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A Maslahah Analysis of Early Marriage Practices and Family Harmony: A Case Study in Ciparahu Village, Lebak Regency

Nakyla Anandhika Burhanudin*[1], Husnul Hotimah[2], Habib Al Rahman[3]
[1,2,3]Darunnajah University

Correspondance: nakylaanandhika@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study is motivated by the persistence of early marriage in Ciparahu Village, Cihara District, Lebak Regency, Banten Province, which poses problems for family harmony. It aims to analyze the factors causing early marriage, describe the dynamics of family harmony among couples who married early, and assess the practice from the perspective of *maslahah* at the levels of *dharuriyyat*, *hajiyyat*, and *tahsiniyyat*. The study employs a qualitative method with a case study approach; data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation involving seven informants, and analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana. The results show that early marriage is driven by educational, economic, socio-cultural, religious, familial, and legal-administrative factors, with discontinued education as the most dominant factor. Family harmony is not uniform, and from the perspective of *maslahah*, early marriage contains only case-specific benefits; therefore, postponing marriage until maturity is recommended.

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A. Introduction

Marriage in Islam is a sacred bond intended to form a family characterized by *sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah*, as affirmed by Allah SWT in QS. ar-Rum [30]: 21, which states that He created spouses so that human beings may find tranquility and that affection may grow between them (Kementerian Agama RI, 2019). Shihab (2021) interprets this tranquility as the outcome of continuous interaction between husband and wife in getting to know and complementing one another, which can only be achieved when both parties possess adequate maturity. This readiness is also emphasized in the Prophet's hadith on *al-ba'ah*, which Sayyid Sabiq (2021) understands broadly as encompassing biological, financial, psychological, and social readiness. Syarifuddin (2020) describes marriage as *mitsaqan ghalidzan*, a solemn covenant that demands maturity from both parties to bear the responsibilities of a household.

***Corresponding Author: Nakyla Anandhika Burhanudin**
Nakyla Anandhika Burhanudin, Universitas Darunnajah, Indonesia, Email: nakylaanandhika@gmail.com
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In reality, however, practice often diverges from this ideal. Through Law Number 16 of 2019 amending Law Number 1 of 1974 on Marriage, the Indonesian government raised the minimum age of marriage to 19 years for both men and women, on the grounds of public benefit, namely protection from reproductive health risks, school dropout, structural poverty, and domestic violence. Nevertheless, the report *Indikator Kesejahteraan Rakyat 2024* (People's Welfare Indicators 2024) published by Statistics Indonesia (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024) shows that in 2024, 25.08 percent of Indonesian women first married at the age of 16–18 and 8.16 percent first married at the age of 10–15, while 49.58 percent first married at the age of 19–24. Both figures cited are drawn from the 2024 report, which processes data from the National Socio-Economic Survey, and not from the Statistics Indonesia (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023) publication *Profil Perkawinan Anak di Indonesia 2023* (Profile of Child Marriage in Indonesia 2023), which this article cites separately for the definitional and measurement framework of child marriage among women aged 20–24. UNICEF Indonesia (2021) notes that the decline in child marriage in Indonesia remains slow, so that the target of reducing its prevalence to 6.94 percent by 2030 under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) risks not being achieved unless prevention efforts are accelerated.

This phenomenon is unevenly distributed. Banten Province, particularly its southern region, still records rates of marriage at the age of 15–19 above the provincial average (Dinas Pemberdayaan Perempuan, Perlindungan Anak, Kependudukan dan Keluarga Berencana Provinsi Banten, 2023). Ciparahu Village, Cihara District, Lebak Regency, is one of the villages in this region where early marriage still occurs in significant numbers. Recapitulation data from the Office of Religious Affairs (Kantor Urusan Agama, KUA) of Cihara District for 2023–2025 record a number of marriages involving couples under 19 years of age, most of whom sought a marriage dispensation from the Rangkasbitung Religious Court, alongside unregistered marriages (*nikah siri*) that are socially recognized but not officially recorded. The dominant pattern is marriage in which only the female party has not yet reached 19 years of age, consistent with national data identifying women as the largest group marrying below the minimum age.

