

STOPAN Policy as an Effort to Reduce Child Marriage: A Review of Public Policy Based on Maqashid Syariah

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Abstract

Child marriage is still a crucial social problem in Indonesia, one of the provinces with the highest rate of underage marriage is West Java Province nationally. This practice not only violates children's rights, but also has an impact on their future, some drop out of school, ongoing poverty, and domestic violence. To respond to this problem, the West Java Provincial Government through the Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, and Family Planning Service (DP3AKB) initiated the Stop Child Marriage (STOPAN) program. This program involves cross-sector collaboration government, academics, business, media, and communities with a comprehensive and participatory approach to reduce the number of child marriages. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the STOPAN program in reducing the number of child marriages and evaluate its effectiveness from the perspective of Maqashid Syariah. The approach used is qualitative-descriptive with a case study method. The results of this study indicate that STOPAN is quite effective partially. The number of marriage dispensations decreased from 6,794 cases (2021) to 3,631 cases (2024), and the proportion of women aged 20-24 who married before 18 also decreased from 10.09% to 5.78%. However, the practice of unregistered marriage is still often carried out by some communities. From the perspective of Maqashid Syariah, STOPAN contributes to the protection of religion, soul, mind, descendants, and property, although it is not yet fully optimal. This study recommends strengthening the community-based approach and the integration of local religious and cultural values in the implementation of STOPAN.

Keywords : *Child Marriage; STOPAN; West Java; Public Policy; Maqashid Syariah*



ملخص

لا يزال زواج الأطفال قضية اجتماعية بالغة الأهمية في إندونيسيا. تُعدّ مقاطعة جاوة الغربية من بين المقاطعات التي تشهد أعلى معدلات زواج القاصرات على المستوى الوطني. لا تنتهك هذه الممارسة حقوق الأطفال، فحسب، بل تؤثر أيضًا على مستقبلهم، مما يؤدي إلى التسرب من المدارس واستمرار الفقر، والعنف الأسري. ول معالجة هذه القضية، أطلقت حكومة مقاطعة جاوة الغربية، من خلال وكالة تمكين المرأة وحماية الطفل وتنظيم يتضمن هذا (STOPAN) "برنامج وقف زواج الأطفال، (DP3AKB) الأسرة، البرنامج تعاونًا بين القطاعات المختلفة - الحكومة، والأوساط الأكاديمية وعالم الأعمال، ووسائل الإعلام، والمجتمعات المحلية - مع اتباع نهج شامل وتشاركي للحد من معدلات زواج الأطفال. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل في الحد من معدلات زواج الأطفال، وتقييم STOPAN تطبيق برنامج فعاليته من منظور مقاصد الشريعة الإسلامية. وقد استخدم المنهج الوصفي النوعي مع دراسة حالة. وتشير نتائج هذه الدراسة إلى أن فعالية جزئية. انخفض عدد حالات الزواج من 6794 حالة STOPAN برنامج إلى 3631 حالة (2024)، كما انخفضت نسبة النساء اللواتي تتراوح (2021) % أعمارهن بين 20 و 24 عامًا واللواتي تزوجن قبل سن 18 عامًا من 10.09 إلى 5.78 %. ومع ذلك، لا تزال ممارسة الزواج غير المسجل شائعة في بعض المجتمعات. من منظور مقاصد الشريعة الإسلامية، يُسهم برنامج في حماية الدين والحياة والعقل والذرية والممتلكات، على الرغم STOPAN من أنه لم يصل إلى المستوى الأمثل بعد. توصي هذه الدراسة بتعزيز النهج STOPAN المجتمعي ودمج القيم الدينية والثقافية المحلية في تنفيذ برنامج

الكلمات المفتاحية : زواج الأطفال; جاوة الغربية; السياسة ; STOPAN ; العامة; مقاصد الشريعة الإسلامية

Abstrak

Perkawinan anak di bawah umur masih menjadi persoalan sosial yang cukup krusial di Indonesia, salah satu Provinsi dengan tingkat perkawinan di bawah umur tertinggi ada di Provinsi Jawa Barat secara nasional. Praktik ini tidak hanya melanggar hak anak, tetapi juga berdampak pada masa depan mereka, ada yang putus sekolah, kemiskinan berkelanjutan, dan kekerasan dalam rumah tangga. Untuk merespons persoalan ini, Pemerintah Provinsi Jawa Barat melalui Dinas Pemberdayaan Perempuan, Perlindungan Anak, dan Keluarga Berencana (DP3AKB) menginisiasi program Stop Perkawinan Anak (STOPAN). Program ini melibatkan kerja sama lintas sektor pemerintah, akademisi, dunia usaha, media, dan komunitas dengan pendekatan komprehensif dan partisipatif untuk menurunkan angka perkawinan anak. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis implementasi program STOPAN dalam menurunkan angka perkawinan anak serta mengevaluasi efektivitasnya dari perspektif Maqashid Syariah. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah kualitatif-deskriptif dengan metode studi kasus. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa STOPAN cukup efektif secara parsial. Jumlah dispensasi nikah menurun dari 6.794 kasus (2021) menjadi 3.631 kasus (2024), dan proporsi perempuan usia 20–24 tahun yang menikah sebelum 18 tahun juga menurun dari 10,09% menjadi 5,78%. Namun, praktik nikah siri masih kerap dilakukan beberapa masyarakat. Dalam perspektif Maqashid Syariah, STOPAN berkontribusi terhadap perlindungan agama, jiwa, akal, keturunan, dan harta, meskipun belum sepenuhnya optimal. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan penguatan pendekatan berbasis komunitas serta integrasi nilai keagamaan dan budaya lokal dalam pelaksanaan STOPAN.

