja I di Kecamatannn Wara Kota Palopo, 20 Oktober 2022.

¹⁸Wawancara pribadi dengan Uztad MIR selaku Penyuluh Agama di Kecamatannn Wara Kota Palopo, 20 Oktober 2022.

mother's safety; also, the possible impact is divorce. The marriage law was made to assure the public that marriage is not as easy as one might imagine; marriage is sacred and should not be treated as a toy. In addition, underage marriages have a negative impact. Moreover, a man, as a leader in the family, has a great responsibility to his wife, namely the responsibility of the world and the hereafter and vice versa.¹⁹

"Menurut saya, selama menjadi anggota majelis pengajian yang dibimbing oleh penyuluh agama Islam yang bertugas di Kecamatan Wara ini, saya pribadi mendapatkan banyak pencerahan. Khususnya tentang pernikahan. Apalagi saya ini khan orangtua yang memiliki anak. Jadi kalau menurut saya kinerjanya penyuluh agama Islam di sini bagus, mereka langsung terjun kelapangan, terbuka sama warga".²⁰

Based on these interview excerpts, the Islamic religious instructors who work in Wara District have performed well in the eyes of the community because they have a straightforward program that directly reaches out to the community. This is in line with the opinion of the contents of the letter Attaubah verse 105 that in carrying out the assigned duties of employees, they should carry out work without any element of compulsion, but because the work given to them is their responsibility, because all actions carried out will be accounted for in the afterlife later and also affect the job done in this world related to the results of employment and wages received from that work. Also, Mangkunegara states that performance results from work in quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out his duties following his responsibilities.²¹

The Roles and Functions of Islamic Religious Counselors to Minimize Early Marriage in Wara District

The main task of the Religious instructor by the provisions of the Decree of the Coordinating State Minister for State Supervision Number 54/KEP/MK.WASPAN/9/1999 is to carry out and develop Religious guidance or counselling and development activities through the language of religion. ²²Religious instructors as community leaders act as priests in religion and social issues as well as in matters of state by making government programs successful. ²³In addition to carrying out their duties, Islamic religious instructors are also required to carry out their functions in society so that they can be said to have a role in society.

a) Informative and Educative Functions

 $^{^{19}}$ Hasil wawancara dengan Bapak HNF selaku penyuluh agama Islam KUA Kecamatan. Wara.

 $^{^{20}}$ Wawancara pribadi dengan Ibu Nirwana, Jama'ah majelis taklim binaan Penyuluh agama Islam Kecamatan Wara, 20 Oktober 2022.

²¹ A.A Anwar Prabu Mangkunegara, *Evaluasi Kinerja Sumber Daya Manusia,* (Jakarta: Rafika Aditama, 2017), h. 27

²²Kemenag RI, *Petunjuk Teknis Pelaksanaan Jabatan Fungsional Penyuluh Agama*, (Jakarta: Kemenag RI, 2012), h. 12.

²³Trisnayati, *Strategi Komunikasi Penyuluh Agama Islam Fungsional Dalam Upaya Pencegahan Perceraian Di Kabupaten Tangerang*, (Tesis: Jurusan Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam, Fakultas Ilmu Dakwah dan Ilmu Komunikasi UIN Jakarta, 2018), h. 71.

KUA Wara Islamic Religion Counselors carry out coaching and guidance activities to congregations in taklim assemblies and assist KUA's duties in conveying information about the importance of participating in pre-marital guidance activities, which are the KUA Wara program.

"Sekaitan dengan fungsi informatif, kami senantiasa memberikan informasiyang aktual, terbaru, terupdate sejak perkembangan yang ada. Baik semua aturan-aturan pernikahan terbaru, disosialisasikan kepada masyarakat. Perkembangan digital yang maju pesat kami manfaatkan untuk menjadi media untuk sosilisasi terkait aturan-turan terbaru tentang perkawinan".²⁴

The description of the explanation that the author found in the field is as follows:

