



The Effectiveness of the Role of the Office of Religious Affairs in Combating Early Marriage: A Case Study of Kandis Subdistrict

Muhammad Iran Simbolon¹, Ahmad Rof'i Harahap², Parlindungan Simbolon³

Institut Agama Islam Edi Haryono Madani Kandis, Riau-Indonesia^{1,2}, University Of Malaya³

Email: ¹Irammuhammad850@yahoo.co.id, ²ahmadrofihrp@gmail.com,

³abukhofisah06@gmail.com

Abstract : Early marriage remains a significant problem in Kandis Subdistrict and has an impact on education, reproductive health, and the socio-economic stability of families. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the role of the Kandis Subdistrict Religious Affairs Office (KUA) in combating the practice of early marriage and to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors. This study uses a qualitative-descriptive approach through in-depth interviews with religious leaders, religious counselors, community leaders, parents, and adolescents, accompanied by observation and review of administrative documents. The results of the study show that the KUA has three strategic roles in preventing early marriage: (1) a regulatory role through age verification and marriage dispensation recommendations; (2) an educational role through the Marriage Guidance (Bimwin) program, youth counseling, and dissemination of marriage laws; and (3) an advocacy role through collaboration with schools, traditional leaders, and the DP3A agency. However, the effectiveness of these roles is still hampered by local cultural factors that consider early marriage to be normal, the community's lack of legal literacy, and the KUA's limited human resources and budget. This study emphasizes the need to strengthen the capacity of counselors, improve institutional synergy, and strengthen continuous legal education to minimize the practice of early marriage in Kandis District.

Keywords: *Early Marriage, Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), Kandis Subdistrict*

INTRODUCTION

Marriage of minors remains a serious problem in various regions of Indonesia, including Kandis Subdistrict, Siak Regency, Riau Province. This practice has a direct impact on the continuity of education, reproductive health, and child welfare. Children who marry early tend to drop out of school, face the risk of pregnancy complications, and experience economic instability because they are not mentally or financially ready. Various studies show that child marriage increases the risk of intergenerational poverty and increases social vulnerability.¹

In response to the increase in early marriages, the government passed Law No. 16 of 2019, which sets the minimum age for marriage at 19 years for both men and women. This regulation was followed by Government Regulation No. 9 of 2020, which regulates its technical implementation. However, national data shows that requests for marriage dispensations continue to increase.² The Directorate General of Religious Courts recorded more than 34,000 requests for

¹ S. Khomairah, *Pernikahan di bawah umur: Dampak dan solusi menurut perspektif social dan agama* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2023).

² Bappenas Puskapa, UNICEF, BPS, *Data nasional dispensasi nikah dan peringkat global pernikahan anak* (Jakarta: Laporan Bersama, 2024).

dispensation in January–June 2024, 97% of which were granted. Indonesia even ranks 10th in the world and 2nd in ASEAN for child marriage rates.³

This gap arises partly due to differences in understanding between state law and religious perspectives. The law sets the age limit at 19, while in religious viewpoints, readiness for marriage is often associated with reaching puberty, which is not always based on chronological age. This difference can cause pros and cons among the community, because Islamic law implicitly requires mental, physical, and psychological readiness, in addition to biological signs of puberty. In addition, other factors such as economics, customs, culture, and education levels also contribute to the high rate of early marriage.⁴

In Kandis Subdistrict, this situation is reflected in data from the local Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), which recorded a number of underage marriages driven by factors such as premarital pregnancy⁵ (72 cases), cultural/religious factors (50 cases), economic pressure (47 cases), and dropping out of school (75 cases). This phenomenon demonstrates the complexity of the problem, which involves social, cultural, economic, and legal aspects. In this context, the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA), as the institution responsible for marriage affairs, has a strategic role, not only as the administrator and supervisor of marriages, but also as a party that can provide education and counseling to the community.

However, in reality, not all people fully understand the provisions of the Marriage Law that have been established. On the other hand, public opinion on early marriage also varies; some view it positively as long as there are signs of maturity, while others view it negatively. Another challenge is the concern that the sanctity of marriage is being eroded, with marriage being seen as nothing more than a formality or the fulfillment of biological needs. Therefore, it is important to examine the role of the Kandis Subdistrict KUA in addressing underage marriage, including the educational and counseling measures it has taken and the regulations it has implemented.