Kata Kunci: Perkawinan Anak; STOPAN; Jawa Barat; Kebijakan Publik; Maqashid Syariah

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A. Introduction

Child marriage is a social issue that is still a serious challenge in various developing countries, including Indonesia¹. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2021 in a study by Linda et al., Indonesia is among the 10 countries with the highest child marriage rates in the world². West Java Province in particular is recorded as the province with the third highest number of child marriage cases nationally³. This phenomenon not only violates children's basic rights as stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), but also has long-term impacts on their future, some dropping out of school, intergenerational poverty, limited access to health services, and increased vulnerability to domestic violence (KDRT)⁴.

Global studies consistently show that child marriage is driven by structural factors such as poverty, social norms, and gender inequality⁵⁶. Several previous studies have reviewed the factors causing child marriage, both from cultural and economic aspects, to the weak legal protection system. A study by Al-Ghani et.,al shows that the practice of child marriage in Indonesia is often influenced by social norms and community

¹ Noverman Duadji and Novita Tresiana, "Analysis of Child Marriage and Related Policies in Indonesia: Sustainable Development Issue," *Problemy Ekorozwoju* 17, no. 1 (2022): 101–13, <https://doi.org/10.35784/pe.2022.1.10>.

² Linda Yulyani et al., "Analisis Data Sdki 2017: Faktor-Faktor Yang Berhubungan Dengan Kejadian Pernikahan Dini Di Provinsi Bengkulu," *Journal Of Midwifery* 11, no. 1 (2023): 154–61, <https://doi.org/10.37676/jm.v11i1.4537>.

³ Tiara Navy Argawidyanti, Teguh Ilham, and Agni Grandita Permata Sari, "Meningkatkan Keterwakilan Perempuan Di Ruang Publik Dan Politik: Pendidikan Politik Perempuan Dalam Program 'Sekoper Cinta' Di Desa Cimuja, Kecamatan Cimalaka, Kabupaten Sumedang, Provinsi Jawa Barat," *Civitas Consecratio: Journal of Community Service and Empowerment* 2, no. 2 (2023): 95–106, <https://doi.org/10.33701/cc.v2i2.2899>.

⁴ M . Riska Anandya Putri Pratiwi, "The Impact of Early Marriage in the Fulfilment of Women Rights," *The Indonesian Journal of International Clinical Legal Education* 2, no. 4 (2020): 449–62.

⁵ Stephanie R Psaki et al., "What Are the Drivers of Child Marriage ? A Conceptual Framework to Guide Policies and Programs," *Journal of Adolescent Health* 69, no. 6 (2021): S13–22, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2021.09.001>; Unicef, "Towards Ending Child Marriage : Global Trends and Profiles of Progress," 2021.

⁶ Mikyas Abera et al., "Early Marriage and Women's Empowerment : The Case of Child-Brides in Amhara National Regional State , Ethiopia," *BMC International Health and Human Rights* 5 (2020): 1–16.

pressure⁷. In Indonesia, international assessments by UNFPA⁸ and BPS–UNICEF⁹ highlight persistent challenges despite various interventions. The literature also emphasizes that cross-sector, collaborative frameworks are essential for effective prevention¹⁰. To analyze such interventions at the subnational level, policy implementation theories such as those of Edwards¹¹, Mazmanian & Sabatier¹², and Hill & Hupe¹³ offer analytical tools to assess communication, resources, bureaucratic structure, and stakeholder coordination. In the context of West Java, research conducted by DP3AKB noted that one of the significant efforts of the local government in addressing this problem is through the Stop Child Marriage (STOPAN) policy, which prioritizes a collaborative and community-based approach¹⁴.

Within Islamic legal scholarship, the Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah framework provides an additional evaluative lens for child protection policies. Classical scholars like al-Ghazali and al-Shatibi establish the five essential objectives of Sharia (*hifz al-din, al-nafs, al-‘aql, al-nasl, al-mal*), while contemporary works by al-Qaradawi¹⁵ and Auda¹⁶

⁷ Muhammad Zulfi Al’Ghani et al., “Fertility in Child Marriage Families: In-Depth Investigation In Indonesia,” *Changing Societies and Personalities* 8, no. 2 (2024) : 465–90, <https://doi.org/10.15826/csp.2024.8.2.283>.

