

Causes and negative effects of child marriage in Malaysia: A case study



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ABSTRACT

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Child marriage in Malaysia is driven by several aspects, including the lack of a standard marriage age and also due to the enabling legislation. Between 2007 and 2017, nearly 15,000 cases of child marriage were reported in Malaysia. However, as of 2018, it is estimated that there are at least 1,500 child marriages every year in Malaysia. The aim of this paper is to analyze the factors of cases related to child marriage from the point of view of factors, legislation and obstacles. The research methodology used is a qualitative design through bibliography by obtaining data from past studies whether journals, articles and newspapers as secondary sources. The results of the study found that even though there is Islamic family law that allows age limits at such a young age, from the point of view of accepting the current custom, it is different from the past. The cases that happened as reported in the news media or newspapers as well as the results of previous studies show the importance of parents's awareness and caution in the matter of child marriage so that there are no bad cases and negative impacts that have a long-term impact on the child's life.

Contribution/ Originality: This study is one of several case studies of child marriage in Malaysia that emphasizes analysis from various legal angles and obstacles to propose a balanced solution between Islamic law and legislation to curb the causes and negative effects in the issue of child marriage more effectively.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Malaysia, child marriage is defined as any formal marriage or informal union in which the spouses live together as if married among children at the age of 18 years and below with an adult or another child. This is a worldwide phenomenon that affects the lives of millions of children every year, as well as Malaysia. Between 2007 and 2017, nearly 15,000 cases of child marriage were reported in Malaysia, with child marriage occurring in all areas across the country. However, as of 2018, it is estimated that there are at least 1,500 child marriages every year in Malaysia. 1 in 5 young women aged around 20 to 24 get married before the age of 18, compared to 1 in 30 young men. There are approximately 12 million girls under the age of 18 who are married each year which is equivalent to 23 girls for every minute. Usually, child marriage occurs in rural and urban areas across all states in Malaysia in all ethnic and religious communities. Both boy and girl are considered to be affected by the issue of child marriage in Malaysia. However, the impact on girls is greater where 90% of girls are said to be married at a young age in 2018.

Child marriage in Malaysia is driven by a number of aspects, including the scarcity of a standardised least marriage age and legislation that allows and enable child marriage which there an absence of resources related to sexual and reproductive health or also known as (SRH) knowledge and offerings, low income and underdevelopment, a shortage of resources and poor school enrollment, sociocultural norms that enable and uphold traditional practises of child marriage, and an inadequate parental insight and perception. In fact, gender discrimination is intertwined with all of these problems. In addition, child marriage considered as takes away children's childhood and can have particularly long repercussions for their health and lives. Thus, Malaysia adheres to the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Sustainable Development Goals, which consider climate action to put a stop to this bad practice by 2030. In fact, Malaysia's government has pledged to tackle the elements that causes to child marriage through the National Strategy Plan in Handling the Causes of Child Marriage in the year of 2020 until 2025, which is overseen by a Steering Committee chaired by the [Secretary General of the Ministry of Women Family and Community Development \(2020\)](#).

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem to be addressed by this study is when a couple marries at a young age, they may face a number of issues, including financial difficulties. Early marriage occurs between the ages of 16 and 25, implying that a person does not have sufficient financial resources to start a family ([Kohno, Dahlui, Nik Farid, Safii, & Nakayama, 2020](#)). They are most likely still studying or serving part-time jobs, and the money they obtained may be likely to adversely affect their family, making it nearly impossible for them to take care of their families. Second, poor communication between the couple is one of the issues. This is due to their lack of understanding, and it is always the misinterpretation that gets the best of them. This is why having two modes of communication is crucial for everybody so that there are no issues at the end of the day, but people ought to make the same mistakes. Third, when people marry at a young age, they are more likely to divorce. Most divorces occur since the young couple has not reached maturity and finds it difficult to understand each other. Divorce is perhaps most likely in this case because so many issues arose that young people were unable to handle them maturely. As a result, they decided to divorce in order to resolve their issues.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

In their study from "Underage Marriage from The Perspective of Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah" ([Hazram & Azahari, 2021](#)) Every provision in Islam is wise and has a purpose. In general, they found out the goal of syarak is to provide as many advantages (malaah) to humans as feasible while preventing as much harm (mafsadah) from humans as possible. Behind the regulation, there is the basic goal that is to be achieved through the marriage contract specified in Islam. The controversy against underage marriage has recently heated up once more. Islamic scholars have differing opinions on the practise of underage marriage, which is frequently associated with harms and hazards experienced by children who marry at a young age. Thus, the purpose of this essay is to investigate the extent to which the practice of underage marriage complies with the Maqasid Syariah in marriage regulations. The author concludes that the practice of underage marriage, in general, can meet the goals of syarak in marriage if certain criteria are met. Furthermore, some scenarios in underage marriage are considered as one method of rejecting the wider mafsadah, such as preventing adultery and adulterous pregnancy.

