

Educating child marriage applicants: Designing an Islamic pre-marriage education framework

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ABSTRACT

Child marriage remains a persistent issue in Malaysia, raising concerns about the potential harm it poses to young brides and grooms. Statistics show a downward trend in child marriage in Malaysia every year. However, child marriage still occurs because the existing laws are not capable of preventing child marriage in absolute terms. Child marriage below the minimum age can be conducted with the approval of the relevant authorities. Since child marriage cannot be completely banned, actions must be taken to minimize the potential harms (mafsadah) that may affect children involved in this marriage. This study addresses the need for a specialized Islamic Pre-Marriage Education Module for children to mitigate these harms. The main objective is to develop a framework for this module, focusing on children's understanding of their rights within marriage and the measures they should take if the marriage brings harm to them. The methodology involves a qualitative case study design, utilizing document and content analysis of previous studies and existing pre-marriage modules. Findings highlight that child marriage negatively impacts various aspects of children's preservation of the aspect of al-kulliyat al-khoms. The improved module aims to educate children on their marital rights, mental and physical health, and financial management so that the potential harm can be rejected from them. This article emphasizes the necessity of this module to protect married children to ensure their well-being.

Keyword (s): Child Marriage, Pre-Marital Course, Maslahah, Mafsadah, al-kulliyat al-khoms.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sexual desire for the opposite gender is an instinct created by Allah SWT. This instinct ensures the continuation of human lineage on earth, as stated in Surah An-Nisa, which mentions that Allah created humans from Adam and Hawa and then made their descendants (An-Nisa: 1). Research shows that most children and adolescents have sexual desires as early as their teenage years due to age development and hormonal changes (Che Anuar, 2018). Therefore, this instinct should be well-controlled to prevent various types of harm. Without proper guidance for children and adolescents going through this phase, there is a risk of social problems in society, such as promiscuity and out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

Based on research conducted by scholars, there are various factors contributing to the occurrence of child marriages around the world, including economic problems and financial hardship (Nor Jana Saim, 2018), local cultural practices (Eucharía et al, 2018), and the involvement in social problems such as out-of-wedlock pregnancies (Uswatun Hasanah, 2018). Besides that, most people believe that child marriage is also a way to prevent premarital sex among children. Based on a study conducted in Indonesia, one of the factors leading to child marriage is the children's desire to marry. Most of these children have become pregnant out of wedlock because of sexual relations with their partners. The study also indicates that one of the reasons for this occurrence is the lack of formal education and parents' attention (Rasyid & Siregar, 2022).

Nurul Ain (2022) in her study discovered that most applicants for child marriage in Kelantan, Malaysia were those who had engaged in premarital sexual relations, with some of them already pregnant. Besides that, another study that has been conducted found that one of the reasons for child marriage is the respondents believe premarital sex is sinful. Marriage is seen as a solution to out-of-wedlock pregnancies (Kohno et al, 2019). Based on the explanation above, we can see that child marriage does not occur in specific countries only, but it happens in many places around the world. In Malaysia, according to the statistics released by the Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development (KPWKM) a total number of 1542 Muslim children were married in 2018 out of the overall number of 1856 children who got married in Malaysia, with the rest number being non-Muslim children (UNICEF Malaysia, 2022). The latest data regarding Muslim child marriages show that 912 Muslim children were married between 2022 and 2023 (JKSM, 2024). It is also reported by UNICEF Malaysia that among all the children reported to have married in 2018, 63 percent of them were adolescents who were already pregnant. This data indirectly shows the correlation between pregnancy and early marriage among children.