⁸ Megumi Uchino, “Government of Indonesia Commits to End Child Marriage,” UNFPA Indonesia, 2020, <https://indonesia.unfpa.org/en/news/government-indonesia-commits-end-child-marriage>

⁹ Unicef Indonesia, “Perkawinan Anak Di Indonesia : Statistik Terbaru Perkawinan Anak Di Indonesia,” UNICEF Indonesia, BPS, PUSKAPA UI, Kementerian PPN/ Bappenas, 2020, <https://www.unicef.org/indonesia/id/laporan/perkawinan-anak-di-indonesia?>

¹⁰ Margaret E. Greene, Manahil Siddiqi, and Tara F. Abularrage, “Systematic Scoping Review of Interventions to Prevent and Respond to Child Marriage across Africa: Progress, Gaps and Priorities,” *BMJ Open* 13, no. 5 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2022-061315>.

¹¹ D Brent Edwards, Alejandro Caravaca, and Núria Torras, “World Bank Influence on Policy Implementation in Education: A Systematic Review,” *International Journal of Educational Development*, no. February (2025).

¹² Sabatier Mazmanian, *Implementation and Public Policy* ((Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman, 1983)).

¹³ Michael Hill and Peter Hupe, *Implementing Public Policy : An Introduction to the Study of Operational Governance, 3rd Ed.* (Los Angeles : SAGE Publications, 2014), 248.

¹⁴ Humas Bappeda Jabar, “Pemda Provinsi Jabar Sukses Tekan Angka Perkawinan Anak,” Bappeda Jawa Barat, 2021, <https://bappeda.jabarprov.go.id/pemda-provinsi-jabar-sukses-tekan-angka-perkawinan-anak/>.

¹⁵ Yūsuf. Al-Qaradāwī, *Dirāsah Fī Fiqh Maqāṣid Al-Sharī‘Ah: Bayna Al-Maqāṣid Al-Kulliyyah Wa Al-Nuṣūṣ Al-Juz ‘Iyyah.* (Beirut : Mu’assasat al-Risālah., 1999), 67.

¹⁶ Jasser Auda, *Maqasid Al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach* (Herndon, VA: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2008),56.

demonstrate their relevance for assessing modern social policy¹⁷. These studies confirm that aligning public policy with maqashid principles enhances its moral legitimacy and societal acceptance yet few studies apply this framework to local-level child marriage prevention programs in Indonesia¹⁸.

STOPAN is a regional policy program designed to reduce the number of child marriages through education, advocacy, and strengthening regulations at the local level. This program involves strategic actors from government, academics, media, business, and communities (pentahelix) to develop a sustainable prevention system¹⁹. However, although STOPAN has shown positive results in reducing the number of marriage dispensation requests and the proportion of women marrying at a young age, critical studies on the effectiveness of this policy in relation to Islamic values are still very limited.

Despite the growing body of literature on Maqashid-based policy assessment, research that specifically applies this framework to child marriage prevention policies remains limited, particularly in the context of local government interventions such as the *Stop Pernikahan Anak* (STOPAN) program in West Java. This creates a clear knowledge gap in understanding how local policy initiatives align with or operationalize Islamic normative objectives.

This study is designed to address that gap by evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of STOPAN through the analytical lens of Maqashid Syariah. The explicit novelty of this research lies in its systematic integration of Maqashid principles with public policy evaluation an approach that has not been explicitly formulated or empirically applied in existing studies on child marriage prevention. By articulating this novelty, the study not only contributes to the academic discourse on Islamic legal theory and social policy, but also provides a context-sensitive model for strengthening child protection policies in Muslim-majority regions. In addition, this approach also opens up opportunities to formulate regional policy models that are rooted in Islamic values and relevant to the contemporary social context.

¹⁷ Leanne Morin Qodariah Barkah, Suraya Sintang, "Sharia and Legal Ethics Negotiating Islamic Law and State Norms in Child Marriage Practices in Coastal Indonesia," *Antmind Review : Journal of Sharia and Legal Ethics* 2, no. 1 (2025): 43–55.

¹⁸ Mohamad Aniq et al., "The Integration of Five Main Goals of Shariah in The Production of Science and Technology for Human Well-Being," *Journal of Maqāṣid Studies and Advanced Islamic Research* 5, no. 1 (2024): 1–16.

¹⁹ Yana Taryana, "Meski Tren Menurun, Jabar Terus Kampanyekan Stop Perkawinan Anak," *Kabar Nusantara*, 2024, <https://kabarnusantara.id/meski-tren-menurun-jabar-terus-kampanyekan-stop-perkawinan-anak/>.