Child marriage is a contentious issue, especially in developing countries and emerging economies including Malaysia. Based on the article from "An In-depth Examination of Issues Surrounding the Causes of Child Marriage in Kelantan, Malaysia: a qualitative study" by [Kohno, Dahlui, Farid, Ali, and Nakayama \(2019\)](#) which is the purpose of this article is to see the difficulties interpersonal, family, society and society around child marriage in Kelantan, Malaysia. There were eighteen women of reproductive age (18 to 44 years) who were married for the first time before the age of 18, as well as five key informants: a government official, a community leader, a religious

department official, and two mothers. The woman was taken from a fertility clinic. Key informants with specific information about child marriage were carefully recruited. Three themes emerged that corresponded to the social-ecological model: decision-making immaturity, family poverty, and religious and cultural standards. The findings from that article show that sex education and initiatives to raise awareness about the implications of child marriage must be done in Malaysia to combat child marriage. This implementation must be coordinated as a team effort consisting of experts in law, theology, psychology, social welfare and public health. To raise awareness of the implications of child marriage, the target audience must include not only adolescent girls and their families, but also society and society as a whole, clearly stating the negative effects of child marriage and addressing the drivers of child marriage.

The article of "Factors Not Approving Early Marriage in Malaysia" (Ridzuan et al., 2018) has mention that parents may also protect their daughter's dignity by allowing her to marry young. Furthermore, many parents agree to marry off their daughters at a young age due to financial concerns and other factors, hence they trust the man who will marry their daughter to take care of her. There are two types of young marriages. The first is due to parental coercion, and the second is due to their own free will. Early marriage has recently become popular among young people. This article involve 421 respondents who completed the distributed questionnaire. From the data collected where the main reasons respondents disagree with early marriage are financial insecurity and loss of teenage life.

Despite advances in digital technology and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the practice of marrying off underage girls persists in many parts of the world. A customary or statutory union occurs when one or both partners are under the age of 18. Based on the article, "Child Marriage in the 21st Century: Sentiment And Semantic Analysis Via Social Media Intelligence" (Sharifah, Fatimah, Muhd, & Zarihan, 2018). The primary goal of this study is to investigate the practice of child marriage using social media intelligence in order to assess its current trend. This article also examines the attitude and semantics of conversations about this behaviour on social media and the internet in general. This study makes use of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Tracker, a tracking tool, was used to obtain data on child marriage. The study's findings show that there are more negative feelings about this practice, particularly the need to ban and eliminate child marriage practices worldwide. The study also discovered that hegemonic masculinity's interpretation of religion and tradition, as well as poverty, are the two main causes of child marriage practices.

In their study "Why girls get married early in Sarawak, Malaysia - an exploratory qualitative study" (Kohno et al., 2020) child marriage, defined as a marriage involving someone under the age of 18, is a long-standing social issue in Sarawak, Malaysia. The state has taken many steps to address unfairness for women who marry young; yet, the practice remains a common component of custom and society. The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that contribute to child marriage in Sarawak, Malaysia. An exploratory qualitative study was undertaken in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia, using semi-structured interviews with twenty-two women who married while they were under the age of 18. Purposive and easy sampling with data from a reproductive health clinic and village recruiting were used to recruit participants. The author found out that health risk behaviour, family poverty, early marriage as fate, and family disharmony were found as four underlying themes. A thorough study of the local elements that contribute to child marriage would assist the implementation of novel approaches to child marriage eradication in Sarawak, Malaysia.