The Laws in Malaysia generally have provisions regarding child marriage. Although such regulations exist, they still do not completely ban the practice of child marriage. In Malaysia, the laws related to marriage and divorce differ for Muslims and non-Muslims. Muslims are subject to the Islamic Family Law in each state, while non-Muslims are governed by the Law Reform (Marriage and Divorce) Act 1976 [Act 164]. The law in Malaysia stipulates that the minimum age for Muslim girls to get married is 16 years, while for Muslim boys is 18 years. The minimum age for non-Muslim children to get married is 18 years for both genders. However, this does not mean that marriages below the minimum age are prohibited, they can still take place with the

proper authorization from the relevant authorities. Section 8 of the Islamic Family Law Act (Federal Territories) 2001, requires that those below the minimum marriage age should obtain permission from the Syariah Court Judges before proceeding with the marriage. This indicates that every application for underage marriage submitted to the Syariah Court will be reviewed according to the applicant's situation, and the decision will be made at the discretion and wisdom of the Syariah Judge.

Based on a report provided by UNICEF (2022), most early marriages among children result in negative impacts for the children involved, including the potential to become victims of domestic violence, in addition to being at risk of complications during pregnancy and childbirth. Generally, child marriage is something that should be completely prohibited. In Malaysia, several actions have been taken by various parties in dealing with child marriage, including proposing to raise the minimum marriage age for Muslim girls from 16 to 18. However, child marriage cannot be completely prohibited in Islam because, from a Sharia perspective, things that are generally permissible cannot be classified as haram (forbidden) unless there is clear evidence stating that they are haram. Despite many studies highlighting the negative impacts of early marriage, statistics released by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) show that 2,288 cases were recorded in 2016, 2,107 cases in 2017, 1,856 cases in 2018, 1,459 cases in 2019, and 1,124 cases in 2020. Although this data indicates a downward trend in early marriages among children, it cannot be denied that child marriage still occurs within society.

Many people, parties, and agencies are opposing child marriage as it is seen to be harmful to the children involved. Although there is a trend of decreasing statistics for underage marriage applications in Malaysia, it is undeniable that this kind of marriage cannot be completely prohibited since it is permitted in Islam. Things that are

permissible in Islam cannot be considered haram unless there is clear evidence stating otherwise. From a legal standpoint, a minimum marriage age does not mean that child marriage is entirely prohibited instead, it depends on the approval from the appropriate authorities. Since child marriage cannot be fully stopped and the negative effects on children are undeniable, it is necessary to take steps to minimize these harmful impacts as much as possible. It is important to note that various actions have been taken by the authorities to address this issue, including the creation of standard operating procedures (SOP) by the Malaysian Syariah Judiciary Department (JKSM) that courts must follow when handling underage marriage applications since the permission is subject to the discretion of the Syariah court judge.

In Malaysia, one of the requirements for the prospective Muslim bride and groom before getting married is to attend a pre-marriage course. They are required to attend an Islamic pre-marriage course organized by their respective state religious departments. The certificate obtained will be used as an important document when filling out the marriage application form. This regulation applies to all Muslims who wish to marry, including minors.

However, considering concerns regarding potential harm that may arise in marriages involving children, the question arises whether the existing Islamic pre-marital course content aligns with the realities of child marriage in Malaysia. Does the existing pre-marital course will provide the children with a clear understanding of their rights within marriage and the actions they should take if their marriage poses a threat to their well-being? Therefore, the researcher feels there is a need to develop an Islamic pre-marital education module specifically for children. However, when developing a module that is appropriate to the realities of child marriage in Malaysia, the question arises, what content should be included in the module?

In addressing the negative effects of child marriage, this proposed module aims to minimize the harms of child marriage and to provide children with an understanding of the realities of marriage and their rights within marriage according to Sharia and law. It also aims to educate them on mental and physical health issues and the actions they can take if the marriage proves harmful, considering that children in marriages are at potential risk of domestic violence. Additionally, the module will include training on household and financial management. This Islamic pre-marriage education module is crucial for children to ensure that married children are aware of their rights in marriage and to ensure they know the steps to take if the marriage becomes detrimental, particularly concerning the aspects of the preservation of the five essentials (kulliyat al-khams).

