

Dialectics of Early Marriage and Stunting: Prevention Through Government Policies and Culture-Based Education

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This research aims to analyze the social praxis of early marriage in society, focusing on the role of ulama as cultural and symbolic capital in changing this practice. **Method:** The study uses a case study approach, starting with the identification of specific cases such as individuals, groups, institutions, or friendships. Data was collected through interactive and in-depth interviews, FGDs, and event interpretation. The research instrument uses human instruments for data collection, analysis, and interpretation. **Results:** Early marriage is prevalent in marginalized communities, and changing this requires strategies and synergy from scholars, government, academics, and the community, conducted systematically and sustainably. **Novelty:** The research emphasizes culture-based education and the role of scholars and the community in stunting prevention programs, offering a more empathetic approach rooted in cultural understanding.

INTRODUCTION

The learning process allows for individual and environmental interaction, namely social interaction, this process also involves understanding student development [1]. Open education practices related to cooperation frameworks, information sharing and empowerment, are significant in the focus on educational equity. The discussion method in learning can encourage individual creativity to dare to reveal their ideas and ideas. The practice of community education based on local culture, interaction with the environment, respect for their cultural domain, naturally gives rise to trust and a sense of empathy, thus allowing the main goal of education to be achieved. One of the effective paradigms is to educate the public, using interactive discussion forums, both formal and informal meetings [2], [3].

Marriage according to Law No. 17 of 1974 is a moment of unification of the bond of a man and a woman as a husband and wife legally aimed at building a happy and eternal household based on the On [4] Godhead. The law also sets a minimum age of 16 for women and 19 years for men to marry. The implementation in today's society is often different, the implementation of the marriage age limit is often not achieved, this is due to various factors, including culture, economy, social, ideology, and others [5].

Marriage is important in human relations, the development of culture, and the religion of Islam, one of the functions of fostering social cohesion, moral integrity, and spiritual balance [6]. A sexual agreement is an agreement of sexual activity of two different sexes and is ongoing, if the agreement is terminated, there is the potential for

sexual violence, because there are elements of information, motives of social expectations, and behavioral incompetence when identifying potential inconsistencies of the agreement. Marriage in Islam is not just a momentary sexual agreement between two different sexes, but it is sustainable, the government affirms the latest regulations regarding the age limit and purpose of marriage, so that no party is harmed [7]. Marriage plays a role in shaping the structure and social class of society, which is orderly, orderly, according to local rules, norms and culture.

Education is able to create a new social class, both from social and political aspects. The aspect of domestic happiness, related to maturity of age, understanding noble behavior, is formed through the process of spiritual education that affects the personality, helping to understand the essence of life better. Safeguarding offspring is one of the goals of marriage, but the main goals are *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *warrahmah* (tranquility, love, and mercy), for that it is necessary to prepare intelligently, socially, and psychologically, because marriage is a legal contract of male and female relations, as well as a *ta'awun* contract/cooperation of equal rights and obligations of both parties. Marriage triggers the emergence of a new social class, it is hoped that the class is better than the previous social class, education related to early marriage is a method of achieving a better social class. Early marriage education is important because Islam does not explicitly explain the age limit for marriage, only explains the signs, for example menstruation in women and wet dreams in men [8], [9], [10].

The phenomenon of early marriage has both negative and positive impacts, negative impacts include a decrease in the quality of human resource education, related to the increase in poverty, so that the 12-year compulsory education program is relevant to overcoming this phenomenon, therefore it needs a strong commitment from the government. Actually, the commitment of all parties and concrete actions are needed so that the main goal of suppressing the negative impact of early marriage is achieved, because it has implications for poverty and high stunting rates in society, low quality education, triggers for social conflicts, and others [11].

With the target of reducing early marriage by 2030, the fifth part of the SDGs is gender equality and the empowerment of women and children, including global efforts to prevent marriage: child, early, and forced CEFMU (child, early and force marriage and union), as well as understanding the underlying power dynamics [12]. The government and the community have carried out various support for the prevention and countermeasures of early marriage practices, although the practice is still relatively high, it is hoped that the government will consistently meet the goals and achieve the targets in the SDGs, the formulation of the UN program, ending the practice of early marriage by 2030. The reality of early marriage is relatively high, because it is related to various aspects: education, social media, culture, area, socioeconomic conditions and community background, religion, and others [13].