B. Research Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design. Such an approach is appropriate for exploring in depth the implementation of the STOPAN policy in West Java Province, particularly in capturing the institutional processes, social dynamics, and normative foundations that shape the policy²⁰. It also enables a contextual and comprehensive assessment of STOPAN's effectiveness through the evaluative lens of Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah. West Java was selected as the research site because it is among the provinces with the highest rates of child marriage in Indonesia and has been a pioneer in systematically implementing the STOPAN program since 2021. Data from the West Java High Religious Court and the Provincial DP3AKB indicate a notable decline in marriage dispensation cases and child marriage proportions following STOPAN's implementation. Moreover, the province's complex and diverse socio-cultural context makes it a strategic setting to examine the operation of multi-sector, collaborative child-protection policies.

Data were collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including 4 West Java DP3AKB officials, 1 religious and 3 community leaders, 1 academic involved in STOPAN advocacy, and 1 representative of a civil society organization focused on child protection. Secondary data was obtained from policy documents, STOPAN program reports, official statistics (BPS and Religious Courts), as well as academic literature on public policy and Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah.

Data analysis followed a thematic strategy, identifying recurring patterns across interviews and documents. The analysis was guided by the Van Meter & Van Horn Public Policy Implementation Model, which examines indicators such as policy standards and objectives, resources, interorganizational communication, implementer characteristics, and socio-economic conditions²¹. These dimensions were then systematically aligned with a Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah evaluation grid, focusing on the five core objectives protection of religion (hifẓ al-dīn), life (hifẓ al-nafs), intellect (hifẓ al-'aql), lineage (hifẓ al-nasl), and property (hifẓ al-māl). This combined analytical model allowed for a dual assessment of STOPAN's administrative performance and its normative alignment with Islamic ethical principles.

To ensure validity, the study employed source triangulation by comparing information across multiple interviewees and documentary sources. This strategy strengthened the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the findings.

²⁰ Robert Rianto Widjaja Hendri Poltak, "Pendekatan Metode Studi Kasus Dalam Riset Kualitatif," *Journal of Local Architecture and Civil Engineering* 1, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.59810/localengineering>.

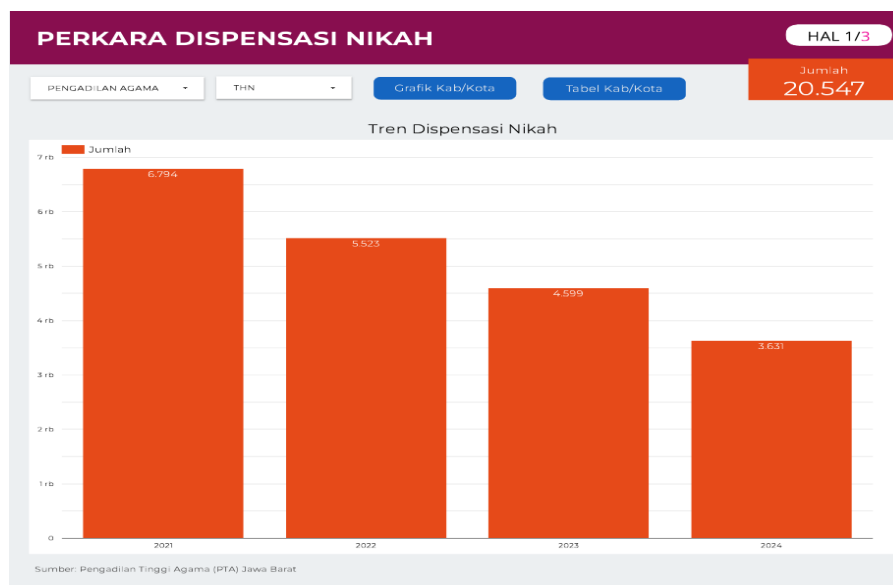
²¹ Per Nilsen et al., "Never the Twain Shall Meet ? - A Comparison of Implementation Science and Policy Implementation Research," *Implementation Science*, 2013, 1–12.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Overview of the STOPAN Program in West Java Province

The Stop Child Marriage (STOPAN) Program in West Java Province is one of the strategic initiatives taken by the regional government in response to the high number of child marriages in the West Java region²². Data shows that West Java ranks third nationally in the number of child marriage cases, this then encourages the government to intervene in policies that are not only administrative, but also cultural and multisectoral. In this context, the West Java Provincial Government through the Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, and Family Planning Service (DP3AKB) initiated the launch of the STOPAN program as a concrete step in preventing and reducing the practice of child marriage. Below is data that shows that marriage rates may decrease.

