



Adolescent Forced Marriage and Community Misconduct: Rethinking Islamic Family Law

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ABSTRACT

The normalization of forced marriage as a response to adolescents' involvement in behaviors perceived by their communities as socially or religiously inappropriate, such as premarital interactions or relationships beyond culturally sanctioned norms, may result in complex and disproportionate consequences for the adolescents involved. This study addresses gaps in prior research by exploring the characteristics of these cases, the prevailing community interpretations, and the rationale behind legitimizing forced marriage as a form of moral resolution. The findings highlight three key insights. First, forced marriage is often constructed as a culturally informed response to situations involving behaviors considered socially sensitive. Second, People commonly understand such practices as preserving family honor and fulfilling communal or religious expectations. Third, these responses are typically driven more by shared moral and cultural frameworks than by considerations of the adolescent's rights and well-being. This study contributes to the discourse on Islamic family law by illustrating how community-based interpretations of morality, honor, and religious obligation may shape the application of legal and ethical principles in cases involving adolescents, particularly within the framework of protection and justice for minors.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Forced marriage has become a recurring response to cases involving adolescents engaged in communities that perceive these behaviors as conflicting with prevailing marital values and social norms, such as premarital intimate relationships (Larasati & Abdullah, 2023). Community attitudes normalize such responses by addressing socially inappropriate conduct by arranging early marriages for the individuals involved (Darmawan, 2021; Nasrun, 2022; Saputra, 2019). According to Fernando et al. (2023), this normalization process often overlooks the welfare and autonomy of adolescents. It may contribute to compounded burdens and latent forms of discrimination during the imposition of community-driven social responses. Therefore, examining the normalization of forced marriage is essential for evaluating how communities respond to behaviors seen as outside accepted norms, especially when these responses involve adolescents. Such an analysis also highlights the need to assess whether these practices align with the core principles of Islamic family law, particularly concerning the requirement of consent (*riḍā'*) and the ethical limitations on guardianship authority (*ijbār*), which emphasize justice, protection, and the dignity of the individual.

The normalization of forced marriage practices involving adolescents associated with criminal offenses represents a critical phenomenon that warrants serious evaluation. Existing studies on forced marriage among adolescents, however, tend to concentrate on three main aspects. First, research primarily focuses on reproductive health outcomes (Burgess et al., 2022; Fan & Koski, 2022; Kamal & Ulas, 2021). Second, scholarly attention has been directed toward regulatory legitimacy and prevailing moral discourses (Baraie et al., 2024; Lebni et al., 2020; Villacampa & Torres, 2020). Third, studies explore the economic motivations and consequences for the families involved (Bartels et al., 2021; Kohno et al., 2020; Psaki et al., 2021). While these perspectives offer valuable insights, a more comprehensive analysis that integrates socio-legal, cultural, and religious frameworks in understanding adolescent marriage remains necessary.

The practice of forced marriage among adolescents involved in behaviors perceived as socially inappropriate is significantly shaped by contextual value systems and prevailing community norms, which often contribute to the normalization of such practices. Girouard-Hallam et al. (2021) argue that the imposition of forced marriage on adolescents associated with socially deviant behavior represents a critical context that requires deeper examination, particularly in understanding societal attitudes and the application of social sanctions toward these individuals. However, existing studies on adolescent forced marriage tend to focus primarily on reproductive health, legal frameworks, moral discourse, and family economic factors. In other words, the broader discourse on the normalization of forced marriage among adolescents involved in socially contested behaviors remains underexplored. This study addresses these gaps by critically examining how such practices become socially legitimized within specific community contexts.