The consideration of choosing the theme of early marriage as the object of research is first, because of the correlation of early marriage with the emergence of various social conflicts in society, one of which is stunting which is triggered by the economic, mental and psychological unpreparedness of the bride. According to WHO, stunting is the inability of a child to grow and develop due to nutritional deficiencies, recurrent infections, and an imbalance of psychological stimuli. The current global trend is a

significant increase in the occurrence of early marriage, the drivers of early marriage include poverty, lack of education, shocks and crises, social norms and power structures, gender gaps, paternal characteristics, social expectations of marriage and childbearing [14], [15].

Second, religious aspects, marriage is a sacred momentum for the union of men and women in official household bonds according to religious and state rules. Getting married at a young age or a young adult, the ruling is sunnah or mandub, based on the hadith: "O young men, for those who are able, let them marry, because by marrying you will lower your gaze and protect your honor, if you are not able to, fast, because fasting will be a shield for you". Men and women who are considered mature enough, namely 19 and 23 years old, can get married. According to the WHO, child marriage refers to formal or informal marriage under the age of 18 with an adult or other child, although there has been a steady decline in this practice over the past decade, child marriage is still widespread, with about one in five girls married in childhood worldwide. Although there are rules regarding the age limit for marriage, the tradition of underage marriage or child marriage is still rampant. Early marriage or child marriage is not allowed by the government because of the many negative impacts it causes, including psychological and mental health, social, economic, cultural, and others [16], [17].

The three aspects of legal problems cause various problems, both aspects of the compilation of Islamic law and in the Marriage Law, related to the age limit of marriage referring to article 7 paragraph 1 of 1974, then amended to Marriage Law No. 16 of 2019. In Islamic law itself, it is not explicitly stated what the age limit for men and women to marry, in the Qur'an and hadith it only mentions the sign of maturity in men and women, so it is considered to be able to marry. Referring to UNICEF data, child marriage in Indonesia is ranked as the seventh highest in the world, and second in ASEAN, SUSENAS data 2017, there are 20 provinces with the highest prevalence of child marriage compared to the national average of 22.8%, including West Sulawesi 34.22%, South Kalimantan 33.68%, Central Sulawesi 31.91% [18], [13].

One of the verses that explains marriage is Ar-Rum verse 21, which means: "And among the signs of His greatness is that He created for you couples of your own kind, so that you may be inclined and at peace with him, and He makes among you love and affection. Indeed, in such a thing there is indeed a sign of the greatness of Allah for the thinkers." [4] Referring to this verse, humans have been created by God to be couples, this is one of the bases of marriage in Islam.

Regarding the issue of early marriage, the government made changes in 2019, through Law No. 16 of 2019, emphasizing that marriage will only be allowed if it meets the provisions of the age limit of marriage to 19 years for women and men as stated in article 7. The government hopes that with the increase in the age limit for marriage, social problems that arise after child marriage or early marriage can be reduced or prevented. The purpose of marriage as compiled by Islamic law (KHI 1991/1992) article three, namely the establishment of [18] a *sakinah* household, *mawaddah wa rahmah*, which therefore requires the physical and mental readiness of the two prospective brides to sail the ark of the household. Article 29 of the Civil Code, explains the age limit of 18 and 15 years for men and women, while Civil Code article 330, explains the age limit for a person at the age of 21 years and has never been married [18].

There are several analyses of early marriage research in Indonesia and abroad. First, *Resistance to Child Marriage Prevention in Indonesia and Malaysia*, explores barriers to support for child marriage prevention in Indonesia and Malaysia. Second [19], *Gender Equality Stereotypes on Early Marriage Culture in Madura Society*, aims to find out the position of women in the early marriage culture. The three [20] factors that cause early marriage in women, aim to find out the causes of early marriage in women. Fourth [21], *Analysis of the Impact of Early Marriage on Adolescent Psychology*, analyzing the causes of early marriage [22].

Fifth : *A Clear Message: Child Marriage Is A Significant Global Problem Requiring a Collaborative, Contextual, and Evidence-Based Response*. Qualitative method of systematic literature review. The research findings show that the number of child marriages represents data from five countries from 1.8 to 4.9 million, which will increase the risk until 2035, an estimated 50% of the incidence of child marriage in the world [23]. Sixth *Review of the Impact of Early Marriage from Various Aspects*, a qualitative descriptive method of analysis aims to understand the impact of early marriage, so that the community is able to filter knowledge and news related to early marriage, into important and useful information. The Seventh [24] *Psychological Impact of Early Marriage on Harmonious Families*, aims to analyze the countermeasures of early marriage in Indonesia carried out by the government and other policy makers [16].