To date, studies on the role of the KUA in addressing early marriage in Kandis Subdistrict remain limited, particularly in terms of program evaluation, implementation dynamics, and obstacles encountered at the field level. This is where the research gap lies: there is a lack of research that specifically assesses how the Kandis KUA's strategies are implemented and how effective its role is in the local socio-cultural context.

³ United Nations Children's Fund dan Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional, Badan Pusat Statistik, "Laporan nasional: Perkawinan anak di Indonesia" (Jakarta, 2024).

⁴ R. Hamzah, *Pernikahan anak di desa: Perspektif sosiologis dan ekonomi keluarga* (Pekanbaru: Literasi Bangsa, 2024).

⁵ N.R. Ika, *Remaja dan pernikahan dini: studi kasus social di kecamatan kandis*. (Pekanbaru: Pustaka Anak Negeri, 2024).

Based on the above description, this study focuses on answering the following questions: 1). What is the role of the Kandis Subdistrict KUA in combating early marriage, and what are the supporting and inhibiting factors in the implementation of this role? This study aims to analyze the role of the KUA in preventing early marriage and identify the challenges faced so that recommendations can be made to strengthen the institutional role in the future.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of the Kandis Subdistrict Religious Affairs Office (KUA) in combating early marriage. This approach was chosen because it is able to describe social phenomena in a natural, contextual, and comprehensive manner through direct interaction with the research subjects, as recommended by Creswell, who states that qualitative research is effective for examining complex social phenomena that require an in-depth understanding of the field.⁶

The research was conducted in the form of field research, with data obtained through in-depth interviews with the Head of the Religious Affairs Office, religious leaders, religious counselors, community leaders, parents, and adolescents; supplemented by observations of service and counseling activities; and a review of administrative and regulatory documents. Interviews were chosen as the main technique because they were able to explore the experiences and views of informants more authentically, in line with Moleong's view of the importance of in-depth interviews in qualitative research.⁷

To ensure data validity, this study applied triangulation techniques by comparing data from various sources and collection techniques. This verification model refers to the Miles and Huberman approach, which emphasizes the importance of data consistency to ensure the validity and reliability of findings.⁸

Triangulation was conducted by matching information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation so that the data obtained was more robust and objective. Data analysis was carried out interactively following the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Through this ongoing analysis, the study can produce an accurate picture of the strategies, roles, and obstacles faced by the KUA in tackling early marriage practices in Kandis Subdistrict.

⁶ Lexy J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosda Karya, 2018).

⁷ Moleong.

⁸ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan R & D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2011).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Conceptualization of Early Marriage within Legal and Social Frameworks

Conceptually, early marriage refers to marriage that takes place before reaching the minimum age set by law. Based on Law Number 16 of 2019 concerning Amendments to Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage, the physical and spiritual bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife, which aims to form a family,⁹ is only permitted if both parties have reached the age of 19 (Section 7 clause1).¹⁰ Thus, marriage below this age can be categorized as underage marriage. The definition includes the unpreparedness of the prospective bride and groom, whether physically, emotionally, mentally, or economically, which is the root cause of various negative impacts that arise.

Underage marriage is caused by several factors, including:

a. Pregnancy Outside of Marriage

The main reason is pregnancy before marriage due to promiscuity, so marriage is used to cover up the family's shame. This is exacerbated by a lack of parental supervision of their children's social lives, which teenagers take advantage of to try new things during their transition to adulthood.

b. Economic Factors

Economic hardship drives parents to marry off their children to ease the burden on the family, even though the children are not yet of age, often applying to the court for a marriage dispensation.

c. Educational Factors

The level of education of parents influences views on early marriage. Highly educated parents tend to prioritize their children's education and delay marriage. Conversely, parents with low levels of education, especially in rural communities, often believe that girls do not need a high level of education and should marry early.

d. Parental Concerns and Media Influence

Parents worry that their children will engage in illicit relationships, so they choose to marry them off. In addition, mass media that displays negative content (violence, pornography) easily influences teenagers who are searching for their identity.

⁹ Republik Indonesia, "Undang-Undang Nomor 16 Tahun 2019 tentang perubahan atas Undang-Undang Nomor 1 Tahun 1974 tentang Perkawinan. Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 2019 Nomor 186," Pub. L. No. 16 (2019).