1) Activities of Majelis Taklim

Related to carrying out informative and educative functions for cases of early marriage, the KUA Wara Islamic Religion instructor provides information and teaching to the counselling target with material guidelines originating from the shekinah family movement development program designed by the Ministry of Religion. This particular material about the shekinah family is usually in the form of munakahat figh material, but because the Islamic Religious instructors are not devoted to conveying material only about the shekinah family, but deliver counselling material from all aspects of religion. The material usually inserted is in the form of age maturation in marriage, morals, and fostering household life. As revealed by Uztadzah KDJ. "Materi yang biasa disisipkan seperti materi kesiapan mental dalam menjalani rumah tangga. Kesiapan umur dalam menjalani pernikahan. Juga materi berakhlak yang baik sama pasangan, misalnya bersikap lemah lembut dan tidak berkata kasar sama pasangan misalnya, seorang istri harus mematuhi perintah suami dengan catatan kepada hal-hal yang dibenarkan sama Agama dan bukan mengikuti perintah yang dilarang Allah Swt. Selain itu juga materi tentang bagaimana memanage rumah tangga mulai dari pola asuh anak. Karna membangun keluarga sakinah bukan hanya hubungan antara suami dan istri saja tetapi seluruh yang berada dalam keluarga, baik anak, orangtua, bahkan dilingkungan masyarakat".²⁵

2) Pre-Marital Marriage Guidance

Pre-marital marriage guidance for the bride and groom is a form of activity that aims to educate the prospective bride and groom before going through the process of married life. This marriage guidance activity is carried out once a week, on Thursday from 10.00-13.00 WIB, located in the KUA Wara marriage hall. To find out more clearly about the initial stages of marriage guidance activities for the bride and groom, the following is the expression of the Uztad BDJ.

"Jika calon pengantin mendaftarkan diri, pihak KUA melihat kelengkapan persyaratan yang mereka serahkan. Kalau sudah terpenuhi persyaratannya,

 $^{^{24}\}mbox{Wawancara}$ pribadi dengan Kepala Kantor Urusan Agama Kecamatan
nn Wara, Palopo 18 Oktober 2022

²⁵Wawancara pribadi dengan Uztadazah KDJ selaku Penyuluh Agama Islam Fungsional KUA Kecamatan Wara, Palopo 18 Oktober 2022.

kemudian di Billing atau didaftarkan ke pusat. Nah, baru oleh kita diberikan surat panggilan untuk mengikuti BIMWIN itu. Biasanya bisa seminggu atau dua minggu sebelum mereka melangsungkan pernikahan. Kita kondisional, dan ada waktu-waktu tertentu yang memang diarahkan oleh Kantor Kementrian Agama Kabupaten itu untuk dilaksanakan secara serentak atau massal. Nah diluar itu, ketika misalnya tidak secara definitif ditentukan oleh Kementrian Agama Kabupaten Bogor, setiap orang yang daftar untuk pernikahan kita tetap melayani kegiatan BIMWIN itu meskipun hanya satu atau dua pasang".²⁶

This guidance is carried out after the prospective bride and groom who register have fulfilled all administrative requirements at the KUA. After all the requirements are met, the KUA will issue a summons to the prospective bride and groom containing a timetable for the activity to take place one to two weeks before the activity is carried out. Apart from that, there are certain times when marriage guidance activities are held simultaneously, but outside of these times, the KUA will continue to carry out BIMWIN activities even if only one or two pairs of prospective brides and grooms register. The material in BIMWIN's activities included the basic teachings of Islam, the law on marriage, domestic violence, family planning, and reproductive health. In addition, in the pre-marital marriage guidance activities that were held simultaneously, participants who participated in the activity received certificates and souvenirs in the form of a sakinah family foundation book, notes, and pens. Pre-marital marriage counselling activities are a preventive effort so the prospective bride and groom can know about marriage.

From the explanation above regarding the informative and educative function of the KUA Wara Islamic Religious Instructor for cases of early marriage, the KUA Wara Islamic Religious Instructor has implemented it well.

b) Consultative Function

In carrying out the consultative function, the Islamic Religious Education instructor at KUA Wara provides himself to think about and solve problems faced by the community, both personally, as a family, and as members of the general public with guidance and solutions to religious teachings, especially regarding household problems experienced by the people of Wara District. As for reports of household problems experienced by the community, such as infidelity, husbands not providing a living, differences of opinion, domestic violence, and polygamy. As expressed by Uztad TS.