Meanwhile, the theme of early marriage has been analyzed from several perspectives, common barriers to support for child marriage prevention in Indonesia and Malaysia, gender equality stereotypes towards the culture of early marriage in Madurese society, factors that cause early marriage in women, analysis of the impact of early marriage on adolescent psychology, a clear message: child marriage is a significant global problem that requires a collaborative response, contextual, and evidence-based, an overview of the impact of early marriage from various aspects, the psychological impact of early marriage on harmonious families. There is still no analysis of the aspect of the role of ulama that is able to influence changes in the social practice of early marriage in society, so researchers consider this theme important. Research related to the role of this scholar and previous research is relatively different in the use of theory, but relatively the same in the use of methods.

This study focuses on the analysis of the social praxis of early marriage in the community, with the purpose of analyzing the role of scholars in changing the social practice of early marriage in society. Benefits of the research: 1. It is expected to understand the significant role of scholars in the prevention of early marriage in society. 2. It is hoped that the attitude of the community will be wise and objective when understanding the significant role of ulama in the prevention of early marriage.

Early Marriage Frame of Mind

Habitus is in the mind of an individual who is still in his or her conscious realm as a result of interaction with the environment, Bourdieu uses the notion of agency and structure to explain the conflict between objectivism and subjectivism, the approach works with objectivists and subjectivists differently. The relationship between the two is not in conflict with each other but is related to social actions or practices in society. Objective structures with subjective representations, agencies and actors give rise to dialectics, intertwined and involved in reciprocal correlations [25, p. 42].

Habitus is a set of dispositions that direct individuals to behave and react in certain ways, resulting in 'regular' social practices, perceptions, and attitudes without being consciously coordinated or controlled by any 'rules'. The disposition is deliberately instilled, structured, durable, generative, and hereditary, acquired through a gradual planting process, with an important phase in early childhood. Habitus is acquired through the process of training and learning, the individual acquires a set of dispositions that naturally fuse and become natural, also structured, they cannot avoid the reflection of the social conditions around them [26, p. 12].

The focus of Bourdieu's attention on social practice is due to the dialectical correlation of structure and agency. The practical actions of the individual are subjective and implicit of environmental influences, the individual reflects his interest in the dialectic between the surrounding structures by constructing social reality. Bourdieu calls his orientation of understanding structural constructivism, structuralist constructivism, or genetic structuralism. Habitus is the result of the internalization of the individual with the environment, the mental attitude of the individual then develops and shapes his environment. The perspective of genetic structuralism understands that all reflections of human knowledge are constructed from within people's lives, the knowledge has different interests according to the social and intellectual circumstances of society. Knowledge and thinking are part of social life, the development of knowledge and thinking according to the interests and effectiveness needed [27, p. 578], [28, p. 6].

Habitus is in the mind of the individual who is still in the realm of consciousness, while the Arena is already outside the mind of the individual, playing a role in constructing the individual's thoughts. Habitus and Arena are not separate, but intertwined, habitus is a mental or cognitive structure that controls the way an individual relates to the social world, appearing historically by displaying special properties such as the arena of literature, art, politics, religion, and others. An individual has essentially been equipped with a series of internalized schemes that they use to perceive, understand, appreciate, and evaluate the social world. Through this scheme, individuals produce their practices, perceive and evaluate them. Dialectically, habitus is "a product of the internalization of structure" of the social world/arena. Habitus is acquired as a result of occupying a position in the social world/arena for a long and continuous period of time [27, p. 580], [26, p. 15], [27, p. 581].

Capital or Capital is not just an instrument of relations between economic classes, but a set of instruments that are owned in life and affirm the social status of individuals, capital is used as a means of analyzing the form of social interaction of society that is not limited to economic aspects only. There are at least four types of capital according to Bourdeu: Cultural, Economic, Social, and Symbolic. Cultural Capital includes certain cultural knowledge, skills, and expertise that are usually possible due to special education. Symbolic Capital, generally an accumulation of prestige, rulers, honorable positions in society, religious leaders, etc [26, p. 14].