Figure 1. Marriage Dispensation Trends in West Java Province Source: Pengadilan Tinggi Agama (PTA) Jawa Barat



The graph above shows a downward trend in marriage dispensation cases in West Java from 2021 to 2024. In 2021, the highest number of cases was recorded at 6,794. This number decreased significantly in 2022 to 5,523 cases, then continued to decline in 2023 to 4,599 cases. This downward trend continued in 2024, reaching 3,631 cases. Overall, the graph above shows a consistent decline over the four-year period. This decline may indicate several factors, such as increased public awareness of the legal minimum age for marriage, the effectiveness of policies aimed at preventing child marriage, or changes in administrative and social mechanisms both in society and in

²² Jabar, "Pemda Provinsi Jabar Sukses Tekan Angka Perkawinan Anak."

religious courts. This is nothing more than the ongoing efforts of the Government and the DPA3K (Regional Leadership Development Agency) to implement the STOPAN program extensively among the younger generation through educational institutions.

Figure 2. STOPAN Jabar Socialization in Schools



Source: <https://www.instagram.com/p/C93uMI7y8mm/>

STOPAN Jabar was officially launched on July 28, 2021. This launch is an important momentum as an initial step in a joint commitment between the Regional Government and a number of strategic partner institutions in an effort to protect children from early marriage practices. The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was carried out between the DP3AKB of West Java Province and a number of state institutions, such as the West Java Provincial BKKBN Representative, the West Java Provincial Ministry of Religious Affairs Regional Office, and the Bandung High Religious Court. This agreement is a normative and political basis for the implementation of STOPAN as a collaborative policy between institutions that have a direct mandate in child protection, marriage supervision, family planning services, and religious education²³.

²³ Ratu Salma Salsabila, "Kampanye Public Relations Program Stopan Jabar Sebagai Upaya Menurunkan Perkawinan Anak Di Jabar," *REPUTATION: Jurnal Ilmu Hubungan Masyarakat* 9, no. 1 (2025): 295–314.

The STOPAN program is packaged with a collaborative approach based on multi-party cooperation known as the pentahelix concept. This approach involves five main elements: government, academics, business actors, media, and communities. The government as a policy-making actor and regulatory implementer has a central role in the preparation and implementation of the STOPAN program. Academics play a role in providing data, scientific studies, and formulating research-based policy recommendations. The business world contributes through funding support and strengthening the family economy. The media functions as a channel for education, social campaigns, and the dissemination of public information. Meanwhile, the community, especially traditional institutions and religious figures, function as guardians of values and agents of cultural change at the local level.

Based on the results of interviews with the management of DP3AKB West Java Province :

*"The STOPAN program in principle cannot be run by the government alone. We involve religious instructors, PKK cadres, and also community leaders, because they are the ones who are in direct contact with families at risk of child marriage. The challenge is how to convey the message in a language that can be accepted by the community without appearing to be preachy"*²⁴

This program is aimed at creating a paradigm shift in society regarding the importance of delaying the age of marriage, protecting children's rights, and building healthy and quality families. STOPAN does not stand as a single program, but is developed as a cross-sector movement that strengthens the role of families, educational units, religious institutions, and other social structures in supporting the child protection agenda.

2. Dynamics of STOPAN Implementation in Reducing Child Marriage

The implementation of the Stop Child Marriage (STOPAN) program in West Java Province reflects the complex dynamics of the public policy process which is not only influenced by formal structures and policy instruments, but is also closely related to the social, cultural, economic context, and the capacity of implementers in the field. In the policy implementation theory put forward by Van Meter and Van Horn, the success of policy implementation is influenced by several main variables : policy standards and objectives, resources, inter-organizational communication, characteristics of implementing agents, socio-economic and political conditions, and the disposition (attitude) of policy implementers²⁵.

²⁴ (Interview with Head of Child Protection Section, DP3AKB West Java, May 14, 2024)

²⁵ Zainal Muksin et al., "Implementation of Village Road Infrastructure Development Policy Using Van Meter and Van Horn Models," *Jurnal Inovasi Ilmu Sosial Dan Politik (JISoP)* 6, no. 1 (2024): 37–46, <https://doi.org/10.33474/jisop.v6i1.21561>.

The STOPAN program, as a regional policy launched in July 2021, has clear standards and objectives : reducing the number of child marriages through a cross-sectoral approach with a spirit of pentahelix collaboration. The memorandum of understanding involving DP3AKB, BKKBN, the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and the Bandung High Religious Court is a formal framework that guarantees legitimacy and coordination between agencies. However, in terms of implementation, this policy faces challenges in several important aspects as formulated in the Van Meter and Van Horn model.

First, in terms of communication and consistency of implementation, there are several methods used in the process between districts/cities. Some regions have a fairly responsive bureaucracy, available budget support, and regional regulations derived from STOPAN (either in the form of Regent Regulations or Regional Regulations), tend to be more ready to integrate the program into the regional development agenda. On the other hand, several regions with low institutional capacity still implement STOPAN sporadically, they still rely on project-based activities, not a structured policy system. *Second*, in terms of resources, both human, financial, and institutional, the implementation of STOPAN is highly determined by local readiness. In areas with good human resources, it can encourage acceleration of the implementation of this policy, for example support from village facilitators, religious counselors, and active PKK cadres, counseling and premarital education run effectively. However, in different regions whose human resources are not so supportive, the implementation of STOPAN is certainly difficult to reach vulnerable community groups optimally. This has an impact on weak supervision of the practice of unregistered marriage, which although not recorded in the religious court system, is often carried out by the community.