This study aims to propose an Islamic Pre-Marriage Education Framework specifically designed for children, equipping them with essential knowledge of their rights and protections under Islamic law and contemporary legal frameworks. The primary objectives of this study are to analyze existing Islamic pre-marriage education modules and assess their suitability for child marriage applicants, develop a comprehensive framework that addresses the needs and vulnerabilities of underage spouses, and evaluate the alignment of such a framework with Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah. This study employs a qualitative case study approach, using document and content analysis of existing pre-marriage education modules and scholarly research. This paper will discuss the literature review, followed by an outline of the research methodology, and will discuss the findings and propose an improved framework. In conclusion, this paper will offer recommendations for effective policy implementation

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Child marriage is a practice that occurs globally, especially in marriages involving

underage girls with adult men. This practice was even commonplace among the Malay community before the 1930s (Zanariah Noor, 2013). However, in those days, due to the unfavorable economic conditions and limited educational opportunities, child marriage was not considered a significant issue. Most young girls at that time were prepared with household skills at a young age. Nevertheless, the acceptance of child marriage today is different from the views of society in the past. With educational opportunities now available to all children and the requirement for primary school education, child marriage has become irrelevant.

Although the practice of child marriage in Malaysia has largely been abandoned by society, a study by Noor Aziah and Al-Adib Samuri (2018) reported that the number of girls who married in 2010, aged between 15 and 19, increased by 1.4 percent compared to 2000, which was 1.2 percent. This indirectly indicates that child marriage still occurs today. Furthermore, it was reported that there were 15,000 cases of child marriage across various states in Malaysia between 2007 and 2017 (UNICEF, 2022). Although recent statistics on child marriage show a declining trend, it cannot be denied that child marriage still happens in the community.

Based on the literature review conducted, most contemporary researchers who studying the practice of child marriage conclude that this practice harms children and is no longer suitable for today's society. Eucharia et al. (2018) in their study explain that child marriage deprives married children of their right to receive a complete education and puts them at risk of becoming victims of domestic violence. Sultana and Abdussalam (2017) in their research found that child marriage has negative effects on the health and well-being of married young girls. Their study also revealed that most married young girls tend to experience depression and are at risk of domestic violence due to the significant age gap between spouses. This age gap often leads to young girls being easily

influenced by their partners.

Although most previous studies discuss the negative impacts of child marriage, there are a few studies that conclude that child marriage can also bring benefits and positive effects for the children involved, such as preserving family honor and preventing out-of-wedlock pregnancies (Kohno et al, 2020). Child marriage is also seen to help in preventing the birth of children outside of a lawful marriage (Stein J.S, 2013). Furthermore, a study conducted on adolescents in Kuching, Sarawak, found that early marriage can also be beneficial. The study results show that most adolescents in Sarawak believe that early marriage brings many benefits, including preventing immoral acts, fostering independence, nurturing patience, building a sense of responsibility, and maintaining a positive attitude (Nor Jana Saim, 2018). From another perspective, this indicates that some positive aspects and benefits can be achieved from the practice of child marriage.

The reality is that child marriage is a global phenomenon that affects the children involved, and Malaysia is no exception (UNICEF, 2022). Based on research conducted by scholars, various factors contribute to child marriage, including economic problems and financial hardship (Nor Jana Saim, 2018), local cultural practices (Eucharia et al, 2018), underdevelopment in terms of infrastructure and education (Nor Syamila, 2020), involvement in social issues such as out-of-wedlock pregnancies, and to avoid premarital sex among teenagers (Uswatun Hasanah, 2018). Additionally, most studies have found that out-of-wedlock pregnancies and premarital sexual relationships are among the primary factors leading to child marriages (Kohno et al, 2019). Under the theme of religion, some studies indicate that one of the reasons child marriages are accepted by society is the recognition that premarital sex is sinful in Islam, and marriage is seen as a solution to unwanted pregnancies. Furthermore, when a teenager is pregnant with an illegitimate child,

many parents of the involved teenager act by marrying their child to the partner to avoid the sin of abortion (Kohno et al, 2020). This clearly shows that the decision for early child marriage is driven by considerations of rights and wrongs in Islam.