¹⁰ Andri Muda et al, "Problematika Perkawinan di Bawah Umur Pada Masyarakat Mandailing Natal; Analisis Terhadap Undang-Undang Nomor 16 Tahun 2019," *Al'Adalah: Jurnal Syariah dan Hukum Islam* 10, no. 1 (2025): 111–131, <https://doi.org/10.31538/adlh.v10i1.6825>.

e. Local Customs and Traditions

Certain customs, such as the prohibition against rejecting marriage proposals or the tradition of early marriage that has been passed down from generation to generation, encourage early marriage. The reasons for this include avoiding the label of “old maid” and the concern that it will be difficult to find a partner if a marriage proposal is rejected.¹¹

The Impact of Early Marriage

Early marriage (under the age of 19) is still common, especially in rural areas, and has various negative impacts:

a. Health Impacts

Increases the risk of pregnancy and childbirth complications, such as preeclampsia and premature birth, due to biological unpreparedness. Girls under the age of 18 are twice as likely to experience complications and are vulnerable to sexually transmitted infections.

b. Educational Impact

It causes school dropouts, eliminates opportunities to develop potential, and exacerbates the cycle of poverty. More than 70% of girls who marry early in Indonesia do not continue their education.

c. Psychological Impact

Causes mental pressure, stress, and depression due to emotional unpreparedness for married life, as well as the risk of domestic violence. Children's psychosocial development is also hampered.

d. Social and Economic Impact

It results in financial dependence due to a lack of education and skills, thereby increasing persistent poverty, especially in rural areas.

e. Legal Impact and Children's Rights

It is a violation of children's rights to grow, develop, and receive an education. Although Law No. 16 of 2019 sets a minimum age of 19, child marriage still occurs due to cultural and economic reasons.¹²

The Role of the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in Handling Early Marriage

As an implementing agency at the local level, the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) plays a strategic role in efforts to combat early marriage in Indonesia. This role is not limited to the

¹¹ Hamzah, *Pernikahan anak di desa: Perspektif sosiologis dan ekonomi keluarga*.

¹² Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, *Panduan pencegahan pernikahan anak: strategi KUA di daerah* (Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Bimbingan Masyarakat Islam, 2023).

administrative function of registering marriages, but also includes preventive functions through education, advocacy and supervision. Operationally, the KUA has the authority to refuse to register marriages that do not meet the minimum age requirements under Law No. 16 of 2019. Furthermore, in the process of applying for a marriage dispensation, the KUA actively provides recommendations and verifies eligibility based on social and psychological considerations of the prospective bride and groom, thus functioning as an initial legal filter.¹³

Prevention strategies are implemented through a series of direct programmes (grassroots approach). The main programme is Marriage Guidance (Bimwin), which is compulsory for prospective brides and grooms. Bimwin equips participants with an understanding of mental readiness, economics, reproductive health, household conflict management, and the risks of early marriage, with the aim of building family resilience from an early age.¹⁴ Another approach involves integrating prevention messages into sermons at mosques and religious gatherings, which persuasively convey Islamic values regarding child protection and family readiness. For high-risk cases, the KUA provides empathetic counselling and family assistance services to educate families about the legal and social consequences of early marriage.¹⁵

The effectiveness of the KUA is strengthened through cross-sector collaboration with agencies such as the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency (DP3A) and community leaders, including through outreach in schools and villages. This synergy has been proven to increase the impact of reducing child marriage rates in its working areas. However, the implementation of this role faces a number of challenges, such as limited human resources, minimal operational budgets, and socio-cultural and economic pressures from communities that still consider early marriage to be normal. Therefore, strengthening institutional capacity, adequate policy support, and increased resource allocation are important prerequisites for the KUA to optimise its function as the front line in the prevention of early marriage.

Early Marriage in Kandis Subdistrict

In order to obtain accurate and in-depth data on 'The Role of the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in Combating Early Marriage in Kandis Subdistrict', the researcher conducted interviews with several informants who had direct or indirect connections to cases of early marriage. These informants were selected based on their roles, experiences, and knowledge of the phenomenon being studied.

¹³ Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia.

¹⁴ Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia.

¹⁵ Khomairah, *Pernikahan di bawah umur: Dampak dan solusi menurut perspektif social dan agama*.