The normalization of forced marriage involving adolescents who engage in socially contested behaviors, such as premarital sexual activity, represents a critical phenomenon that warrants closer examination, particularly in understanding how communities impose informal social sanctions on these individuals. This study focuses on three main questions: (1) what are the defining characteristics of forced marriage cases involving adolescents engaged in such behavior? (2) how do communities interpret adolescents' involvement in these situations? (3) what socio-religious

and cultural rationales contribute to the normalization of forced marriage in such contexts? The study argues that this community-level misunderstanding influences practices or misapplications of marriage concepts, where forced marriage is perceived as a corrective response to behavior considered socially inappropriate. Such responses not only risk violating fundamental human rights but may also contradict core Islamic family law principles, emphasizing consent (*ridā*), ethical responsibility, and protection of individual dignity.

2. METHODS

The researchers conducted this study in response to the growing visibility of forced marriage cases involving adolescents whose People socially perceive these behaviors as inappropriate, particularly premarital sexual activity, as frequently reported in Indonesian online news media accessed through Google search. Rather than attempting to generalize the prevalence of such cases, this research aims to explore their characteristics, how scholars interpret them within the framework of Islamic family law, and how the practice of forced marriage in such contexts has become increasingly normalized in public discourse. The study is grounded in three key considerations. First, existing literature has largely overlooked the specific intersection between adolescent marriage and social perceptions of behavioral deviance, particularly in the Indonesian context. Second, forced marriage in these cases is often justified through selective interpretations of Islamic family law, especially concerning the preservation of family honor and the regulation of sexual behavior reflecting contested religious and cultural meanings. Third, the recurring portrayal of such cases in media as acceptable or inevitable solutions suggests a process of normalization that deserves critical analysis, especially regarding its impact on public perception and policy responses.

This study employed a qualitative-descriptive approach, utilizing primary and secondary data sources. The primary data consisted of excerpts from online news articles collected through an intensive review of approximately 1,000 news items identified using the search term "forced marriage of adolescents involved in socially sensitive cases" via the Google search engine. According to Fernando et al. (2023), cases disseminated through online news platforms often reflect real societal occurrences and can serve as a legitimate empirical foundation for analyzing social phenomena. Margagliotti et al. (2019) further assert that media reporting represents observable social realities and offers insight into dominant narratives and collective responses. Moreover, the frequent recurrence of similar cases across different regions and media outlets demonstrates consistent patterns in how forced marriage involving adolescents is framed, justified, and perceived by the public.

The researcher carried out the data collection process between February 26 and March 11, 2024. Six researchers were involved in selecting and reviewing news articles, focusing primarily on headlines for efficiency. This process resulted in 312 online news articles discussing the characteristics of cases involving adolescents associated with socially sensitive behavior, 398 articles examining how communities interpret such behavior, and 290 articles exploring the reasons behind the practice of forced marriage involving adolescents in these situations. The researcher gathered secondary data by reviewing relevant literature and statistical reports, including books, academic journal articles, and credible websites related to the topic. These data sources helped provide a broader context and supported the analysis of patterns and public responses to forced marriage cases. The use of news and online media as data was based on the recognition that media

often reflects real incidents and collective social attitudes (Larasati et al., 2025; Verisa et al., 2024; Widari et al., 2024).

The data analysis in this study followed the approach outlined by Miles Huberman (1994), which consisted of three main stages. First, data reduction was carried out to organize the collected information more systematically, based on the patterns observed in the characteristics, contributing factors, and implications of forced marriage cases involving adolescents. Second, The researcher verified key points from the reduced data, which grouped them into thematic categories. Third, after verifying their relevance, The researcher presented the data by arranging the thematic categories into tables and supporting them with selected excerpts from online news texts. After these three stages, the data underwent a reflective analysis, which became the basis for interpreting the findings, similar to the process suggested by Fernando et al. (2023). The researcher interpreted the data inductively by restating it to allow conclusions to emerge naturally from the evidence. This process helped provide a deeper understanding of the social dynamics behind the normalization of forced marriage involving adolescents in socially sensitive contexts.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Forced marriage involving adolescents who are associated with socially sensitive behavior, such as premarital sexual activity, is often viewed as a normal and acceptable response within specific communities. This practice tends to place adolescents in a passive role, treating them not as individuals with agency but as subjects needing correction. People frequently frame forced marriage as a solution believed to restore the adolescent's moral or social standing within the community. This perception reflects broader social pressures and expectations related to honor, reputation, and conformity to local norms. The normalization of such responses can obscure the ethical, legal, and psychological consequences for the adolescents involved. The three main findings of this study reflect this context.