In this study, the term early marriage is limited to a marriage in which, at the time the marriage contract is concluded, one or both prospective spouses have not reached 19 years of age as stipulated in Article 7 paragraph (1) of Law No. 16 of 2019, regardless of which party is underage, and it covers both marriages registered through a Religious Court dispensation and those that are unregistered. This limitation is important because classical fiqh does not set a definite age limit but instead uses the criteria of *baligh* (biological maturity) and *rusyd* (intellectual maturity); contemporary scholars emphasize that *baligh* alone is not a sufficient measure of readiness for marriage. Within the *maqashid* framework, the age limit functions as a *wasilah* (means) to protect greater interests, since many couples

who are eligible to marry on the basis of *baligh* have not yet attained *rusyd* and are therefore vulnerable to household failure (Rofiq, 2020).

Early marriage has wide-ranging consequences. Hadi and Jamal (2021) found that the emotional and economic unpreparedness of couples who marry early correlates with household conflict, ineffective communication, and an increased risk of divorce. The National Commission on Violence against Women (Komisi Nasional Anti Kekerasan terhadap Perempuan, 2023) reports that women who marry under the age of 18 face a higher risk of domestic violence. However, the situation on the ground is not uniform; a preliminary interview with the Head of the KUA of Cihara District indicated that some early-married couples in Ciparahu Village have in fact managed to sustain relatively harmonious households thanks to support from their extended families, the role of religious leaders, and the social acceptance of the local community. This condition points to variations that warrant further study rather than being reduced to a single, wholly negative phenomenon.

From the perspective of Islamic law, this phenomenon should be read through the instrument of *maslahah*, namely anything that brings benefit or prevents harm in accordance with the objectives of the sharia (*maqashid asy-syari'ah*) (Al-Ghazali, 1997). Article 15 paragraph (1) of the Compilation of Islamic Law states that the minimum age is set for the benefit of the family and household (Presidential Instruction No. 1 of 1991), explicitly placing the principle of *maslahah* as the philosophical foundation of marriage age regulation. Studies of early marriage from the perspective of *maslahah* linked to a specific local context remain very limited; most are either normative-theoretical (Nurhadi, 2021; Nur, 2022) or empirical-sociological (Rahayu & Suryani, 2022; Nur Aisyah, 2022), without bridging the two approaches. Iqbal and Suryani (2021) and Rahman (2021) have touched on the *maslahah* dimension of underage marriage but have not specifically linked it to the dynamics of family harmony in the context of rural communities in South Banten.

This study is positioned to fill this gap by combining the perspective of *ushul fiqh* with empirical qualitative research methods. Unlike similar studies, this article does not stop at describing causal factors or portraying harmony alone, but explicitly weighs both within the framework of *al-kulliyat al-khams* (the five essential objectives of the sharia) at the levels of *dharuriyyat, hajiyyat,* and *tahsiniyyat*, thereby producing a comprehensive and traceable assessment of benefit. The focus of the study is limited to couples who married under the age of 19 and have been married for at least two years, so that they have sufficient experience in dealing with the dynamics of married life. The approach is integrative, positioning Islamic law as the main analytical tool and positive law as the formal boundary framework, so that the resulting conclusions take the form of an assessment of benefit rather than a judgment on the validity or nullity of the marriage contract. Based on the foregoing, this study aims to: (1) analyze the factors causing early marriage in Ciparahu Village; (2) describe the dynamics of

family harmony among couples who married early; and (3) analyze the practice from the perspective of *maslahah* for family harmony.

B. Methods

This study employs a qualitative method with a case study approach, which according to Creswell and Poth (2020) is appropriate for an in-depth understanding of the meanings individuals ascribe to a social problem. Yin (2020) defines a case study as an empirical research strategy that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. The approach is integrative, combining a juridical-normative approach to examine *maqashid asy-syari'ah* and *maslahah* according to al-Ghazali (1997) as well as the provisions of positive law (Law No. 16 of 2019 and the Compilation of Islamic Law), with a juridical-empirical approach to capture early marriage practices and the dynamics of family harmony as they actually occur in the field.

The study was conducted in Ciparahu Village, Cihara District, Lebak Regency, Banten Province, over six months (March–August 2026), covering preparation and preliminary observation, main data collection, data analysis, report writing, and data deepening and confirmation of findings (*member checking*). The location was selected based on the high rate of early marriage in the area according to KUA Cihara District data, the distinctive socio-cultural characteristics of coastal villages in South Banten, and the absence of academic studies examining this phenomenon through a *maslahah* approach.

The informants were selected purposively and comprised seven people: three individuals who married early, one religious leader who is also a community leader, two officials of the Office of Religious Affairs (the Head of the KUA and the Chief Marriage Registrar), and one official of Ciparahu Village. This composition enabled source triangulation across household experiences, community religious views, marriage registration policies, and the observations of the village government. Data were collected through in-depth interviews using a semi-structured guide, participant observation, and documentation of KUA data, the village profile, and early marriage prevention program documents from the relevant agencies. The main research instrument was the researcher herself (*human instrument*), supported by an interview guide, observation sheets, a voice recorder, and a camera.