Based on the literature review mentioned above, one of the main factors leading to child marriages is social issues that result in fornication and out-of-wedlock pregnancies among teenagers. Previous studies have undeniably shown that child marriage has negative effects and impacts on the children involved. Among the negative consequences of child marriage are the neglect of educational rights (Eucharía et al, 2018), the potential to become victims of domestic violence (Sultana, 2017), and neglect in terms of both mental and physical health (Eucharía et al, 2018). Additionally, those involved in early child marriages are found to be prone to depression due to being burdened with the responsibilities of being a wife and mother at a young age (Nawal Nour, 2006). These children are also at risk of health problems due to experiencing pregnancy and childbirth at an early age.

From the Sharia perspective, several studies on child marriage have been discussed. Fathoni (2018) discusses underage marriage from the perspective of various schools of thought and finds that one of the reasons child marriages occur in society is because the society itself believes that children who have reached puberty should be married off to avoid harm. Madihah and Fatimah (2011), in their research, discuss the rights of the wali mujbir in marrying off their daughters. Their study finds that although the wali mujbir has the right to marry off their daughters or granddaughters, in Malaysia, the consent of underage girls to marry is subject to the decision of the Shariah Court. Zanariah (2013), in her study, finds that the establishment of a minimum marriage age and the empowerment of the Shariah Court to approve underage marriage applications are appropriate based on the context of Malaysia.

In Malaysia, attending a pre-marriage course before getting married is a requirement for all Muslims. Given the various issues and problems currently affecting family institutions in Malaysia, several studies have suggested that the existing Islamic Pre-Marriage Course Module be updated to align with current issues and challenges. In Penang, there is a suggestion to update the content of the Islamic Pre-marriage Course Module in that state to reflect current conditions and needs, given the various issues and problems affecting the family institution recently, including domestic violence (Berita Harian, April 2023). Various issues such as domestic violence led to divorces in society. Some studies have been conducted on the importance of organizing pre-marriage courses specifically for the hearing impaired as preparation for this group before they get married (Zuliza and Syaidatul, 2020). This indicates that the existing pre-marriage course module is not suitable for all groups, whether in terms of content or implementation. Therefore, just as the differently abled community requires a specialized pre-marriage course, researchers also feel that there is a need for a specialized Islamic Pre-marriage Module for children who wish to get married.

Based on the above discussion, child marriage is a familiar phenomenon in Malaysia, despite the potential harm that can be caused to the children involved. Various efforts have been made by various parties to ensure that child marriage can be addressed, including proposals to raise the minimum marriage age for girls from 16 to 18 years. However, despite all those efforts, child marriages still occur within society. Given the current situation, if child marriage cannot be completely banned, then actions must be taken to ensure that children involved in marriage at a young age do not suffer harm from this kind of marriage. Furthermore, there have been no studies discussing ways to minimize the potential harm (mafsadah) that might occur in child marriages. Therefore, this study aims to develop a framework

for an Islamic Pre-marriage Education module based on Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah specifically for underage marriage applicants to ensure that the marriages conducted bring benefits (maslahah) and minimize as much as possible the potential harms (mafsadah) to the children involved.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study aims to develop a framework for an Islamic Pre-marriage Module specifically for children. It employs a qualitative approach that emphasizes a deep understanding of child marriage issues within the Islamic context and their implications for children's well-being, particularly regarding the aspects of al-kulliyat al khoms (the protection of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property). The study adopts a qualitative case study design, which allows researchers to examine the phenomenon of child marriage in a specific and in-depth context, providing room for comprehensive analysis of the data obtained. Data is collected from two main sources: document analysis and content analysis. The analyzed documents include previous studies related to child marriage and existing Islamic pre-marriage modules.