Forced Marriage of Adolescents in Socially Sensitive Cases

The practice of forced marriage involving adolescents associated with socially sensitive behavior, such as premarital sexual activity, has occurred widely in various communities. Chantler and McCarry (2020) argue that forced marriage has become a typical response by communities toward individuals involved in behaviors perceived as violating social or moral norms. The widespread nature of these practices, especially involving adolescents, reflects a deeply rooted belief that marriage serves as a corrective measure or social solution. The researcher clearly illustrates this pattern in Table 1, which presents the number and characteristics of reported cases.

Table 1. Cases of forced marriage among Adolescents in socially sensitive cases

Action	Cases
Premarital Encounters of Adolescents in Rented Houses	Community members approached a pair of adolescents after being found in a private rented house. The researcher asked the two to sign an agreement indicating they would marry (Lesmana, 2019).
Premarital Encounters of Adolescents in Empty Houses	Suspected of engaging in intimate behavior, residents detained the underage couple. The community urged the couple to marry promptly (Darmawan, 2021).

Premarital Encounters of Adolescents in Boarding Rooms	Residents in a boarding room found two adolescents, identified by the initials SA and HJ. Community members then arranged for the couple to marry (Nasrun, 2022).
Premarital Encounters of Adolescents in Cars	Adolescents identified as GHJ and N were stopped by residents after being found in a private setting. Before returning them to their families, the community requested they marry (Saputra, 2019).
Premarital Encounters of Adolescents in Shop House Areas	After a video of two adolescents engaging in intimate interaction circulated on social media, their parents mutually agreed to arrange a marriage for them (Indozone, 2021).
Premarital Encounters of Adolescents by the Roadside	A teenage couple found interacting closely by the roadside was secured by residents. The community collectively decided to proceed with their marriage (Zamzami, 2023).

Source: document analysis (2024)

Table 1 presents the characteristics of forced marriage cases involving adolescents "who reportedly engaged in socially sensitive or intimate behaviors. Based on Table 1, researchers can identify three important contexts related to the practice of forced marriage. First, forced marriage is often imposed on adolescents found engaging in premarital relationships, such as those discovered in private spaces like abandoned houses (Lesmana, 2019). Second, Communities (or individuals) also direct this practice toward adolescents in situations perceived as inappropriate by community norms, such as residential areas (Indozone, 2021). Third, forced marriage is frequently applied to adolescents whose interactions occur in public spaces, such as roadsides or near commercial areas (Zamzami, 2023). These contexts indicate that the normalization of forced marriage in such situations reflects broader community responses to adolescent behavior, especially when that behavior challenges prevailing social expectations or cultural norms.

Forced marriage involving adolescents is a complex phenomenon that often sparks controversy, both from a legal and social perspective. As highlighted by Agege et al. (2023), this practice is viewed by many as inconsistent with existing marriage laws. However, specific communities (or authorities) continue to implement it in communities due to deeply rooted, context-specific beliefs. According to Psaki et al. (2021), the cultural frameworks that shape a community's behavior play a significant role in normalizing forced marriage for adolescents who are perceived to have violated social expectations. In this sense, forced marriage is not solely about preserving family values, but people also see it as a response to broader social concerns. Furthermore, Villacampa and Torres (2020) emphasize that the characteristics of forced marriage go beyond domestic or legal issues, especially in cases involving adolescents reported to have engaged in socially sensitive behavior. These findings suggest that the practice reflects a blend of cultural norms, social pressures, and perceived moral responsibilities within communities.