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2020), which consists of three stages: data condensation (selecting, simplifying, and inductively coding the data), data display (organizing findings by the themes of causal factors, dynamics of harmony, and *maslahah* analysis), and conclusion drawing and verification. Verification was carried out by seeking additional evidence and confirming findings with informants before the final conclusions were formulated. The five indicators of family harmony were assessed using three categories, namely

fulfilled, partially fulfilled, and not fulfilled, based on the interviews, observations, and documents obtained in the field, so that every conclusion regarding the status of family harmony can be traced back to its primary data. This indicator-based assessment was applied to two of the three early-married households, namely the cases that could be followed up through further interviews, direct household observation, and confirmation with village officials. The remaining case, a long-distance marriage because the husband works abroad, was not included in the five-indicator assessment because some sub-indicators particularly those concerning the couple's daily interaction, child-rearing, and household religious practice could not be verified through triangulation. Information from this case was nonetheless used in the narrative analysis of causal factors and the dynamics of family harmony.

Data validity was tested using the *trustworthiness* criteria of Lincoln and Guba (2020), comprising credibility through source triangulation (comparing accounts from husbands, wives, parents, religious leaders, and KUA officials), method triangulation (interviews, observation, and documentation), *member checking*, and prolonged engagement; transferability through *thick description* of the social, economic, and religious context of Ciparahu Village; dependability through documentation and process auditing by the academic supervisor; and confirmability by tracing each conclusion back to the raw data in the form of interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents.

C. Results and Discussion

1. General Overview and Informant Profiles

Ciparahu Village is a coastal village in Cihara District, Lebak Regency, whose economy relies on the agricultural sector; around 70 percent of the population depends on this sector for their livelihood. Seasonal income limits the ability to pay for further education, so that some adolescents leave school after junior high school. Institutionally, the KUA of Cihara District affirms that it cannot solemnize the marriage of prospective spouses under 19 years of age without a dispensation from the Rangkasbitung Religious Court; nevertheless, marriages conducted through an *amil* or P3N (assistant marriage registrar) without official registration are still found within the community.

The seven informants consisted of three individuals who married early (Mrs. Ani, who married at the age of 15–16; Mr. Juli, who married at 18 and now works in Malaysia; and Mrs. Erin, who married at 18 to a husband who was 26 years old and economically established), one religious leader (Kiai Entong), two officials of the KUA of Cihara District (the Head of the KUA and the Chief Marriage Registrar), and one official of Ciparahu Village (Mrs. Yuningsih). This composition allows the phenomenon of early marriage to be read from the experiences of those involved as well as from institutional and religious perspectives.

2. Factors Causing Early Marriage

The findings show that early marriage in Ciparahu Village is caused not by a single factor but by six interrelated factors, namely education, economy, socio-culture, religion, family, and legal administration (Table 1).

The educational factor appears to be the most dominant. A village official emphasized that discontinued education after junior high school is the factor that most influences the high rate of early marriage, because adolescents who are no longer in the school system lose social control and a sense of future orientation, so that marriage is seen as a natural choice. The cases of Mrs. Ani and Mr. Juli, both of whom left school before marrying, reinforce this pattern and are consistent with the findings of Rahayu and Suryani (2022) on low educational continuity as a key variable of early marriage in rural Banten. The relationship between education and early marriage is bidirectional: low school continuation makes early marriage more acceptable, while after marriage the chance of returning to formal education diminishes because those involved have assumed new roles as wives, husbands, or parents.

The economic factor is present as a structural background rather than a uniform direct cause. An agriculture-based economy makes the cost of further education a particular burden for families, consistent with the findings of Nur Aisyah (2022) in Lebak Regency. Interestingly, the informants stated that their decision to marry was driven more by subjective readiness than by economic pressure; after marriage, however, the economy became a heavy household challenge, showing that early marriage does not automatically resolve economic problems but may instead shift the burden onto young couples who are not yet fully financially prepared.