There are relations between classes in human life, there is a process of domination or domination, the process is very much determined by the role of capital, and capital is also strongly influenced by habitus, so it is important to understand what habitus is needed to change society's perspective regarding early marriage. The interaction of cultural and symbolic capital makes the struggle to change the cultural habitus of early

marriage an interesting phenomenon in the community space, because it can analyze how the social relationship of kyai and alim ulama with the community in daily life, so that it can formulate the right policies to achieve the main goal of changing the social practice of early marriage in society. Regarding early marriage, it is hoped that there will be an affirmation attitude of the community through indicators of actions or behaviors, so that the main goal of stunting prevention is achieved. This is as explained by Rohmatun, namely the existence of indicators of people's actions or behavior in daily life that indicate an affirmative attitude [29].

RESEARCH METHOD

This research method is qualitative, dependent on human observation, aiming to understand the holistic phenomena of the research subject, through the elaboration of words and language, in a special natural context [30, p. 16]. The research procedure collects and analyzes data, inductive logic comes from below, then moves the whole into the perspective of the theory used [31, p. 45]. Qualitative research aims to understand the context or setting of the research problem, the informant's information and the scope of the informant: home, family, or workplace. Social [31, p. 71] phenomena comprehensively is a complete whole, a means of exploring and understanding the meaning of individuals or groups, data analysis inductively and obtained through literature studies, interactive and in-depth dialogues during FGD, and field [32, p. 22] observations.

The paradigm of scientific analysis allows the formulation of problems to be answered well, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the analysis of the role of ulama as cultural and symbolic capital that influences changes in the social practice of early marriage in society. The approach of this research is a case study, starting with the identification of specific cases, in the form of real entities such as individuals, small groups, institutions or friendships [31, p. 121] through interactive and in-depth dialogue during FGD and interpretation of events. Human instruments function to determine the focus of the research, choose informants as data sources, collect data, assess data quality, analyze data, interpret data and make conclusions on their findings. The purpose of a case study [33, p. 222] is to affirm that a case can be limited or explained by certain parameters, such as a specific time and place. Case study researchers understand trending cases, real events that are ongoing, so they can gather accurate information that is not lost to time.

The informants of this study are diverse, ranging from relevant government officials and religious scholars from four cities/regencies in East Java: S, J, Si, and B, who are involved in stunting prevention policies through the prevention of early marriage. Data were obtained through interviews in three cities and districts in East Java, then strengthened focus group discussions/FGDs in S city, semi-structured and guided questions to explore informational, motivational, and ideological aspects to understand the phenomenon of stunting triggered by early marriage in the community.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Habitus and Capital in Early Marriage

Habitus is a set of dispositions that direct individuals to act and react in a certain way, these dispositions produce 'regular' practices, perceptions, and attitudes without being consciously coordinated or governed by any 'rules'. The disposition is deliberately instilled, structured, durable, generative, and hereditary. The disposition is obtained through a gradual planting process, with an important phase in early adulthood. The social praxis of early marriage in society is a long-lasting, hereditary habitus, and has been believed to be a "normality" by the supporting society in general [26, p. 12].

The social praxis of early marriage has become their culture without coercion, so they naturally apply it in life, consciously considering it as a natural thing to be carried out in daily life. The social practice of early marriage is deeply rooted in society, so it needs concerted, sustainable and integrated action to change the habitus.

The elaboration of the understanding of the role of ulama as cultural and symbolic capital in influencing changes in early marriage habits in society has been carried out in four cities/districts, together with research teams with various related sciences. This is because the work in the research consortium allows the elaboration of understanding with the team in different ways, because the existing data can be analyzed and used to expand understanding, researchers can share learning, refine the analysis, and consider the application of research evidence/findings better [34].

The findings of the research data explained that there is a culture/belief in society if there is a girl who has been proposed to by someone, then the proposal is rejected by the girl's family, it is believed that the girl will not get married/it is difficult to get married for the rest of her life. Based on the findings of information from the speakers during the FGD, the culture thrives among marginalized communities, which are relatively synonymous with low levels of education and weak in terms of Economy. Referring to Bourdieu's thought, the culture of early marriage has the opportunity to be changed, although it is difficult and requires a continuous process and integration of all parties, in this case through optimizing the role of kyai and ulama as cultural and symbolic capital, because they are role models and have a great influence on society. The following is an overview of the reality in the community related to stunting prevention through the prevention of early marriage.