Families or communities often practice forced marriage in response to situations involving adolescents who reportedly have engaged in socially sensitive behaviors in public spaces. According to Muthoifin et al. (2024), some communities choose forced marriage as a means of addressing and preventing what they perceive as disruptions to family or social harmony. However, in such cases involving adolescents, the focus of this practice has shifted from managing domestic family concerns to reinforcing shared moral expectations within communal settings. Chantler and McCarry (2020) argue that forced marriage tends to position adolescents as a passive subject within the social system, where external social factors shape their well-being judgments rather than

personal agency. In this context, forced marriage becomes a moral response constructed by the community based on actions viewed as socially inappropriate. Numerous reports reflect these dynamic cases where families (or communities) subject adolescents to marriage following community reactions to their public behavior (Indozone, 2021; Nasrun, 2022; Darmawan, 2021).

In the context of Islamic family law, the growing occurrence of forced marriages involving adolescents, particularly as a response to socially sensitive behavior, raises serious ethical and legal concerns. The Qur'an addresses the issue of coercion in marriage in Surah An-Nisa' (4:19): "O you who have believed, it is not lawful for you to inherit women by compulsion..." (*lā yahillu lakum an tarithū an-nisā'a karhan*). This verse highlights *riḍā* (mutual consent) as a fundamental requirement for a valid marriage contract. It affirms that Islam upholds personal autonomy in marital decisions and explicitly rejects coercion, whether in the form of direct force, communal pressure, or moral stigma. This principle stands in contrast to standard practices in some Indonesian communities where adolescents are compelled to marry following public censure, often without proper legal process or genuine consent. These practices disregard the individual's legal and spiritual rights and run counter to core objectives of Islamic law (*maqashid al-shariah*), particularly *ḥifẓ al-nafs* (protection of the self) and *ḥifẓ al-'ird* (protection of dignity), which aim to preserve justice, human agency, and individual well-being (Barkah & Andriyan, 2020).

A deeper examination of Islamic family law reveals that *riḍā* (mutual consent) is not merely a formal requirement for the validity of marriage but a reflection of the ethical foundation upon which Scholars (or jurists) build Islamic marital contracts. In the framework of *maqashid al-shariah*, the presence of genuine consent serves to protect *ḥifẓ al-nafs* (the integrity and autonomy of the self), *ḥifẓ al-'ird* (honor and dignity), and *ḥifẓ al-nasl* (the legitimacy and well-being of lineage) (Mohd et al., 2017). When consent is absent, whether due to social pressure, fear, or manipulation, the marriage may fulfill procedural elements but fail to meet the spiritual and moral objectives prescribed by Sharia. Scholars such as Al-Ghazali and Ibn Asyur have emphasized that marriage is a partnership based on mutual understanding and willingness, not coercion disguised as moral correction. In this regard, forced marriage, especially when targeting adolescents under social stigma, not only undermines personal agency but potentially turns marriage into an instrument of punitive control, distorting its intended function as a source of *sakinah* (tranquility), *mawaddah* (affection), and *rahmah* (compassion). Consequently, any application of 'urf that overrides researchers must critically reassess consent, as it may conflict with the higher ethical goals of Islamic family law.

In addition to Qur'anic guidance, major Islamic legal institutions have issued contemporary fatwas that firmly reject the practice of forced marriage, particularly when it involves adolescents. For example, the Majma' al Fiqhi al Islami (International Islamic Fiqh Academy), in its 2006 resolution, declared that any marriage conducted without the explicit and free consent of both parties, especially minors, has no legal validity under Islamic law and infringes upon the principle of human dignity (IIFA, 2018). Similarly, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), through its fatwa No.06/MK-KUPI-2/XI/2022 on child protection, prohibits coerced marriages, including those initiated due to public or familial concerns over adolescents' behavior prior to marriage. These fatwas reflect a broader commitment in Islamic jurisprudence to uphold *karomah* (dignity) as essential conditions for a valid marriage. Given that many cases in the data involve adolescents

entering marriage under pressure following community intervention, these authoritative opinions affirm that marriage should never be used as a corrective measure. Instead, the ethical framework of Islamic law emphasizes personal agency, protection of dignity, and the avoidance of harm, aligning with the maqashid al-shariah and broader human rights principles.