Based on the results of interviews with Religious Instructors :

*"Often what drives children to marry young is not because of religion, but because of economic pressure and parents' concerns about socializing. We as counselors try to explain that Islam also teaches welfare, not just legal age"*²⁶

Other things were also conveyed by the Regional Government :

*"We have integrated the STOPAN program into the Village Musrenbang and RPJMD. In addition, we issued a Regent Regulation on the Prevention of Child Marriage as a follow-up. But we still lack extension workers who can reach all sub-districts, especially in remote areas"*²⁷

Third, the disposition or attitude of the policy implementer is also a determining factor. The STOPAN program was relatively successful in areas where the

²⁶ (Interview with Islamic Religious Counselor, KUA Cicalengka District, May 25, 2024)

²⁷ (Interview with the Head of the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Service, Garut Regency, May 22, 2024)

implementers had a high commitment and understood the urgency of the issue of child marriage, and were willing to take a participatory and dialogical approach with community and religious leaders. On the other hand, the indecisiveness of the implementers in responding to local cultural practices that support child marriage is an obstacle in achieving the program's objectives.

Figure 3. STOPAN Jabar socialization by the Family Resilience Motivator (Motekar) team in Sumedang Regency



Source : <https://inisumedang.com/cegah-pernikahan-anak-tim-motekar-sumedang-lakukan-sosialisasi-stopan-jabar-di-smk-pgri/>

Fourth, local socio-cultural and economic conditions also play an important role. In the context of a bottom-up approach, resistance to STOPAN is still found in areas with strong traditions that view child marriage as a solution to poverty, maintaining family honor, or even as preserving customs. In this situation, program implementation requires a culturally sensitive strategy (cultural-sensitive policy) and involves traditional and religious leaders as agents of value change (value changer).

Interview results with residents, said :

*"I used to think that it was good to marry off girls early, so they wouldn't 'hang out'. But after there was counseling from the integrated health post and PKK, I began to understand, it turns out there are many negative impacts. Now I am more careful"*²⁸

Despite many challenges in its implementation, statistics show that STOPAN has contributed to reducing the number of child marriages. Based on data from the High

²⁸ (Interview with Ciburuy Village Residents, May 28, 2024)

Religious Court of West Java Province, applications for marriage dispensation decreased from 6,794 cases in 2021 to 3,631 cases in 2024. Likewise, the proportion of women aged 20–24 who married before the age of 18 has experienced a downward trend, although the phenomenon of unregistered marriages (siri marriages) is still a separate problem that requires an integrated strategy. From a policy implementation perspective, STOPAN in West Java represents a mixed approach between top-down and bottom-up. This policy originates from the provincial government structure as the initiator, but its success is highly dependent on the support and acceptance of local actors at the grassroots level. Therefore, the synergy between structural and cultural approaches, as well as strengthening implementing resources and community social networks, is key to optimizing the impact of the STOPAN policy on reducing the number of child marriages. This success is illustrated in the table below, which shows the positive impact of the STOPAN program.

Figure 4. Activities and Achievements



Source : <https://dp3akb.jabarprov.go.id/stopanjabar>

3. STOPAN Policy Analysis in the Perspective of Maqashid Syariah

Maqashid sharia is substantially an ethical and normative concept in Islamic law which aims to realize benefit and prevent damage (mafsadah) in human life. The five main principles in maqashid sharia namely protection of religion (hifz al-din), soul (hifz al-nafs), reason (hifz al-'aql), lineage (hifz al-nasl), and property (hifz al-mal) are important parameters in assessing the extent to which public policies are in line with the basic values of sharia. STOPAN is substantively a form of tadbir siyasah syar'iyah

or public policy taken by government authorities in order to realize public benefit and prevent harm, as confirmed in the rules of fiqhiyah :

"Tasharruf al-imām 'ala al-ra'iyyah manūṭun bi al-mashlahah"
(The leader's policy towards the people must be based on considerations of public interest)²⁹.

In this context, the STOPAN policy implemented by the West Java Provincial Government shows a strong correlation with these principles, although its implementation still faces various structural and cultural challenges.