The socio-cultural factor is evident in community support that normalizes young marriage; age is no longer considered the main issue as long as the relationship is socially and religiously legitimate. The religious factor emerges as a moral legitimation, namely concern about premarital relationships or *fitnah* (slander and temptation); as Kiai Entong explained, some community figures choose to marry young couples religiously even though they have not met the state's age requirement, out of a consideration of benefit that must weigh preventing religious transgression against obeying state law. The family factor appears in two forms: support for the decision to marry and, in some cases, pressure or arranged marriage by parents once the child is no longer in school. The legal-administrative factor is reflected in the gap between the 19-year age requirement and the practice of unregistered marriage, whereby some couples marry first through an *amil* or P3N before seeking registration once they reach the legal age, even though such applications cannot be processed if a dispensation was never sought from the outset.

Table 1. Matrix of Factors Causing Early Marriage in Ciparahu Village

No.	Factor	Field Findings
1	Education	Not continuing education after junior high school or no longer being in the school system was the factor most frequently mentioned by informants.
2	Economy	Limited funds for education and an agriculture-based family economy form the structural background; after marriage, the economy becomes a household challenge.
3	Socio-culture	Support from the community and neighbors makes young marriage seen as ordinary or socially acceptable.
4	Religion	Marriage is seen as a way to avoid prolonged dating, *fitnah*, or relationships feared to violate religious norms.
5	Family	Parents support the decision to marry, but in some cases also encourage or arrange the marriage.
6	Legal administration	The 19-year age requirement and dispensation procedure are not yet fully observed; some community members opt for unregistered marriage.

3. Dynamics of Family Harmony

The second research question concerns the dynamics of family harmony among early-married couples. The three households studied have relatively endured without major conflicts being openly disclosed, yet this stability is still accompanied by a number of vulnerabilities. Readiness for marriage was generally practical and gradual (*learning by doing*): couples learned to perform the roles of husband, wife, and parent after the marriage contract, with guidance from the extended family as the main source of knowledge rather than through formal premarital preparation. It should be stated at the outset that the narrative description in this section covers all three households, whereas the indicator-based assessment in Table 2 is limited to two households, as explained in the Methods section.

Communication is the main mechanism for maintaining harmony. Mr. Juli, who lives in a long-distance marriage because he works in Malaysia, emphasized daily communication and resolving problems without delay as the key to sustaining a marriage that has lasted seven years. This finding is consistent with the indicators of a harmonious family formulated by Lestari (2020), which place open communication as a principal characteristic, and with the finding of Latif and Rifai (2023) that the quality of communication is the main factor distinguishing early-married couples who endure from those who do not. Support from the extended family also strengthens household resilience, in line with the socio-psychological resilience dimension formulated by the National Population and Family Planning Board (Badan Kependudukan dan Keluarga Berencana Nasional, 2022); however, excessive dependence risks hindering young couples' independence in decision-making.

Economic challenges remain real even though the households endure. Mrs. Ani named the economy as the greatest challenge because of the family's growing needs, while Mr. Juli faces the challenge of distance as a result of working abroad to provide for his family. Conversely, in Mrs. Erin's

case, her husband's maturity in age and economic stability served as protective factors for harmony, reinforcing the concept of *al-ba'ah* interpreted by Sayyid Sabiq (2021) as multidimensional readiness rather than merely biological readiness.

To assess harmony in a more measurable way, this study used five operational indicators derived from *al-kulliyat al-khams*. Follow-up interviews with two early-married informants, Mrs. Ani and Mrs. Erin, show that the indicators of peace of mind (*hifẓh an-nafs*) and economic resilience (*hifẓh al-mal*) were fulfilled, whereas the indicators of religious preservation (*hifẓh ad-din*), maturity of thought and deliberation (*hifẓh al-'aql*), and continuity and quality of offspring (*hifẓh an-nasl*) were only partially fulfilled (Table 2). This indicator-based assessment is limited to these two cases because both could be traced through follow-up interviews, household observation, and direct confirmation with village officials; the case of Mr. Juli, who lives in a long-distance marriage because he works in Malaysia, was not included because some sub-indicators could not be verified through triangulation, as described in the Methods section. Table 2 therefore represents a subset of two households rather than all three households studied, while Mr. Juli's account is still analyzed narratively in the preceding paragraphs. The most vulnerable sub-indicators are participation in religious study groups (*majelis taklim*) and premarital guidance from religious leaders, continuity of access to education, and the clarity of the marriage's legal status through registration. These findings confirm that family harmony among early-married couples cannot be judged merely by whether the marriage endures, but must be read in layers through communication, the fulfillment of maintenance (*nafkah*), educational continuity, child-rearing, and legal protection.