The study collects data from two primary sources: document analysis and content analysis. Document analysis involves reviewing previous studies, and existing Islamic pre-marriage modules while content analysis focuses on identifying recurring themes and assessing how existing modules align with Islamic principles and child protection measures. The selection of documents follows predefined inclusion criteria to ensure the reliability and relevance of the data analyzed. The documents chosen for this study must be directly related to child marriage education within the Islamic context to ensure their relevance to the research objectives. Only materials from credible sources, such as academic publications, government reports, and recognized religious institutions, are considered to uphold the integrity of the study. Additionally, documents outlining

legal provisions and policies related to child marriage in Malaysia and other Islamic contexts are included to provide a comprehensive view of the regulatory framework.

The selected documents are then deeply analyzed using content analysis techniques. This process involves the codification of data to identify the main themes related to the effects of child marriage and the aspects of al-kulliyat al khoms. The data obtained from document analysis are analyzed thematically. A thematic analysis approach is employed to extract key findings from the selected documents. This involves several steps: familiarizing with the data by reviewing documents, codifying data to identify relevant concepts and organizing them into codes, developing themes by categorizing codes into major themes and sub-themes, and interpreting the findings concerning al-kulliyat al-khoms and the protection of children's well-being. This structured analysis ensures that findings are systematically derived and can contribute meaningfully to the development of an improved pre-marriage education framework.

To enhance the validity and reliability of this study, triangulation is employed by cross-referencing multiple data sources. Ethical considerations are also taken into account, ensuring that all analyzed documents are credible and align with Islamic jurisprudence. Through this qualitative approach and comprehensive document analysis, the study identifies the effects of child marriage and its relationship with al-kulliyat al-khoms. The findings will contribute to the development of a comprehensive and relevant framework for an Islamic Pre-Marriage Education Module for children, ensuring their well-being within marriage. This study not only adds to the field of Shariah and family studies but also provides practical guidelines for the development of effective pre-marriage education for underage applicants.

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the above discussion, it is undeniable that child marriage brings harm to the children involved. Islam concerns the welfare of Muslims. The Shariah itself generally aims to produce benefits (maṣlaḥah) and to eliminate all forms of harm (mafsadah) from Muslims. The scholars (Fuqaha) agree that there are five primary aspects that Shariah seeks to protect, which are the aspect of religion (hifz al-din), the aspect of life (hifz al-naḥs), the aspect of mind and intellect (hifz al-aqal), the aspect of lineage (hifz al-nasl), and the aspect property (hifz al-mal) (al-Syatibiy, 1977). These five aspects are known as al-kulliyat al-khoms (al-Ghazaliy, 1413H). Islam also eliminates all forms of harms that can affect the five aspects of al-kulliyat al-khoms. Based on the analysis of the documents conducted, shows that child marriage brings various harms to children, especially in the aspect of Al-Kulliyat al-Khoms. This section will discuss these findings in detail and propose measures that can be taken to minimize the harm in child marriages through the development of a framework for Islamic Pre-Marriage Course for children.

4.1 Analysis of Mafsadah to the Aspect of Al-Kulliyat al-Khoms in Child Marriage

Most child marriages occur to prevent premarital sexual relations and out-of-wedlock pregnancies. Indirectly, these marriages can help preserve the aspect of religious protection. It is because adultery (zina) and all acts that can lead to zina are prohibited in Islam. The preservation of religion is by following all the teachings and prohibitions in Islam. However, based on previous studies, child marriages have negatively impacted the other aspects of al-kulliyat al-khoms, which are the aspects of life, intellect, lineage, and property. Since the protection of religion is one of the most critical aspects above others, in situations where children would otherwise fall into zina if not married, marriage becomes obligatory (wajib) for them. However, to preserve the aspect of religion,

other aspects will be impacted.

Child marriage poses serious health risks to children, especially girls. Pregnancy at a young age can lead to various health complications such as anemia, pre-eclampsia, and premature birth (Nawal Nour, 2006). Additionally, young girls are at a higher risk of experiencing domestic violence (Sultana, 2017). Lack of emotional and physical maturity often makes them unable to handle the pressure and responsibilities of marriage and pregnancy. This situation not only endangers the life of the young mother but also the unborn child. Children born to young mothers are more likely to face health problems such as low birth weight and slow and delayed development. All the situations mentioned above are the negative impacts of child marriage on the aspect of life (hifz al-naḥs).