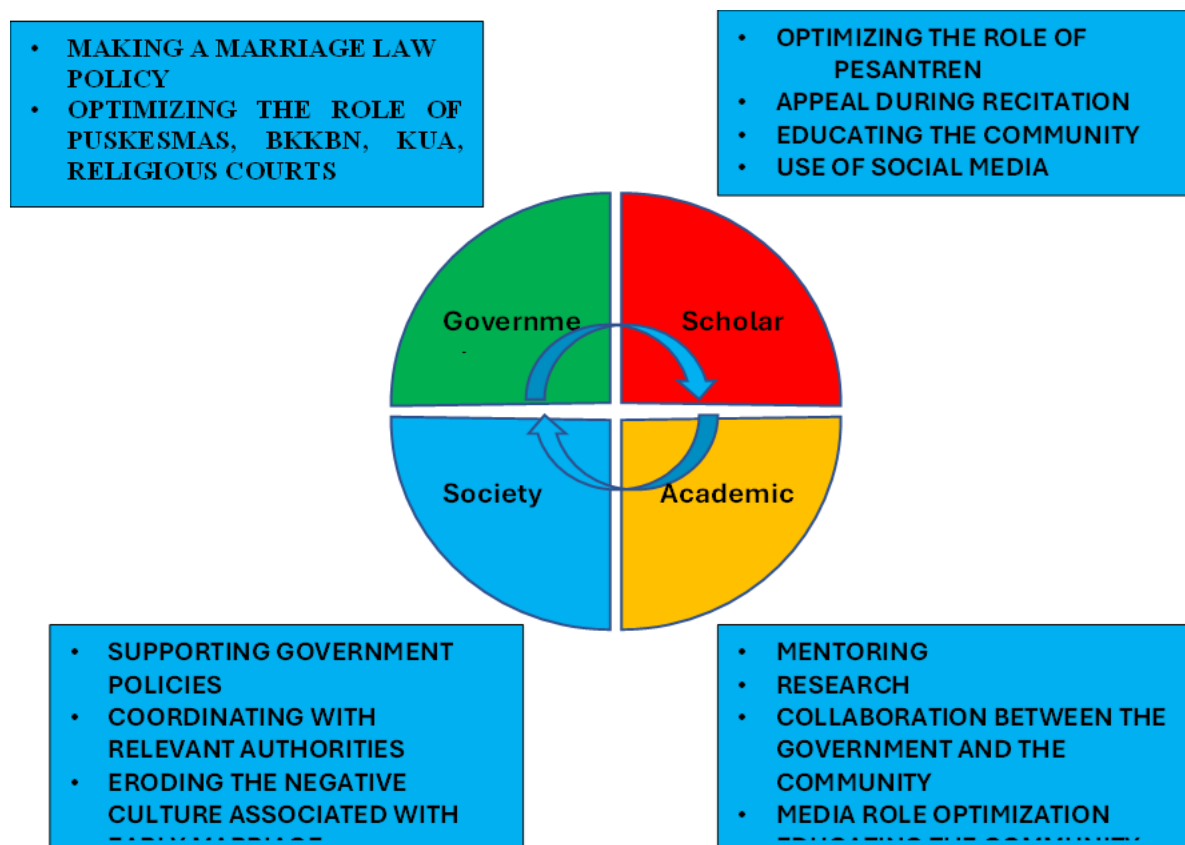


Diagram 2. Stunting Prevention Through Early Marriage Prevention

The struggle of social class in society never stops, one form of struggle is through the social praxis of early marriage, although without them realizing it, this social practice actually gives birth to various new social conflicts in society. According to the findings of information conveyed by one of the speakers during the FGD, there are various effects of early marriage: 1. A new poverty trigger because when the bride and groom got married, they were not financially, mentally, and psychologically ready. 2. High chance of transmission of sexually transmitted diseases. 3. Vulnerable to dropping out of school, because 85% of girls in Indonesia will tend to end their education after marriage.

There are two main things related to the culture of early marriage in society, based on the findings of information during the FGD. First in a village Kn in S district, the culture of matchmaking has occurred since before a person is born, they have been matched since the womb. Both parents have agreed when they are pregnant Concurrent, if their two children are born later, if they are male and female, then they will be betrothed. This social praxis has been passed down from generation to generation, passed down from generation to generation, so that it is accepted as a conscious behavior without coercion to the next generation.