Table 2. Fulfillment Status of Family Harmony Indicators within the Al-Kulliyat Al-Khams Framework (Subset of Two Households: The Cases of Mrs. Ani and Mrs. Erin)

Indicator (Objective of Sharia)	Status	Notes
Religious preservation (hifzh ad-din)	Partially fulfilled	Prayers are performed regularly; participation in religious study groups and guidance from religious leaders is uneven.
Peace of mind (hifzh an-nafs)	Fulfilled	Communication is open and non-violent; family health still relies on informants' self-reports.
Maturity of thought & deliberation (hifzh al-'aql)	Partially fulfilled	Deliberation and role-sharing take place; continuity of access to education has not been realized.
Continuity & quality of offspring (hifzh an-nasl)	Partially fulfilled	The marriage bond is intact and child-rearing takes place; clarity of legal status through registration remains vulnerable.
Economic resilience (hifzh al-mal)	Fulfilled	Maintenance and economic independence are confirmed; vulnerable because it relies on a single income.

4. Maslahah Analysis of Early Marriage Practices

The third research question requires reading the field findings through the concept of *maslahah*, namely benefit that is in line with the objectives of the sharia in preserving religion, life, intellect, offspring, and property. Based on the accounts of the religious leader, KUA officials, and village officials, the *maslahat* (benefits) that the community attributes to early marriage mainly concern *hifẓh ad-din* and *hifẓh an-nasl*, namely protecting young people from premarital relationships and channeling relations between men and women into a legitimate bond. Conversely, the accompanying *mafsadat* (harms) are broader: discontinued education (*hifẓh al-'aql*), psychological pressure and reproductive health risks (*hifẓh an-nafs*), economic vulnerability due to a single income (*hifẓh al-mal*), and legal uncertainty for unregistered marriages, which weakens the protection of wives and children (Table 3).

Al-Ghazali (1997) asserts that *maslahah mursalah* can only serve as a legal basis if it simultaneously fulfills three conditions: *dharuri* (essential), *qath'i* (certain), and *kulli* (universal). When these criteria are applied to the case of Ciparahu Village, the reason of avoiding *zina* (fornication) and *fitnah* does indeed concern *hifẓh ad-din* at the level of *dharuriyyat*, but it is *juz'i* (partial) because it considers only one of the five essential objectives of the sharia, while the other four dimensions are potentially threatened. In many cases, reasons for marrying such as no longer being in school or already having a prospective spouse are more appropriately classified as *hajiyyat* or social custom rather than a genuinely pressing necessity.

The *fiqh al-muwazanat* (jurisprudence of balancing) approach proposed by Al-Qaradhawi (2022) is relevant for weighing competing *maslahah* and *mafsadah* in a balanced manner. In line with the legal maxim *dar'u al-mafasid muqaddam 'ala jalbi al-mashalih* (preventing harm takes precedence over securing partial benefit), the field findings show that economic pressure and discontinued education remain real *mafsadah* for family harmony, even though the households concerned still endure. The pattern in Mrs. Erin's case further reinforces this conclusion: her husband's maturity in age and economic standing do reduce some of the risks of *mafsadah*, but they do not eliminate the *mafsadah* of discontinued education for the wife who married early, so that her *hifẓh al-'aql* remains at risk.

Accordingly, the stronger *maslahah* lies in preventing and postponing marriage until maturity is attained, accompanied by the strengthening of education, religious guidance, and supervision of adolescent social interaction. The common ground between the KUA and religious leaders should be reinforced: the KUA safeguards *maslahah* in terms of legal protection and administrative readiness, while religious leaders safeguard it in terms of morality and social acceptance. The synergy of the two, as affirmed by the legal maxim *tasharruf al-imam 'ala ar-ra'iyyah manuthun bi al-mashlahah* (a leader's policy toward the people must be grounded in public benefit), is necessary so that the community can be guided to postpone marriage until a mature age or to seek a dispensation properly only in genuinely pressing cases.

One framework note needs to be made before reading Table 3. The row on legal order in the table is not a sixth essential objective outside *al-kulliyat al-khams*. Within the *maqashid* framework, marriage registration and the dispensation procedure serve as a *wasilah* (means) that protects two essential objectives at once, namely *hifzh an-nasl* through certainty of lineage, custody, and the inheritance rights of children, and *hifzh al-mal* through guaranteed rights to maintenance and joint property for wives and children in the event of a dispute or divorce. This dimension is presented in a separate row solely to highlight the administrative-juridical problem specific to the case of Ciparahu Village, namely unregistered marriage; its analytical consequences are still referred back to *hifzh an-nasl* and *hifzh al-mal*. With this placement, the framework of the five essential objectives of the sharia used since the Introduction remains intact and is not expanded to six.