"Saya sering terima curhatan dari jama'ah tentang masalah rumah tangganya. Tapi ada juga masyarakat yang mau konsultasi dan datang langsung ke KUA.Biasanya masalah yang dialami mereka itu macam-macam seperti masalah perselingkuhan, istri mengeluh suami tidak memberikan nafkah, masalah perbedaan pendapat, KDRT, poligami. Nah kebanyakan yang datang konsultasi soal masalah KDRT adalah pasangan muda-muda. Mereka menikah di bawah umur. Based on the results of the interviews above, Islamic religious instructors are a place to ask questions and a place to complain to the

 $^{^{26}\}mbox{Wawancara}$ pribadi dengan uztad BDJ, Mediator BP4 KUA Kecamatan Wara, Palopo 18 Oktober 2022.

community to help solve the problems they are facing. Unscheduled consultation activities such as activities at the taklim assembly. For this reason, extension workers must be ready to serve people who want to consult with them. This is because questions related to personal problems in public. So usually, people who want to consult ask for an extension time after the activities of the taklim assembly or come directly to the KUA. In consultation, the Islamic Religious Education instructor at KUA Wara cooperates with BP4 in helping to deal with household problems experienced by a client where BP4 is a professional organization that is socio-religious as a partner of the Ministry of Religion and related institutions, both government and non-government in realizing a sakinah ma waddah wa rohmah family.²⁷

The author also had the opportunity to interview a member of the community in Wara District who had household problems and to conduct consultations at the Wara District Office of Religious Affairs in 2020. Ms. Sabawiyah was a victim of domestic violence committed by her husband in 2019. Ms. Sabawiyah received a bruise on her head, but the problem was resolved so that Ibu Sabawiyah and her husband can reconcile. The household problems of Mrs. Sabawiyah re-emerged when Mrs. Sabawiyah decided to return to her original place, namely in Wara District, when she was pregnant with her second child. Ibu Sabawiyah's husband again showed an uncompromising attitude, such as always getting angry at things that were considered trivial. As expressed by Mrs. Sabawiyah.

"Dua kali maka' bermasalah sama suami. Pertama waktu saya tinggal di daerah Sabbang, suami saya menuduh saya ambil iuangnya, saya tidak terima. Sebelumnya memang ada perselisihan juga, terus suamiku napukul kepalaku sampai memar. Saya bilanglah sama bapakku lewat telepon, dan bapaku kasi saran untuk visum dan lapor ke polsek supaya ada efek jera buat suamiku. Kalau dulu saya tidak cabut berkas, suamiku bisa dipenjara. Tapi alhamdulillah masalah yang itu sudah selesai. Nah yang kedua, waktu hamil ka' anak kedua ini, kebetulan saya disesar. Saya minta biaya untuk sesar, dia bilang ji "jangan-jangan itu bukan anakku" malah bilang begitu. Suami saya itu wataknya keras, masalah yang spele-spele saja dia suka banting-banting barang, kalau marah suka tidak jelas. Saya juga sudah bingung dan coba datang ke KUA untuk curhat, terus aku konsultasi sama penyuluh tentang masalah rumah tangga saya".²⁸

Based on the interviews and the author's findings in the field, the authors conclude that the Islamic Religion instructors who work with BP4 KUA Wara are very open and helpful to people who wish to conduct consultations regarding the household problems they are currently experiencing.

c) Advocative Function

²⁷Qois Dzulfaqqor, *Peran Penyuluh Agama Islam Dalam Mewujudkan Keluarga Sakinah Di Kecamatannn Cakung Jakarta Timur*, (Tesis: Program Studi Bimbingan dan Penyuluhan Islam, Fakultas Ilmu Dakwah dan Ilmu Komunikasi, UIN Jakarta, 2018), h. 101.

²⁸Wawancara pribadi dengan Ibu Sabawiyah selaku masyarakat Kecamatan Wara, 20 Oktober 2022.