In terms of the preservation of the aspect of intellect (hifz al-aql), child marriage causes children to drop out of school and discontinue their education (Wodon et al, 2015). This hinders their intellectual development and skills, which subsequently harms their future. Without adequate education, these children will face difficulties in securing good employment and are likely to remain trapped in the cycle of poverty. Education is the foundation for the development of intellect and critical thinking which become essential for making sound decisions in life.

Some child marriages in Malaysia occur due to premarital pregnancies. These marriages are intended to preserve the family's honor which indirectly can help illegitimate children avoid negative perceptions associated with being born out of wedlock. Children born in such circumstances often face social stigma and discrimination, which can adversely affect their psychological and emotional development. Marriage can conceal the child's status. However, this marriage can impact the aspect of lineage preservation from Islamic law. According to Shariah, an illegitimate child cannot be considered as their own by the biological

father. This affects inheritance issues, and the father cannot act as the guardian for his daughter. Therefore, marriage due to pregnancy can adversely affect the aspect of lineage preservation in the long term.

Furthermore, in terms of preservation of property (hifz al-mal), child marriage however impacted the children involved in marriage. Children who marry at a young age tend to become trapped in a cycle of poverty due to the lack of education and skills needed to secure good jobs. The absence of formal education often limits their employment opportunities, and they may only be able to perform low-paying jobs. Additionally, the financial responsibilities that come with marriage and starting a family can be a heavy burden for young couples who lack adequate financial management skills. Their immaturity in decision-making also puts them at risk of making financial mistakes, such as falling into burdensome debts. Based on the explanation above, we can see that child marriage negatively impacts the children involved. In situations where child marriage cannot be avoided and banned within society, some actions must be taken so that the negative impacts on other aspects of al-kulliyat al-khoms can be minimized.

4.2 The Preservation of the Aspect of Al-Kulliyat al-Khoms in Child Marriage Through Education.

In Malaysia, Muslims must attend an Islamic Pre-marriage Islamic Course as a prerequisite for marriage. This general course aims to educate the community about the challenges in marriage and to prepare them for the challenges. The existing module consists of 10 main modules that discuss the fundamental religious topics, marriage and its related procedures in Malaysia, responsibilities and communication between spouses, financial management, health management, stress and conflict management, dissolution of marriage, and the wedding ceremony (walimatul urus). These ten modules generally address marriage-related issues

from the formation of a marriage to its dissolution. However, the current module is quite general. Therefore, to expose children who wish to marry to the risks of child marriage and to minimize the potential harms they may face, a specific Islamic Pre-marriage Course Module for children should be developed. Based on the existing Islamic Pre-Marriage Course that consists of 10 modules, only 4 of them emphasize the protections of al-kulliyat al-khoms. The 10 modules are as below:

Table 1 Islamic Pre-marriage Course Modules

No	Modules	Aspects of al-Kulliyat al-Khoms
1	Islamic Teachings	Hifz al-Din
2	Marriage in Islam	Hifz al-Din
3	The Procedure of Marriage in Malaysia	-
4	Responsibilities between Spouses in Marriage	Hifz al-Nafs
5	Communication between Spouses	Hifz al-Nafs
6	Financial Management	Hifz al-Mal
7	Health Management	Hifz al-Nafs
8	Stress and Conflict Management	Hifz al-Nafs
9	Dissolutions of Marriage	
10	Walimatul Urus	

Based on the previous discussion, among the mafsadah caused by child marriage to the children involved is the mafsadah to aspects of life (pregnancies, childbirth, and the potential of becoming the victim of domestic violence). It also affects the protection of the intellect (affects the right to formal education), the aspect of lineage (the status of the illegitimate child in Islam), and the protection of property (financial management). From the existing Islamic Pre-Marriage Module, it seems that the module only emphasizes 2 out of 4 aspects of al-kulliyat al-khoms that have been affected by this marriage. So, to minimize the negative impacts of child marriage on the children involved, it is suggested to build an Islamic Pre-Marriage Education Module specific for children.