The interview results show that early marriage in Kandis Subdistrict is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by cultural, economic, educational, and social pressure factors. The Head of the Religious Affairs Office explained that economic factors are the most dominant cause. Many families marry off their children due to financial constraints and limited educational opportunities, so marriage is seen as a quick solution to reduce the burden on the family.

Community leaders added that customs and social norms also play an important role. In some cases, parents feel obliged to marry off their children when a proposal is made, because rejecting a proposal is considered taboo and can damage the family's honour. This cultural view reinforces the practice of early marriage, even when children are not yet physically or psychologically mature.

From the parents' perspective, concerns about promiscuity and the risk of premarital pregnancy are the main reasons. They prefer to marry off their children to 'protect the family name', even though they understand that their children are not yet mentally ready. Meanwhile, those who marry early admit to following their parents' decisions and environmental pressures, even though they feel emotionally unprepared for married life.

The Causes of Early Marriage in Kandis Subdistrict

Culture and social pressure play a major role in triggering early marriage. Parents' ignorance or lack of understanding about the risks of marriage at a young age also reinforces this practice. In addition, economic factors are often used as a practical justification. From the interviews, it was found that the main reasons parents marry off their children at a young age vary, including strong cultural factors, family pressure to maintain a good reputation, and economic conditions that make them feel that early marriage is the solution. Many parents stated that the decision to marry off their children came more from the family than from the children themselves. A social environment that still accepts and even encourages early marriage also influences this decision.

The Head of the Religious Affairs Office explained that the main factors causing early marriage in Kandis Subdistrict are the strong cultural and traditional pressures in the community, as well as a lack of understanding about the negative impacts of marriage at a young age. In addition, unstable family economic conditions are often a trigger, with families feeling that early marriage can be a quick solution to their economic burdens. Meanwhile, those who engage in early marriage explained that the decision to marry at a young age does not entirely stem from their own desires, but rather from pressure from parents and the social environment. They feel the need to become independent quickly and avoid the shame associated with relationships that are considered to have

lasted too long. Furthermore, unstable family economic conditions also serve as a reason for rushing into marriage.

Then, community leaders explained that the main causes of early marriage in their area were cultural factors and long-standing traditions that were still strongly ingrained. The community believed that marrying off children at a young age could preserve the family's honour, especially if the daughter was already in a close relationship with someone of the opposite sex. In addition, economic factors and low levels of education also encouraged parents to marry off their children earlier.

The Role of the Kandis Subdistrict KUA in Combating Early Marriage

Most parents are aware of the KUA's counselling on early marriage, but only a small number have consulted the KUA before marrying off their children. They consider the registration process and requirements at the KUA to be sufficient, but there is a perception that the KUA has not done enough to provide a thorough understanding of the ideal age for marriage.

According to the Head of the KUA, his office regularly conducts outreach and awareness campaigns on the ideal age for marriage and the consequences of early marriage through various activities, such as lectures, dialogues with community leaders, and coordination with schools. However, the Head of the KUA also acknowledged obstacles such as lack of community participation and limited resources. Meanwhile, the perpetrators admitted that they did not receive any direct education or guidance from the KUA before getting married. The administrative process and marriage registration requirements were mostly handled by their parents. This shows that the perpetrators did not receive sufficient information about the risks of early marriage and the ideal age for marriage.

Furthermore, according to community leaders, the KUA has actually made various efforts to provide education and raise awareness about the ideal age for marriage and the risks of early marriage. However, implementation in the field has not been optimal due to low community participation and the perception that education is not very important. Community leaders also mentioned that the KUA needs to involve local leaders so that the message can be received more effectively.

Public Awareness of the Consequences of Early Marriage

Some parents are aware of the risks of early marriage, such as the educational and economic difficulties experienced by children after marriage. However, there are also those who feel that the decision to marry off young children is appropriate based on their respective family circumstances. Public response tends to vary, ranging from support to criticism. The Head of the Religious Affairs

Office notes that public awareness of the negative impacts of early marriage is gradually increasing, particularly following frequent awareness campaigns. However, there are still some residents who do not fully understand or disregard these risks, primarily due to cultural and economic factors that remain the main reasons for marrying young.