Social Interpretation of Adolescent Involvement in Controversial Behavior

The social interpretations of adolescent involvement in controversial behavior are multifaceted and complex. According to Idriss (2022), such instances involving adolescents often lead to various community responses and interpretations concerning their conduct and underlying values. Table 2 clearly illustrates this diversity of interpretation, which outlines various societal perspectives on adolescents' involvement in these situations.

Table 2. Social interpretations of adolescent involvement in controversial behavior

Interpretation	Statement
Behavior Perceived as Inconsistent with Social Norms	The behavior of adolescents engaging in intimate relationships outside of marriage is often viewed by society as inconsistent with prevailing social norms, especially within communities that value marital bonds as the proper context for such relationships (Sukmawati, 2023).
Behavior Perceived as Diverging from Collective Cultural Values	Intimate relationships between unmarried adolescent couples are often perceived as diverging from collective cultural expectations, emphasizing the importance of formal and legal marital commitment (Novrizal, 2020).
Behavior Perceived as Misaligned with Social Order	Such behaviors are sometimes seen as challenging existing social structures, as they are considered to potentially disrupt the shared values, social norms, and cultural cohesion of the community (Yusran, 2023).
Behavior Perceived as Incompatible with Customary Traditions	In many local contexts, premarital intimate relationships are viewed as actions that contradict established customary values and are thus considered socially inappropriate by collective standards (Fahlevi, 2020).
Behavior Perceived as Contrary to Religious Values	Within religious communities, premarital intimacy among adolescents is often seen as strongly discouraged and in conflict with religious teachings that promote chastity and moral restraint prior to marriage (Sitepu, 2018).
Behavior Perceived as Deviating from National Principles	As part of a rapidly evolving generation, some adolescents are perceived as engaging in behaviors that diverge from national and cultural values. Such conduct is often interpreted as part of a broader concern over the erosion of traditional moral frameworks among youth (Putricia, 2022).

Source: document analysis (2024)

Table 2 presents the complexity of how communities interpret adolescents' involvement in socially contested behavior. It outlines three key contextual patterns. First, community members often perceive such behavior as inconsistent with prevailing social norms, as reflected in the Novrizal report. Second, it is commonly interpreted as not in line with religious values, as documented in the report of Sukmawati (2023). Third, some community members view this

behavior as misaligned with national principles and cultural expectations, as seen in the report of Putricia (2022). These perspectives suggest that adolescents' actions are assessed not merely on legal grounds but also through the lens of social, religious, and national values. In this context, Local communities sometimes consider forced marriage as a viable practice as a corrective response to reestablish social or moral order.

Interpretations of adolescent behavior considered socially controversial often focus on actions perceived to conflict with prevailing social norms, particularly those related to sexuality. Liao et al. (2023) argue that such behavior is frequently associated with deviation from accepted cultural and religious values within communal settings. These interpretations vary widely in meaning and practice, reflecting the complexity of societal views on adolescent behavior (Manago & Mize, 2022). This complexity also influences how communities respond to such behavior, especially involving adolescents in their social environments (Huzaimah et al., 2024; Zoogah & Zoogah, 2020). In some cases, this has led to the adoption of forced marriage as a form of social response (Fahlevi, 2020). In other words, how communities handle these situations often depends on how they define and understand the concept of social deviation.

Communities often interpret adolescent behavior perceived as conflicting with collective social values as a deviation from accepted social norms. Hester et al. (2020) observe that community interpretations of such behavior among adolescents are frequently linked to sexual activity outside of marriage. In many Muslim communities, sexual relations are considered permissible only within the bounds of marriage, which is legitimized through a series of culturally and religiously meaningful rituals (Fernando, Larasati, Abdullah, et al., 2023). According to Nivette et al. (2020), this belief system serves as a basis for legitimizing sexual behavior following the cultural and religious values upheld by the community. In this context, behaviors that fall outside these expectations often contradict established norms and values. These interpretations significantly influence how communities respond to such situations, often leading to hierarchical and normative responses toward adolescents involved in socially controversial cases.