Table 3. Weighing the Maslahah and Mafsadah of Early Marriage within the Al-Kulliyat Al-Khams Framework and Its Supporting Dimension

Maqashid	Potential Maslahah	Potential Mafsadah
Hifzh ad-din	Avoiding *zina*, *fitnah*, and relationships outside marriage.	Religious understanding may narrow if it emphasizes only the validity of the contract without readiness for responsibility.
Hifzh an-nafs	Provides a sense of security for couples who already wish to marry.	Reproductive health risks, psychological pressure, and emotional instability.
Hifzh al-'aql	The family can provide practical guidance after marriage.	Education is discontinued and opportunities for self-development diminish.
Hifzh an-nasl	Sexual relations and childbirth take place within the marriage bond.	Immature parenting and the risk of divorce may disrupt child welfare.
Hifzh al-mal	The husband is motivated to work and provide maintenance.	Young couples are vulnerable to economic pressure and dependence on family.
Legal order (*wasilah* for *hifzh an-nasl* and *hifzh al-mal*)	Dispensation can provide a legal route in special cases.	Unregistered (*siri*) marriage weakens the legal protection of wives and children.

These findings enrich previous studies, which tend to focus on only one side. Purnamasari (2023) shows that household harmony among early-married couples in Lebak Regency can be maintained even when the wife's education is discontinued, but does not situate this finding within a *maqashid* framework that explicitly weighs the five objectives of the sharia. Zahro (2023) and Nur (2022) examine the marriage age limit normatively without empirical field data. This article bridges these two poles by showing that the benefits of early marriage are case-specific and cannot serve as a general justification, so that prevention policies need to address the root causes, namely educational continuity, the strengthening of family economies, and the strengthening of premarital guidance, rather than merely enforcing the age limit.

D. Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion, three conclusions can be drawn. *First,* early marriage in Ciparahu Village is caused by interrelated educational, economic, socio-cultural, religious, familial, and legal-administrative factors, with discontinued education as the most dominant factor. *Second,* the dynamics of family harmony among early-married couples are not uniform: all three households endure through communication, patience, and extended family support, and in the two households assessed using the five *al-kulliyat al-khams* indicators, the indicators of peace of mind and economic resilience were fulfilled while those of religious preservation, maturity of thought, and continuity of offspring were only partially fulfilled, leaving them vulnerable to economic pressure, discontinued education, and emotional immaturity. *Third,* from the perspective of *maslahah*, early marriage in Ciparahu Village contains only case-specific benefits oriented toward *hifzh ad-din* and *hifzh an-nasl*, whereas the accompanying *mafsadat* are broader and affect *hifzh al-'aql, hifzh an-nafs,* and *hifzh al-mal*; hence, the stronger benefit lies in preventing and postponing marriage until maturity is attained.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged openly. *First*, the number of cases examined is very limited, namely three early-married households in a single village, with the indicator-based assessment applied to only two of them; the findings are therefore contextual and are not intended to be statistically generalized to the population of early-married couples in Cihara District, Lebak Regency, let alone to a broader level. *Second*, as a qualitative case study, the *transferability* of the findings depends on the similarity of the reader's social, economic, and religious context to that of Ciparahu Village rather than on probabilistic sample representativeness. *Third*, the perspective of those involved in this study is dominated by wives, so the experiences of early-married husbands who reside in the village are not adequately represented. *Fourth*, some data on health, economic conditions, and the quality of household relationships rely on informants' *self-report*, which may contain *social desirability bias*, although this has been counterbalanced through source triangulation, method triangulation, and *member checking*. *Fifth*, data collection took place over six months and was cross-sectional, so it cannot capture long-term changes in family harmony. These limitations do not invalidate the findings but position them as an in-depth portrait of specific cases that still needs to be tested in broader contexts and at a larger scale.

These findings confirm that the benefit of early marriage cannot be judged solely by the success of a few cases that endure, but must be weighed comprehensively against all five essential objectives of the sharia. The implication is that early marriage prevention policies need to address the root causes, namely adolescents' educational continuity, the strengthening of family economies, the expansion of premarital guidance by the KUA and religious leaders, and the strengthening of the village government's role in recording and assisting vulnerable families. Future research is recommended to expand the number and variety of informants, including early-married husbands,

Religious Court judges, and health workers, and to undertake longitudinal studies to examine changes in the family harmony of early-married couples over a longer period.

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