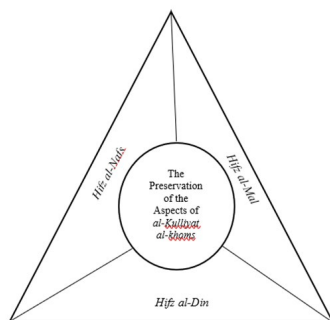


Figure 1: The Preservations of The Aspects of *al-Kulliyat al-Khoms* in Existing Module

The figure above shows the aspects emphasized in the existing module. However, this existing module does not emphasize the aspect of the preservation of intellect and lineage. So, here is the improved Islamic Pre-Marriage Education Module for children

In Figure 2, two aspects have been added to the improved frameworks of the Islamic Pre-Marriage Education Module for children. The aspects are *hifz al-aqal* (intellect) and *hifz al-nasl* (lineage). Based on the analysis of mafsadah to the aspects of *al-kulliyat al-khoms* in child marriage as discussed above, the proposed module will emphasize these aspects to minimize the harm.

In the context of the preservation of life (*hifz al-nafs*), it is important to provide educational modules that emphasize the importance of family planning and proper sex education. Medical professionals need to play an important role in delivering this information to ensure that children understand the risks of pregnancy and childbirth at a young age, as well as how to plan pregnancies and manage family planning. This can indirectly help to protect themselves from dangerous health complications. Besides that, comprehensive and appropriate sex education can help children understand their bodies, their reproductive systems, and how to maintain their reproductive health. With proper education, they can make wiser decisions regarding their health to avoid unnecessary risks.

In the aspect of the preservations of intellect (*hifz al-aqal*), since child marriage affects their right to get a formal education, children should be

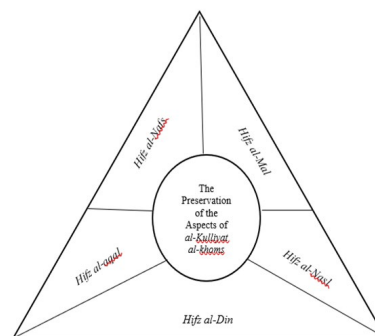


Figure 2: The Improved Framework of Islamic Pre-Marriage Education Module for Children

educated about the importance of education in life. They should be exposed to the importance of having educational certificates for them to have a better future. In this module, speakers should emphasize future planning and the significance of obtaining educational certificates such as the Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM) or the Malaysian Skills Certificate (SKM). Both certificates are crucial for helping children secure better employment opportunities, enabling them to break out of the cycle of poverty. The implementation of these aspects in the proposed module will help children understand how important education is in achieving a better and more stable life. In addition, children need to be exposed to the wide range of educational and training opportunities available to them, including technical skills that can help them build successful careers.

Since some of the child marriages that occur are due to pregnancies outside of marriage, it is important to discuss the status of the child conceived from the perspective of *shara'*. In the context of the protection of lineage (*hifz al-nasl*), this suggested module will educate the involved children about the status of illegitimate children in Islam and its implications, ensuring that young couples understand their child's position and the steps they can take to protect their future lineage. Although a couple who has conceived an illegitimate child marries, the marriage does not change the child's status in Islam. Education on the Sharia perspective regarding this issue and the rights of children in Islam must be emphasized to ensure that these young couples can make the right

and responsible decisions. Children and teenagers need to understand that marriage is not a solution to the issue of premarital pregnancy and that there are better ways to handle the situation, such as seeking family and community support, as well as professional help.