Community interpretations regarding adolescents' involvement in socially sensitive behavior have significantly influenced how such cases are addressed locally. Debbaut & De Kimpe (2023) explain that societal responses to social realities are shaped by dominant meanings continuously reproduced through prevailing cultural and religious norms used to evaluate individual behavior. It can be seen in community responses to cases involving adolescents, where early or forced marriage is sometimes considered an appropriate solution. These practices are often driven by the belief that such measures can restore what is perceived as disrupting communal moral order. In this context, arranging such marriages reflects a rationalized social response rooted in collective interpretations of acceptable conduct rather than being based on formal legal processes. Such actions tend to emerge from informal mechanisms of social regulation shaped by shared values and expectations (Hasaniy & Azisurrohman, 2024; Marsaban & Said, 2023; Nazula et al., 2024).

In Indonesian national law, the protection of adolescents from early and forced marriage is explicitly addressed in Law No. 16 of 2019, which amends Marriage Law No. 1 of 1974. This law raises the minimum legal age for marriage to 19 for both men and women, reflecting the state's commitment to ensuring adolescents' physical, mental, and social development (Barkah et al., 2025). Forced marriages, especially those conducted due to social pressure or family expectations,

directly contradict this legal framework. The law's primary concern is to protect adolescents from harmful practices and to ensure their rights to education, health, and autonomy are preserved. So, when communities continue to marry off adolescents outside legal procedures, it not only violates statutory law but also places adolescents at risk (Barkah et al., 2022). This legal protection highlights the importance of recognizing adolescents as individuals with rights, not subjects of social conformity. Therefore, national law sets a firm boundary to safeguard adolescent welfare.

In addition to national law, Islamic family law places significant emphasis on the requirement of consent in marriage, especially for adolescents (Abdillah et al., 2023; Debbaut & De Kimpe, 2023). Classical scholars from all major schools of Islamic jurisprudence (Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki, and Hanbali) stress that The parties cannot establish a valid marriage without both parties' explicit and voluntary agreement. The Hanafi school, for instance, allows a legally competent adolescent to contract a marriage independently and considers forced marriage invalid if the individual objects. It is grounded in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "*A previously married woman has more right to herself than her guardian, and one must seek the virgin's consent before marriage.*" This principle affirms marriage as a social arrangement and a moral and legal partnership. Therefore, any form of coercion in adolescent marriage contradicts the ethical essence of Islamic law and undermines its commitment to individual dignity and legal protection.

Reframing the Normalization of Forced Marriage in Cases Involving Adolescents

The normalization of forced marriage involving adolescents in socially sensitive situations is often driven by contextual factors within society. Moret et al. (2021) explain that this practice frequently emerges from social interpretations influenced by prevailing cultural values, communal expectations, and perceived responsibilities to restore social harmony. These contextual reasons, often tied to concerns about social reputation, family honor, or communal norms, can contribute to the persistence of forced marriage as a response to adolescent involvement in situations considered controversial. The various rationales that support this practice within different communities are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3. The societal reasoning for forcing adolescents involved in sensitive behavior to get married

Reason	Statement
To prevent community unrest	To prevent community unrest and avoid escalation, residents and security authorities requested that an adolescent couple found in a situation considered socially inappropriate proceed with marriage (Lesmana, 2019).
As a lesson for parents	An adolescent couple was reportedly found in a rented room, leading members of the community to facilitate their marriage to set an example for parents in guiding their children (Nasrun, 2022).
As a form of guidance for the individuals involved	Following a viral incident involving an adolescent couple on social media, community members urged them to marry, viewing it as a corrective step and a deterrent for others (Indozone, 2021).