Second, there is a taboo thing if a girl is 20 years old or even before that, if she is not engaged/no man has come to propose. It is certain that the girl's family will be upset, this is related to the perspective in society, namely the development of hereditary culture that considers it negative. The girl is considered not to be married, so it becomes an embarrassing disgrace for the family. These two things usually develop in societies with

relatively weak economic and educational aspects, so they are used to taking these social praxis for granted.

Capital or Capital is not just an instrument of relations between economic classes, but a set of instruments in life that affirms the social status of individuals, capital is used as a means of analyzing forms of social interaction of society that are not limited to economic aspects alone. Religious leaders, kyai and alim ulama are influential figures in the life of the people in the village, this is because they are attached to cultural and symbolic capital instruments that affirm their social status in the community. This social status can be used effectively to support government policy programs related to the prevention of early marriage as one of the aspects that trigger stunting, especially cultural and symbolic capital aspects [26, p. 15].

Cultural capital includes a specific set of knowledge, skills, cultural expertise that is usually possible through special education. Symbolic capital is an accumulation of prestige, rulers, regional heads, honorable positions in society, religious leaders, and others. Religious leaders, kyai and alim ulama are influential figures who meet the criteria of the two capitals, so that their role can be optimized to support government policy programs. It is important to understand how social praxis is needed to be able to change people's perspectives on early marriage in the long term rather than in a short time, or use coercive instruments of legal and legislative aspects. This is because the social praxis of the community has been going on for a long time, so changing it requires time and cooperation from all parties, especially kyai and alim ulama [26, p. 14].

Analysis of the Role of Scholars in Stunting Prevention through Early Marriage Prevention

The social praxis of early marriage occurs in the social life arena of the people, most of whom are relatively poorly educated, especially formal education, and relatively weak in economic aspects. Changing the social praxis requires the synergy of all parties, both Ulama (optimizing the role of Islamic boarding schools, appeals during study, educating the public, using social media, interpretation ready for marriage/ba'ah), the Government (making policies on the Marriage Law, optimizing the role of Puskesmas, BKKBN, KUA, Religious Courts), Akademisi (mentoring, research, collaboration between the government and the community, optimizing the role of the media, educating the community) and the community (supporting government policies, coordinating with relevant authorities, eroding negative culture related to early marriage), and carried out in a sustainable manner. M Analysis of the role of ulama as symbolic and cultural capital that is able to influence changes in the social practice of early marriage in society, is a critical step in understanding how social relations develop in society, so that it can determine effective strategies to change the social praxis of marriage.



Diagram 3. Symbolic Capital of Scholars in Stunting Prevention Through Early Marriage

The culture of early marriage in society has the opportunity to be changed, although it is difficult and requires a continuous process and integration of all parties, in this case through the optimization of the role of symbolic capital of kyai and ulama, because they are role models and have a great influence on society. In the momentum of the wedding, the community will always consult with the Village Kyai and Ulama regarding the implementation time, which is a 'good' day to hold the wedding. Marriage is considered sacred, so not everyone knows the rules of its implementation, if it is wrong in determining a 'good' day, it will have implications for health, safety, smooth risk, and others. Thus, we can understand that the role of the village kyai, the religious scholars in the village, is very significant in preventing the practice of early marriage.

Based on the findings of information during the FGD, early marriage is one of the causes of stunting because it is triggered by cultural aspects that have developed strongly in the community: even though they are already residents of Islamic boarding schools, when given the opportunity to get engaged, they also choose to have a betel wedding, this is because the door to marriage is open. Although various marriage rules have been socialized, there are still opportunities for easing in society to still be able to get married even though it is not in accordance with the age limit of the Marriage Law. The phenomenon in J district, marriage certificates can be taken care of after they are old enough, for that the relevant parties have coordinated, of course with some special considerations.

The social practice of early marriage in society has a great chance of being changed in the long term, but with the cooperation of all parties, especially the role of village kyai and religious scholars, not only the government, academics, and the community. The role of the village kyai and the ulama is very significant, through fatwas

or direct messages during lectures, recitations, and other da'wah activities. The community really respects this social status, the amount of respect and tawadlu to the kyai and alim ulama, can be used as an instrument to educate the community, even if necessary it can be with a little coercive action, because the community is afraid if they do not get blessings from Mr. Kyai when carrying out the wedding celebration.