In the advocative function, the KUA Wara Islamic Religion instructor has a moral and social responsibility to carry out activities to defend the people/society from various threats, disturbances, obstacles, and challenges that harm faith, disrupt worship, and damage morals.

The way for the KUA Wara Islamic Religion extension staff to maximize their role in carrying out their advocative function is to provide advocacy in the form of assistance. Based on the author's observations in the field, the problems experienced by the community are already at a critical level, and both parties lack the effort to reconcile. For this reason, assistance is provided with techniques and strategies that can calm and provide solutions to couples in conflict. In addition, efforts to build communication with related institutions were also carried out. What has been done by the Islamic Religious instructors above can be related to the extension theory put forward by M. Arifin. In extension theory, it is said that counselling means illuminating, advising, or giving clarity to others so that they understand or understand what they are experiencing.²⁹

The Strategies of Islamic Religious Extension in Reducing Early Marriage Rates in Wara District

The task of religious extension officers is to provide guidance, information, and direction to the community in the religious and social fields to increase public knowledge of religious teachings further and then encourage them to implement them as well as possible. Likewise, in social matters, they provide guidance and encouragement so that people know what to do and organize in everyday life for the sake of progress and prosperity. Romauli's theory states that efforts to overcome early marriage include setting the early marriage age above 20 years, not forcing children, and providing counselling about the risks of early marriage. In addition, Ketty Mangkey also believes that underage child marriage can be prevented through parents being proactive in supervising children, family education, religion, early sex education control from parents, frequent discussions with children/making children friends. Property in the religion of the religion of

Likewise, regarding dealing with underage marriages, Islamic religious instructors at the KUA Wara District, Palopo, made various efforts and strategies to convey government policies and prevent underage marriages, especially in the District. Wara. The following strategy is carried out, namely:

1. Counselling on the Prevention of Underage Marriage

²⁹ Lailatussa"diah, dkk. *Metode dan Teknik Penyuluhan*, Jurusan Bimbingan Penyuluhan Islam 6 Tahun 2013, (Ciputat: Mega Mall Ciputat, 2016), h. 2.

 $^{^{\}rm 30}$ Aep Kusnawan, Urgensi Penyuluhan Agama, Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah Vol. 5 No. 17 Januari-Juni 2011

³¹ Beatris Olivia Leti Kotan, Gambaran Pengetahuan Tentang Pernikahan Dini Di SMA Muhammadiyah Ponjong Kelas XI Kabupaten Gunungkidul, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Kesehatan Jenderal Achmad Yani Yogyakarta Tahun 2017, hlm 37

³² Rosdalina Bukido, Perkawinan Di Bawah Umur: Penyebab dan Solusinya, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Manado, Jurisprudentie, Volume 5 Nomor 2 Desember 2018

An underage husband and wife carry out underage marriages according to Law no. 16 in 2019, i.e., under 19 years. Handling underage marriages requires proper counselling so that youth can consider the decisions made to avoid the possible impacts that may occur. Based on the results of research on the strategy of Islamic religious instructors in reducing the number of underage marriages by socializing the impact of underage marriages to adolescents in their working areas. Extension officers try to provide understanding for both adolescents and parents regarding marriage, readiness for marriage, readiness for reproductive organs, and marriage problems so that they can make the right decision if one day they are going to get married and are old enough.

In carrying out counselling activities related to underage marriages, extension workers conduct outreach about the dangers of underage marriage to congregations of taklim majlis, when there are public recitations at village halls or mosques as well as at schools. Counselling is not only for extension workers who play a role, but there must also be cooperation from all government agencies at all levels of society. Likewise, KUA also conducts direct pre-marriage guidance at KUA, called kurscatin (bride-to-be courses), and marriage guidance books when provides couples register KUA.33Intensifying the PUP (Marriage Age Maturity) program the aim is to provide understanding and awareness to adolescents so that in family planning, they can consider various aspects related to family life, physical, mental, emotional, educational, social, economic readiness and determine the number and spacing of births.³⁴