One of the concerning issues when children are involved in marriage is their ability and maturity to manage finances within a marriage. In this module, explaining ways to manage household finances and smart financial planning is essential. This includes budgeting, savings, and appropriate investments to ensure young families can lead financially stable lives. Exposure to proper financial management will help them plan their future better and to avoid poverty. Besides that, young couples need to be educated about job opportunities that can help them improve their living standards. They should be taught to leverage technology and social media to generate financial benefits. Furthermore, one of the most important aspects is to plan the size of their families according to their economic capacity.

From the explanation above, here is the new outline for the improved Islamic Pre-Marriage Education Module for children:

Table 2. Improved Islamic Pre-marriage Course Modules

No	Modules	Aspects of Al-Kulliyat al-Khoms
1	Islamic Teachings	Hifz al-Din
2	Marriage in Islam	Hifz al-Din
3	Family in Islam	Hifz al-Nasl
4	The Procedure of Marriage in Malaysia	-
5	Responsibilities between Spouses in Marriage	Hifz al-Nafs
6	Communication between Spouses	Hifz al-Nafs
7	Financial Management	Hifz al-Mal
8	Health Management	Hifz al-Nafs
9	Stress and Conflict Management	Hifz al-Nafs
10	Education and Job Planning	Hifz al-aqal
11	Dissolutions of Marriage	-
12	Walimatul Urus	-

5.0 CONCLUSION

Child marriage brings various harms to children in terms of the preservation of *Al-Kulliyat al-Khoms*, which are the aspect of *hifz al-nafs*, *hifz al-aqal*, *hifz al-nasl* and *hifz al-mal*. Therefore, it is important to take effective steps to minimize these harms. This improved Islamic Pre-Marriage Education Module can be a proactive step to provide knowledge and awareness to children who wish to marry. With a better understanding of the risks and ways to manage them, it is hoped that these children can make wiser decisions to avoid unwanted harm.

In preserving the welfare of married children, it is important to involve various parties in the effort to address the negative impacts of child marriage and to provide the necessary support to children and their families. Through a holistic and comprehensive approach, we can ensure that children who wish to marry are given proper guidance and appropriate exposure and education. This will not only help them understand the risks involved but also equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to face future challenges.

Overall, child marriage is an issue that requires immediate attention and action. By taking appropriate steps and providing proper education, we can protect children from the potential harm of marrying at a young age. The preservation of *Al-Kulliyat al-Khoms* should be a priority in every action taken to ensure that every child receives the protection and support they need to grow up healthily and prosperously.

Therefore, the proposed awareness module needs to be implemented as best as possible and constantly reviewed to ensure its effectiveness. Only through continuous efforts and cooperation from all parties can we achieve the goal of minimizing harm in child marriage and protecting the future of our younger generation.

However, based on this study, there are several limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the study is based primarily on document

analysis, which limits its ability to capture the lived experiences of child marriage applicants. Future research should incorporate empirical data from interviews and surveys with young spouses, religious authorities, and educators to validate the proposed framework. Secondly, the study focuses on the Malaysian context, and while its findings may be applicable to other Muslim-majority countries, cultural and legal variations may affect its implementation. Comparative studies across different jurisdictions would provide deeper insights into the adaptability of this framework. Lastly, this research does not evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed education module in practice. Future studies should conduct pilot implementations of the module and assess its impact on child marriage applicants through longitudinal studies.

Given these limitations, further research is necessary to refine the framework and ensure its practical applicability. Collaboration between policymakers, educators, and religious institutions is crucial to developing a comprehensive pre-marriage education program that effectively safeguards the well-being of child marriage applicants. By addressing these gaps, future research can enhance the efficacy of Islamic pre-marriage education and contribute to the broader effort of mitigating the negative effects of child marriage.

The findings demonstrate that child marriage has significant negative implications across multiple dimensions of al-kulliyat al-khoms. By incorporating religious knowledge, health education, legal awareness, financial management, and educational planning into a structured Islamic Pre-Marriage Education Module, the potential harms of child marriage can be mitigated. Future research should focus on the practical implementation of this framework to assess its effectiveness in real-life scenarios.

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