After entering married life, the perpetrators experienced various difficulties and challenges, both economically and psychologically, as well as in raising children. The perpetrators admitted that they were not ready to face the enormous responsibilities of being a wife and parent, which led to considerable mental pressure and stress. Furthermore, community leaders noted that some members of society have begun to understand the risks of early marriage, such as high divorce rates, mental unpreparedness, and reproductive health issues. However, many families still force early marriages for cultural or economic reasons, without considering the future of the children.

Parents emphasise the importance of education from schools, religious leaders, and the government to prevent early marriage. They also support children completing their education before marrying. The main hope is that families and communities will better understand the consequences of early marriage and delay marriage until a mature age. Meanwhile, the Head of the KUA (Office of Religious Affairs) suggests that the prevention of early marriage must be carried out in an integrated manner through cooperation between the KUA, schools, religious leaders, the government, and the community. Continuous education and counselling, as well as an increased role for families in supervising their children, are essential. In addition, there is a need to strengthen regulations and law enforcement regarding the minimum age for marriage.

Similarly, in the view of the perpetrator, early marriage can be prevented by providing education from an early age, both within the family and at school. The perpetrator suggested that teenagers should focus on their education and be equipped with life skills before getting married. He also emphasised the importance of the role of parents in guiding their children and not rushing them into marriage. Furthermore, community leaders suggest that education about early marriage should not only be provided by schools and the KUA (Office of Religious Affairs), but also involve religious leaders, traditional leaders, and youth leaders. They emphasise the importance of open discussions within the family and community forums so that children do not rush into marriage. Family economic empowerment programmes are also needed so that early marriage is not seen as a solution to poverty.

Based on in-depth interviews with four key informants, the factors driving early marriage in Kandis Subdistrict are interrelated and form a cycle that is difficult to break. Data from the KUA shows that the dominant factors are premarital pregnancy (72 cases), culture/religion (50 cases),

and economics (47 cases). The qualitative findings from this study deepen our understanding of the quantitative data.¹⁶

1. Cultural, Religious, and Social Pressure Factors as Key Drivers

Community leaders and parents (Mrs N) consistently highlight the strong influence of culture and religion. Early marriage is seen as a mechanism for maintaining family honour, particularly in response to premarital intimacy, as stated by Marni (2024). A culture that prohibits rejection of marriage proposals, as stated by Nurwahid (2023), becomes a social institution that reinforces this practice. This perspective is legitimised by religious interpretations that emphasise biological readiness (*baligh*) rather than holistic readiness. The head of the KUA emphasised that strong cultural and traditional pressures are a major challenge, which often override formal legal counselling efforts.

2. Economic Factors as Structural Drivers

Faktor ekonomi muncul sebagai alasan pragmatis yang mendesak. Orang tua (Ibu N) dan pelaku (RS & FM) mengakui bahwa pernikahan dinilai dapat meringankan beban ekonomi keluarga, sebuah pandangan yang juga diungkapkan Sanusi (2023). Pernikahan dianggap sebagai transfer tanggung jawab nafkah dari orang tua kepada suami, meskipun suami itu sendiri sering kali belum memiliki kemampuan ekonomi. Hal ini menciptakan siklus kemiskinan baru, di mana pasangan muda—dengan pendidikan terputus dan keterampilan terbatas—kesulitan membangun kemandirian finansial.

3. Low Level of Education and Access to Information

Low levels of education, both among parents and adolescents, are crucial factors that reinforce other factors. As explained by Ilham (2020) and Rumana (2021), low levels of education limit families' perspectives and life choices. Parents and perpetrators indicated that completing secondary and higher education was not a top priority. In addition, although the KUA had conducted outreach, the information was often not optimally absorbed due to low participation and the perception that the information was not relevant to the immediate pressures faced.

Analysis of the Role and Challenges of the Kandis KUA in Prevention

The role of the Kandis KUA, as a representative of the state at the local level, is analysed in terms of the tension between its functions as regulator, educator and mediator.

¹⁶ Ika, *Remaja dan pernikahan dini: studi kasus social di kecamatan kandis*.