To ease public concern	Community concern arose over an incident involving an adolescent couple, prompting residents to call for their immediate marriage to ease public unease (Setiawan, 2019).
As a shared responsibility for the situation	The parents of two adolescents involved in a controversial situation at a mosque agreed to arrange their marriage as a form of responsibility for the incident (Putranto, 2022).
As a resolution to address the incident	Authorities asked the adolescent couple, who were in a socially sensitive situation, to sign a written agreement to marry, which was viewed by the community as a way to resolve the matter (Sudjarwo, 2018) constructively.

Source: document analysis (2024)

Table 3 presents the reasons underlying the community's choice to practice forced marriage for adolescents involved in some instances. From Table 3, three key contexts emerge regarding the community's motivations for this practice. First, forced marriage is often chosen to prevent unrest or backlash within the community (Lesmana, 2019). Second, it is seen as a way to avoid social disturbances or tension in the adolescents' immediate environment (Setiawan, 2019). Third, forced marriage is perceived as a solution to address the issues arising from these cases (Sudjarwo, 2018). These three contexts suggest that the community's decision to implement forced marriage due to various external factors frequently influences adolescents' interests and rights of the adolescents themselves as individuals.

The practice of forced marriage involving adolescents in certain situations is influenced not only by community-based interpretations of morality but also by fundamental yet contextual considerations. Patel (2020) also explains that how communities respond to perceived social deviation is often shaped by multiple contextual and deeply held concerns, which may lead to normalizing specific actions. In this context, forced marriage is sometimes perceived as a reasonable response to address community tensions, such as preventing public outrage, reducing social unrest, or delivering a message to the families or individuals involved (Lesmana, 2019; Setiawan, 2019; Nasrun, 2022). In other words, forced marriage may be seen by some communities as a socially acceptable response to behaviors involving adolescents that are perceived as challenging local norms and expectations.

In addition to being perceived as a solution to adolescents' involvement in socially inappropriate behavior, the practice of forced marriage can also diminish the agency of individuals in determining their well-being. In many cases, adolescents become objectified by dominant social structures through the imposition of social sanctions (Larasati et al., 2024). The normalization of forced marriage often overlooks the potential of restorative justice models in addressing such cases, resulting in a significant risk of neglecting the well-being of the individuals involved. Fernando et al. (2025) also argue that ignoring the welfare of those affected opens the door to discriminatory practices and imposes a double burden on individuals through social judgment and normative pressure. Thus, the practice of forced marriage, when considered acceptable by society, risks creating additional harm for adolescents involved in situations that are perceived to challenge prevailing social norms.

In Islamic legal discourse, forced marriage is often discussed about the concept of *ijbār*, which refers to the authority of a guardian, usually, the father or grandfather, to arrange a marriage on behalf of a dependent, such as an adolescent or minor. While classical scholars recognized *ijbār* as a legal mechanism, its application was subject to strict conditions and varied across different schools of thought. For example, the Hanafi school limits *ijbār* primarily to minors, emphasizing that adult individuals, especially adolescent girls, have the right to accept or reject a marriage proposal. In contrast, the Shafi'i and Maliki schools allowed broader interpretations but still placed significant weight on the principles of justice and welfare. Importantly, the purpose of *ijbār* is not to enable coercion but to safeguard the well-being and interests of those under guardianship. When *ijbār* is applied without considering the adolescent's agency and consent, it shifts from a protective function to a harmful imposition, undermining the ethical foundations of Islamic law.

The Qur'an emphasizes consent as a core element of marital contracts. In Surah al-Nisa' (4:19), many jurists interpret it as a prohibition of forced marriage. Islamic family law, particularly in modern codifications, increasingly reflects this principle by affirming both parties' right to consent (*ridā*). In countries with codified Islamic family law, such as Indonesia and Jordan, the legal requirement for the bride's consent has been reinforced, even when guardianship is involved. The spirit of Islamic jurisprudence promotes justice and individual welfare, and any form of *ijbār* that results in psychological harm or strips an adolescent of agency contradicts these foundational aims. Thus, aligning forced marriage practices with *ijbār* without considering the Qur'anic imperative of mutual agreement misrepresents both the letter and the spirit of Islamic legal ethics.