2. Rejection of Underage Brides

A marriage dispensation case filing is made in the form of a request (volunteer), not a lawsuit. The Court's decision is in the form of a determination. A copy of this stipulation is made and given to the applicant to fulfill the requirements to enter into a marriage. If the applicant is unsatisfied with the Court's decision, he can appeal to the Supreme Court.³⁵ The results of the study resulted in the District KUA. Wara Kota Palopo refuses to submit a marriage proposal if it is known that the prospective bride and groom are not old enough to register their marriage according to the latest law, Marriage Law No. 16 of 2019 article 7, paragraph 1 with the condition of being pregnant, the KUA cannot prevent it so that the prospective bride and groom must submit an age dispensation to the Court to conduct a trial. If the Court's decision on the outcome of the trial is permitted, the KUA can continue the marriage process from the letter that has been attached. On the other hand, if the prospective bride and groom come to the KUA at an underage age under 19

 $^{^{33}}$ Wawancara Uztad AM salah satu penyuluh agama Islam KUA Kecamatan. Wara tanggal 04 November 2022

³⁴ Wawancara Uztad AM salah satu penyuluh agama Islam KUA Kecamatan. Wara tanggal 04 November 2022

³⁵Ahmad Wafiq dan F. Setiawan Santoso, Upaya Yuridis dan Sosiologis Kantor Urusan Agama Dalam Pencegahan Pernikahan Usia Dini, Jurnal Ulumuddin Volume 7, Nomor 1, Juni 2017

years, but there is no compelling reason to get married, the KUA refuses to do so without a hearing.

This is per Law no. 16 of 2019 concerning amendments to Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning marriage article 7 paragraph 2 that if there is a deviation from the age requirement, the parents of the man/woman can request a dispensation from the Court with very urgent reasons accompanied by sufficient supporting evidence. ³⁶Rejection of the prospective bride by the District Office of Religious Affairs. Wara to underage couples is expected to confirm that getting married is not as easy as imagined; it is necessary to have administrative files that follow the terms and rules referring to the marriage law, which has been passed as a state regulation to its citizens without being sub-district so that it must be carried out and paid attention to under applicable law.

3. Socialization of the Importance of Formal Education to Teenagers

There is a correlation between the level of education and age at marriage; the higher the child's age at marriage, the education the child is relatively higher and vice versa. According to a 2016 UNICEF study, marriage at an early age is associated with a low degree of education. Delaying the age of marriage is one way for children to receive higher education. The low level of education or not a continuing school for a woman can encourage her to get married quickly. People with low levels of education will marry off their children at a young age. This follows the results of research that children who stop going to school, do not continue their education, and decide to work will think about getting married even though they are still young because children do not have responsibilities that allow their time to be busy with valuable things.

This is supported by Yunus' opinion, which states that the reason for early marriage is that those who do not go to school have an impact on their inability to make decisions and, on the other hand, do not have information related to reproductive health. Likewise, according to Yunita, education is essential in a person's life, and she has a good mindset in making decisions and choosing good or bad actions. The higher a person's education, the more information that is owned is broader and more readily accepted, especially about reproductive health, the ideal age for marriage, and the impact of marrying young. ³⁹Besides opening the horizons of thinking, education can also make idle time that has not been productive so far become more productive with various activities that add to children's discourse. Free time that is not filled with practical activities is perilous for young people to do various

³⁶ Pasal 7 Ayat (2), "Undang-Undang RI Nomor 1 Tahun 2019 Tentang Perubahan Atas UndangUndang Nomor 1 Tahun 1974 Tentang Perkawinan.

³⁷ M. Ulfatur Akbar Jafar, dkk, Sosialisasi Undang-Undang No 1 Tahun 1974 Tentang Perkawinan Terhadap Problematika Nikah Dini Di Kabupaten Lombok Utara, JCES (Journal of Character Education Society), Vol. 1, No. 2, Juli 2018

³⁸ Yuspa Hanum dan Tukiman, Dampak Pernikahan Dini Terhadap Kesehatan Alat Reproduksi Wanita, Jurnal Keluarga Sehat Sejahtera Vol.13 (26) Desember 2015, hlm 38

³⁹ Ribkha Itha Idhayanti, dkk., Alasan Remaja Putri Melakukan Pernikahan Usia Dini, Medika Respati: Jurnal Ilmiah Kesehatan, Vol. 15 No.2 Mei 2020: 123-124

activities that are not particularly useful for themselves, such as dating or associating with many things that tend to be negative. This is in line with its function, extension as an educational function that participates in thinking about and solving problems faced by the community by providing an understanding of education for children with the aim that children do not drop out of school and can get a higher education.