1. Role as Regulator and Administrative Filter

Formally, the KUA acts as a gatekeeper by refusing to register marriages that do not meet the age requirements. However, this authority is limited by another institution, namely the Religious Court, which has the right to grant dispensations. National data showing that 97% of dispensations are granted is reflected in the perpetrators' admission that 'there are still dispensations from the religious court if there are certain reasons.' This condition traps the KUA in a dilemma: on the one hand, it is the guardian of the rules, but on the other hand, it is only part of a procedure that ultimately accommodates violations of these rules through legal channels. The effectiveness of the KUA as a regulator is also highly dependent on the consistency of the interpretation of 'urgent reasons' at the court level.

2. Role as Educator and Agent of Change

The KUA has carried out its educational role through programmes such as Marriage Guidance (Bimwin), religious outreach programmes, and counselling. The head of the KUA mentioned regular outreach efforts through coordination with schools and community leaders. However, their effectiveness is limited. The actors (RS & FM) admitted that they did not receive direct guidance from the KUA, and the process was mostly handled by their parents. This indicates that educational programmes often fail to reach their main target audience (young prospective brides and grooms) and instead involve parents or the general public. This gap between the programme's intentions and its implementation in the field weakens its preventive impact.

3. Role as Mediator between State Law and Community Norms

This is the most complex and decisive role. The KUA is required to be a bridge that translates the logic of state law (age limit of 19 years) into the logic of a community that adheres to cultural and religious norms. The 'persuasive approach' and 'family counselling' efforts mentioned in the literature require considerable resources and capacity. The challenge, as acknowledged by the Head of the KUA, is the lack of community participation and the perception that culture/economics are more imperative. The KUA needs to negotiate not only with individuals, but with the entire value structure of the community, which is often stronger than state authority at the local level.

Multidimensional Impact and Community Reflections

The interview results confirm that the impact of early marriage is multidimensional. The participants (RS & FM) directly experienced 'challenges after marriage, especially economic and educational problems,' as well as mental pressure due to unpreparedness. Parents (Mother N) also

began to realise the risks to their children's education and future. This reflection shows that even though the decision to marry early was made, the negative consequences were felt in real terms and became an empirical lesson for the participants and their families. However, awareness of these impacts often comes too late, after the marriage has taken place, rather than as a preventive consideration beforehand.

Based on the above discussion, efforts to combat early marriage require a reorientation of strategies that are more integrative and structural in nature.

1. Strengthening the Role of KUA Mediation: KUA needs to develop its capacity as a cultural broker. Educational programmes should be packaged in a narrative that is strongly rooted in religion and local wisdom, for example by emphasising the concepts of maslahah (universal good) and holistic readiness (al-qawwamah) in Islam, which are in line with the spirit of the law. Collaboration with religious and traditional leaders should be a priority, not merely coordination.
2. Root Cause-Based Interventions: Prevention programmes must be integrated with poverty alleviation and education access expansion programmes. As suggested by community leaders, there needs to be a 'family economic empowerment programme' so that early marriage is not seen as an economic solution. Scholarships and skills training for at-risk youth can be concrete alternatives.
3. Reform of Dispensation Procedures: An in-depth study is needed to tighten and refine the criteria for granting marriage dispensations. The process must involve a multidisciplinary assessment (psychologist, social worker) and prioritise the best interests of the child, rather than merely socio-cultural reasons that are seemingly urgent.
4. Education that Reaches Vulnerable Segments: Socialisation must proactively reach out to young people in schools and communities, using participatory methods. Testimonials from former perpetrators of early marriage reflecting on the difficulties of life can be a powerful educational tool.

Thus, the role of the KUA should not be viewed in isolation. The success of combating early marriage in Kandis Subdistrict depends on its ability to function as a catalyst that connects and synergises law enforcement, cultural transformation, and sustainable socio-economic development.

CONCLUSION

From the above explanation, the author concludes that early marriage in Kandis Subdistrict is caused by multidimensional factors, particularly culture, social pressure, economics, and low

education, which have a negative impact on health, education, psychology, and economics. Although the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) has played its role as a regulator, educator, and mediator, its effectiveness has been hampered by strong cultural norms, low community participation, and limited resources.

To improve the effectiveness of prevention, KUA needs to strengthen its socio-cultural approach by integrating prevention messages into religious narratives and local wisdom, as well as deepening collaboration with religious, traditional and community leaders. On the other hand, structural interventions are needed in the form of integrated programmes that combine economic empowerment, expanded access to education, and skills training for adolescents, supported by adequate resource allocation and cross-sectoral policies.

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