First, from the aspect of hifz al-din (protection of religion), STOPAN contributes to encouraging an inclusive and welfare-oriented understanding of religion. Education carried out through KUA counselors and religious figures not only emphasizes the legal-formal aspects of marriage, but also prioritizes the value of the sanctity of marriage which must be based on mental, spiritual, and economic readiness. This approach strengthens the values of Islam as a religion that protects, not burdens its followers, especially the younger generation. Most people in West Java still understand child marriage as part of religious guidance, even though Islam teaches a marriage that is beneficial. The Prophet Muhammad SAW said :

"O young men, whoever among you is physically and financially able, let him get married. If he is not able, let him fast..." (HR. Bukhari and Muslim)³⁰

The hadith above shows that readiness is the main requirement, not just age. In line with the statement from the religious instructor that "Islam also teaches welfare, not just legal age" (Interview, May 25, 2024). This shows an effort to reinterpret religious values contextually in the implementation of STOPAN.

Second, hifz al-nafs (protection of the soul) is the main focus of STOPAN, because this program directly aims to prevent the negative impacts both physically and psychologically from the practice of child marriage. Early marriage has been medically proven to increase the risk of maternal and infant mortality, stunting, and domestic violence³¹. STOPAN aims to prevent the practice of child marriage that is vulnerable to the risk of young maternal mortality, high-risk pregnancies, and domestic violence. This is in line with the word of Allah SWT :

²⁹ Achmad Musyahid Idrus, "Kebijakan Pemimpin Negara Dalam Perspektif Kaidah Fikih: Tasarruf Al-Imam Manutun Bil Maslahah," *Al Daulah : Jurnal Hukum Pidana Dan Ketatanegaraan* 1, no. 1 (2021): 123, <https://doi.org/10.24252/ad.v1i1.26278>.

³⁰ Azkia Nurfajrina, "Hadist Tentang Anjuran Menikah Dan Hukumnya Bagi Muslim," Detik.com, 2022, <https://www.detik.com/hikmah/doa-dan-hadits/d-6340759/hadist-tentang-anjuran-menikah-dan-hukumnya-bagi-muslim>.

³¹ Yvette Efevbera et al., "Girl Child Marriage as a Risk Factor for Early Childhood Development and Stunting," *Social Science and Medicine* 185 (2017): 91–101, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.05.027>.

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا

"And do not kill yourselves; indeed Allah is Most Merciful to you." (QS. An-Nisa : 29)

Child marriage at an immature biological and psychological age has the potential to take the lives and reproductive health of girls. Therefore, policies to prevent it are part of protecting the soul. STOPAN emphasizes the importance of reproductive health and emotional readiness, thus directly supporting the protection of children's souls, especially girls. The decrease in the number of marriage dispensations from 6,794 cases in 2021 to 3,631 cases in 2024 shows a positive shift in public awareness of these risks.

Third, *hifz al-'aql* (protection of reason) is realized through STOPAN's efforts to maintain the continuity of children's education. Early marriage is one of the main causes of the high school dropout rate, especially among young women³². Through the involvement of schools, youth forums, and family education programs, STOPAN encourages children to remain in education. An interview with a high school student confirmed this, "I was able to discuss with the teacher and parents, finally it was canceled (the marriage) and I was able to continue school" (Interview, May 29, 2024). This shows that STOPAN provides space for the protection of reason and the intellectual future of the younger generation. In Islam, maintaining reason is the main goal of sharia, as is the prohibition against anything that damages reason, including neglect of education. This is reinforced by the rule:

"Al-wasā'il lahāḥukm al-maqāṣid" (The means of obtaining the law as its final goal)³³

Therefore, the policy of preventing children from marrying before they are old enough so that their minds can develop through education is included in maintaining *hifz al-'aql*.

Fourth, *hifz al-nasl* (protection of offspring) is the pillar most closely related to the substance of STOPAN. This program is basically a systemic effort to ensure that the new generation is born in a healthy physical, psychological, and social condition. Delaying the age of marriage is an important strategy in ensuring the quality of offspring, both in terms of maternal and child health, parenting patterns, and family

³² Devika Mehra et al., "Effectiveness of a Community Based Intervention to Delay Early Marriage, Early Pregnancy and Improve School Retention among Adolescents in India," *BMC Public Health* 18, no. 1 (2018): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-018-5586-3>.

³³ Syufa'at Syufa'at, "Implementasi Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah Dalam Hukum Ekonomi Islam," *Al-Ahkam* 23, no. 2 (2013): 143, <https://doi.org/10.21580/ahkam.2013.23.2.20>.

readiness³⁴. The decrease in the index of women aged 20–24 who married before the age of 18 from 10.09% (2021) to 5.78% (2024) reflects STOPAN's concrete contribution to maintaining the quality of offspring as a population. Child marriage has the potential to produce offspring who are weak both physically, socially, and psychologically. In the Islamic perspective, the quality and sustainability of offspring must be maintained. The word of Allah in QS. Al-Furqan: 74 emphasizes the importance of good families and offspring:

"وَجَعَلْنَا لِمَتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا"

“...and make us leaders of the pious.”