Based on the findings of information during the FGD, in district J the coercive action of early marriage has been initiated by Mr. Kyai, if he has prohibited it, and the student's family still does not meet the advice related to the age limit for marriage, then he will not be present when the marriage takes place, because the student has not completed his aliyah education. The absence of a Kyai will greatly affect the credibility of the bride's family, meaning that the bride and groom have not received pleasure, and his blessing in marriage, it is very detrimental to the bride. Marriage is a sacred moment, the absence of blessings and prayers from kyai, it is believed that it will affect the permanence of their marriage, in the future, it is hoped that in the long term these coercive actions can change the negative habitus of early marriage in society.

During the FGD, several motives for early marriage were found including: economy, education, culture, religion, and others. If not prevented, the possibility of early marriage social praxis in society will grow, therefore it is necessary to synergize all relevant parties and the right strategy to change the social praxis of the community through the role of cultural and symbolic capital of kyai and alim ulama as well as the government and society, one of which is through educational aspects involving the role of the community. This is because there are research findings that explain that collaborative approaches to curriculum design and various strategies to involve parents in education have a sustainable impact on student behavior. In addition, there are significant factors that achieve learning goals, namely internal factors (health, intelligence and talents, interests and motivations, learning methods) and external factors (family, community, school). The collaboration of various parties in developing the educational curriculum and learning process will improve the quality of education, so that it is expected to be effective in changing the social practice of early marriage [35], [36].

Education for Sustainable Development is supported by (UN) and (UNESCO), quality education is also one of the seventeen (SDGs) of the United Nations. Culture-based community education is one of the quality education, by including the role of the community and scholars in efforts to change the social practice of early marriage, allowing the main goal of stunting prevention to be achieved, because the community is approached with the perspective of their cultural domain, so that trust and empathy naturally arise. Changing the habitus of early marriage requires a long, ongoing, persuasive, and systematic process. Understanding the cultural and symbolic capital of the ulama is a systematic step so that the main goal is achieved, this is because society is an important part of the social construction that has been formed for a long time. Changing habitus essentially also changes people's ideology, and this should not be done with violent acts, because people have the opportunity to carry out acts of resistance. Coercive actions can only be allowed by highly respected religious figures, in this case

kyai and alim ulama, with a refined medium of language, because language has two functions, as an instrument of communication and an instrument of power [37].

After receiving an enlightening message from the Village Kyai and Ulama, the community is expected to be willing to obey the rules of marriage, for the good and future of the family. Public affirmation of the prevention of early marriage social practice is an early indicator, which is expected to be followed by a decrease in the rate of early marriage in the following year. Research related to the social practice of early marriage in East Java has been carried out through the cooperation of various related parties, but the findings in the field explain how the role of Kyai Kampung and Ulama is an important key, not only the government, academics, and the community. These four aspects are interrelated and support the struggle to change the habitus of early marriage in the social life of the community. Kyai Kampung and Ulama teach and practice religious knowledge every day, therefore they have cultural and symbolic capital in society, so that their advice and suggestions will be obeyed by the community, not against a set of laws and regulations.

Although Law No. 16 article 7 concerning Marriage in 2019, only allows marriage if it meets the age limit of 19 years for women and men, the fact is that people can still get around the marriage age requirement. Government regulations related to marriage age limits will only be effective if they are supported by various parties, and socialized persuasively, in accordance with the customs and culture of the community. Thus, through culture-based quality education, by including the role of the community and scholars in efforts to change the social practice of early marriage, it is possible to achieve the main goal of stunting control, because understanding the community from the perspective of their cultural domain, so that trust and empathy naturally arise for stunting prevention programs.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : The social praxis of early marriage is prevalent in marginalized communities, primarily those with low education levels and weak economic conditions. The role of Ulama as cultural and symbolic capital is significant in preventing early marriage. **Implication** : Changing the social practice of early marriage requires the synergy of Ulama, Government, Academics, and the Community, working together systematically and sustainably. Culture-based education, including the involvement of scholars and the community, can contribute to achieving stunting prevention goals through empathy and trust built on cultural understanding. **Limitation** : The study does not examine other socio-economic factors in detail, and the focus remains primarily on the cultural and symbolic capital of the Ulama in preventing early marriage. **Future Research** : Future research could explore the long-term impacts of culture-based education programs on early marriage practices, as well as the role of other stakeholders such as local authorities and non-governmental organizations.

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