The normalization of forced marriage in Muslim-majority societies, particularly when justified under religious pretexts, can have significant global implications, especially in contexts where Muslims are a minority. Such cases, when publicized internationally, risk reinforcing negative stereotypes about Islam as a religion that subjugates women and disregards individual rights. This perception fuels Islamophobic narratives, especially in Western societies where values of autonomy and consent are strongly emphasized. For Muslims living as minorities, these narratives can lead to social prejudice, policy restrictions, and increased surveillance of Muslim communities. When forced marriage is inaccurately framed as an Islamic obligation, it not only misrepresents Islamic teachings but also jeopardizes the social integration and rights of Muslims abroad. Therefore, scholars, leaders, and educators must clarify that practices contradicting justice and consent are cultural distortions rather than doctrinal mandates in Islam.

In addition, the practice of forced marriage involving adolescents can also contribute to future religious-based tensions. When such practices are associated with Muslim communities, people sometimes misinterpret them as a core aspect of Islamic morality. This perception may lead to misunderstandings and strained relationships with other religious or cultural groups that view forced marriage as incompatible with broader human rights principles. In countries where Muslims are a minority, these tensions can escalate into open conflict (Abu-Nimer & Hilal, 2016; Alhamuddin & Alifuddin, 2024). Fernando et al. (2023) explain that actors in Muslim-majority contexts sometimes use structural and cultural dominance to justify certain social practices. However, this dynamic can be problematic when generalized to Muslim communities living as minorities in non-Muslim countries, such as those in Europe or North America. Hashmi et al. (2021) similarly note that the normalization of forced marriage in certain regions can lead to prejudice and discriminatory treatment against Muslims elsewhere.

4. CONCLUSION

This study presents three key findings regarding the dynamics of adolescent forced marriage in socially sensitive contexts. First, forced marriage is often framed as a culturally driven response to situations involving adolescents who are perceived to have engaged in behavior that challenges prevailing social or moral norms. Second, communities typically interpret such behaviors through shared cultural frameworks, which are lenses of morality and honor. It can result in social pressure to legitimize marriage as a resolution. Third, these practices reflect shared cultural and moral frameworks rather than focusing on the adolescent's consent, autonomy, or long-term well-being. These findings underscore the importance of reassessing such practices through the lens of Islamic family law, particularly about the principles of consent (*ridā*) and the ethical boundaries of guardianship authority (*ijbār*). A deeper alignment with the foundational values of justice, protection, and individual dignity in Islamic legal ethics is necessary to ensure that responses to adolescent behavior do not compromise their rights and safety.

The findings of this study differ from previous research on the practice of forced marriage among adolescents. While earlier studies have focused mainly on describing its forms, contributing factors, and physical and psychological impacts, this research shows that the issue extends beyond those dimensions. It reveals how communities often legitimize forced marriage as a collective response to social concerns. To adolescents' involvement in behaviors perceived as socially or culturally inappropriate. Rather than simply addressing individual well-being, such practices reflect broader social mechanisms of moral regulation. This study aims not only to contribute to the ongoing academic dialogue in the field of Islamic family law but also to critically assess how the normalization of forced marriage can create a double burden for adolescents facing both the consequences of contested behavior and the pressure of socially sanctioned marital solutions.

This study also acknowledges certain limitations in the data collection process, which relied exclusively on online news searches using the keyword "forced marriage of adolescents involved in socially sensitive cases," accessed via Google. In other words, the data presented in this study consists solely of excerpts from digital news sources. Nonetheless, researchers expect these limitations to lay the groundwork for future improvements the groundwork for future research, particularly studies that aim to explore the social and psychological conditions of individuals who have experienced forced marriage through in-depth interviews and field-based inquiry. Researchers anticipate that such an approach will offer a more holistic understanding of the social and psychological impacts of forced marriage on adolescents involved in situations perceived by their communities as controversial and to inform more responsive attitudes and policies that support their well-being.

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