STOP in this case contributes to preventing the birth of a generation born from unhealthy, immature, and economically and socially unprepared relationships.

Fifth, hifz al-mal (protection of property) is also an important aspect, although not always immediately visible. STOPAN helps prevent the reproduction of structural poverty that often begins with the practice of child marriage. By maintaining access to education and delaying the age of marriage, children have a greater opportunity to access decent work, manage resources rationally, and be free from premature household economic burdens. This program thus helps build a more sustainable family economic foundation. This is in line with the principle:

*"Dar' al-mafāsid muqaddam 'alā jalb al-maṣāliḥ" (Preventing harm is preferred over achieving benefit)*³⁵

Supporting STOPAN preventive action against the cycle of poverty. Protection of family assets and economic sustainability are also part of the objectives of sharia.

Based on the presentation above, the author argues that STOPAN is a policy that is in line with the principles of maqashid sharia. Although not yet fully optimal, its implementation has made a real contribution to the protection of the main values of Islamic law, both spiritually, socially, and structurally. Therefore, STOPAN can be seen as a policy of maslahah mursalah that is, benefits that are not explicitly mentioned in the text, but are very much in accordance with the essence of Islamic teachings to protect humanity as a whole. The biggest challenge of the STOPAN program is the rampant practice of unregistered marriages that are not administratively recorded, this still often escapes the supervision of the state and religious institutions. This shows that although statistically STOPAN shows positive achievements, strengthening is still

³⁴ Akanksha A. Marphatia, Gabriel S. Ambale, and Alice M. Reid, “Women’s Marriage Age Matters for Public Health: A Review of the Broader Health and Social Implications in South Asia,” *Frontiers in Public Health* 5, no. October (2017): 1–23, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2017.00269>.

³⁵ Indra Ezha, Noor Rizhal, and Al Nafis, “Menimbang Skala Prioritas Dalam Kaidah Fikih: Antara Darurat Dan Kebutuhan,” *Hidayah : Cendekia Pendidikan Islam Dan Hukum Syariah* 2, no. 2 (2025). 254

needed from the cultural, legal, and economic approaches to reach practices that are hidden beyond the reach of the system.

Therefore, STOPAN in principle has contained and practiced the values of maqashid sharia in its implementation, but still requires a more intensive grassroots community involvement strategy and strengthening synergy between actors in executing this program. The welfare as the main objective of maqashid must continue to be the orientation in every stage of the implementation of the policy of preventing child marriage, both structurally and culturally.

D. Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that STOPAN is a progressive, context-based collaborative program that effectively addresses the problem of child marriage in West Java. Its effectiveness is reflected in the decline in the number of marriage dispensation cases and the reduction in the proportion of women aged 20–24 who married before the age of 18 between 2021 and 2024. This downward trend indicates increased public awareness, strengthening institutional systems, and shifting social norms related to child protection. From the perspective of Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah, STOPAN aligns with the five higher objectives of Islamic law ḥifẓ al-dīn, al-nafs, al-‘aql, al-nasl, and al-māl because it is not only based on legal boundaries but also aims to transform social values through educational, religious, and cultural approaches. This study's theoretical contribution lies in integrating regional public policy analysis with the normative framework of the maqāṣid (Islamic principles), while also demonstrating how the pentahelix model can function in child protection policies rooted in substantive Islamic ethics.

Theoretically, this study enriches policy implementation studies by demonstrating that Islamic legal theory specifically the Maqāṣid al-Sharī‘ah (Islamic principles) can serve as an evaluative lens compatible with conventional implementation models. The integration of Van Meter and Van Horn's framework with maqāṣid indicators offers a new conceptual space for bridging religious normative principles and empirical policy evaluation. The findings also extend the literature on collaborative governance by illustrating how multi-actor cooperation can be effective in culturally diverse Muslim societies.

From a practical perspective, this study underscores that reducing child marriage requires multisectoral collaboration, community empowerment, and values-based messaging rooted in cultural and religious norms. Child protection practitioners can use the STOPAN model to strengthen engagement with religious leaders, educators, government agencies, and civil society organizations to encourage behavioral change. These findings also highlight that prevention efforts must go beyond administrative measures and prioritize value transformation at the household and community levels.

In terms of policy implications, this study demonstrates the need for stronger coordination between actors at the provincial and district levels to ensure a more equitable implementation of STOPAN. Data collection systems need to be improved, particularly regarding unregistered marriages, which remain unrecorded in formal records and hinder evidence-based policymaking. Capacity building for village officials, health workers, religious counselors, and social facilitators is also crucial to enable earlier and more systematic prevention measures. Furthermore, maqāṣid-based indicators can be integrated into the evaluation of child protection policies to ensure alignment with the values and needs of Muslim communities.

For future research, expanding the study to other provinces with similarly high rates of child marriage but different sociocultural contexts would provide a richer comparative understanding of STOPAN's effectiveness.

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