4. The role of parents

In the concept of communication as a system, it is found that the integrity of communication built since childhood is significant. If one of the parents has not physically accompanied the child since they were small, communication function will not be optimal. Some parents are physically present but do not meet the child's communication needs. Parents tend to communicate less openly, do not have enough time together, and lack knowledge about the child's environment, girlfriends, hobbies, and school, so the function of family communication does not work. This causes adolescents to look for a forum for communication outside the family without knowing what possible consequences they will face later. One of the consequences is the early marriage which begins with pregnancy out of wedlock.⁴⁰According to Handayani, the role of parents in controlling children's lives is closely related to early marriage; the role of parents who are not good is 5.78 times more likely to encourage children to marry at an early age.⁴¹

This follows the results of interviews with respondent A, who at school needed more attention from his parents, especially in terms of communication. Parents are rarely at home, resulting in a tenuous relationship between parents and children and parents not following the child's growth and development. Therefore, children feel they are not being given affection, so they look for someone to give them the attention their parents do not get. According to Suprajitno, family is a marriage bond and blood relationship that lives together in one or the other with their respective roles and emotional ties. Kumalasari and Andhyantoro stated that to prevent early marriage, and the family has a significant role; namely, parents need to introduce marriage laws, guide teenagers and explain sex education to children. 42The Office of Religious Affairs, as an institution at the forefront of implementing Islamic marriages in Indonesia, must follow up on age limit rules according to government policies on marriage. KUA Wara District has carried out efforts and programs optimally in this task. Not only the KUA but cooperation from all levels of society is needed so underage marriages can be handled correctly.

⁴⁰ Yola Yohanna Sinaga, Gambaran Dukungan Orang Tua terhadap Upaya Pencegaha Pernikahan Dini Pada Siswi SMA Negeri Tanjungsari Kabupaten Sumedang, Skripsi: Universitas Padjadjaran Fakultas Keperawatan Tahun 2018, hlm 34

⁴¹ Wulan Anggraini, dkk., Faktor yang Mempengaruhi Terjadinya Pernikahan Usia Dini, Fakultas Ilmu Kesehatan, Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu

⁴² Sri Mugianti, dkk., "Upaya Keluarga Dalam Mencegah Pernikahan Usia Din," *Poltekkes Kemenkes Malang, Jurnal Pendidikan Kesehatan*, Volume 7, No. 2, Oktober 2018: 60-70

Conclusion

The Islamic religious instructors at KUA Wara perform well because they go into the field to counsel the community about early marriage. In carrying out its informative and educative roles and functions, the instructor socializes the latest marriage laws through the Quranic study forum. In carrying out the consultative function, extension workers provide consulting services related to problems for couples in conflict. Meanwhile, in carrying out the advocative function, the extension worker acts as a companion and becomes a mediator regarding the community's household problems. The number of early marriages in the Wara sub-district has decreased in the last three years because extension workers have implemented an outreach strategy based on a direct approach to the community. They were socializing the law on marriage, providing knowledge of the dangers and impacts of early marriage.

This research suggests to; (1) the Ministry of Religion; Make policies that are more in recruiting Islamic Religious Instructors by taking into account the educational background of the Instructors and the technical capabilities of Islamic Religious Instructors in approaching the community and in carrying out their duties. (2) Islamic religious instructors; improve performance to always uphold professionalism and responsibility to the community by adopting, diffusing, and innovating in conducting guidance and counselling to the community so that it can keep up with the times. (3) KUA Institutions; Monitor on an ongoing basis the activities carried out by Islamic Religious Extensionists and BP4 in conducting guidance and counselling to the community to further evaluate and improve the guidance and counselling. Cooperating and outreach to community leaders, traditional leaders, and religious leaders regarding the role of Islamic religious extension officers, the role of BP4, and the role of KUA institutions so that people can know who and where they can meet to help solve their problems.

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