The article of "Child Marriages and The Right to Education : The Legal and Social Perspectives" by Makhtar and Ab Kadir (2019) shows that Malaysians were recently horrified by the stunning news of a marriage in Thailand between an 11-year-old Thai girl and a 41-year-old Kelantanese man. Though the marriage was legitimate since it met all of the requirements of Islamic Law, it could not be recorded in Malaysia without the assent of a Syariah Court because the bride was under the minimum age allowed by Malaysian law. The man was convicted and sentenced, but the girl is still his wife. As a wife, she would bear many duties and must be willing to make many

sacrifices. According to reports, the man allowed the girl to continue her religious education, but the latter declined. Without adequate information and experience, the girl's future would be entirely dependent on her husband and parents. Thus, the purpose of this article is to investigate the topic of child marriages in Malaysia and how it affects children legally and medically. This article will also look into the right to an education, with a focus on married children. This article employs a qualitative approach in its examination of pertinent statutory sections, decided cases, international treaties, and publications from selected periodicals. As a result, it is urged that special consideration be given to married children, particularly their right to education and the ability to shape their own future.

Ridzuan et al. (2018) in their article "Factors of Disapproving of Early Marriage in Malaysia" which is the issues of child weddings are widely condemned around the world because when young girls are married off at a young age, their rights as minors are ignored and infringed. Most countries have legislation establishing a minimum age for marriage, which is usually 18 years old. However, some governments make exceptions, which implies that child marriages are still permitted in some instances. In Malaysia, this is the present situation. Even though Malaysia has laws in place to protect minors from sexual exploitation, such as statutory rape and sexual grooming, child marriages may be used to avoid such criminal liabilities. There have been numerous cases when statutory rape accusations were dropped because the victims later married the perpetrator, either willingly or reluctantly. Legalizing child weddings allows child perpetrators to facilitate child sexual abuse because sexual intercourse between a man and his own wife is not considered rape, regardless of how young the wife is. Malaysian laws governing child weddings should be reformed, and required steps should be taken to raise the minimum age of marriage to 18 for both genders, with no exceptions, regardless of faith or race.

Article of the Islamic Family Law Enactment (State of Pahang) 2005 and the Law Reform (Marriage and Divorce) Act 1976: The Study and Position of Underage Marriage" by Hussin and Hamid (2020) studied the case of an underage marriage in Kelantan involving a 41-year-old man who married an 11-year-old girl became public, it sparked a heated debate on social media. This begged the question of whether minor marriages should be legalised in the first place. As a result, the content of the discussion in connection to the issue of underage marriage based on Islamic law and legislation is refined in this paper. This article used a qualitative approach using the documentation method, analysing cases of underage marriage in the Sharia Subordinate Court of Kuantan, Pahang, as well as underage marriage statistics from 2013 to 2018, as well as statistics of underage marriage applications approved in the State of Pahang from 2013 to 2018. The position of underage marriage will also be examined in reference to the Islamic Family Law Enactment (Pahang State) 2005 and the Law Reform (Marriage and Divorce) Act 1976. The findings is minor marriages can only be performed with formal approval from the Court before the marriage application is approved by the District Religious Office. All parties should be responsible for performing their individual parts in this topic so that marriage is not viewed as a quick fix to a relevant problem.

The study Child Marriage In Malaysia: Whose Rights Are Being Violated? Noraine, Yarina, and Nor (2021) has recognised several factors regarding the child marriages in Malaysia and has argued that child marriages are a form of violation to children rights. Based on their research on other literatures, the main factors that were determined were the premarital sex and out of wedlock pregnancies and family poverty. The authors have also determined that child marriages have violated three aspects of child rights which are their right of enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, the right for education and the right to freely enter marriage only with their free and null consent. This violation of child rights is very unfortunate as the children are not able to enjoy especially their rights to health and education. Furthermore, the main reason for these violations are caused by their own families making it a far more complex problem to be dealt with.

In the study Minimum Age of Marriage Under Islamic Law and the Islamic Family Law (Federal Territories) Act 1984: A Preliminary Study on the Ideal Age of Marriage in Malaysia (Mohd & Kadir, 2019) they have identified that the distinction for the proper age for marriage in Malaysia is still not objectively determined. Thus, they have

studied the suitable age for marriage through different perspectives which were the from the juristic discourse, the analysis from the Prophet (PBUH)'s marriage with Saidatina Aishah and under the Islamic Family Law Act 1984. Although there were no specific age where maturity can be deduced, based on the different perspectives from Islamic jurists, it can be concluded that maturity can happen at different times and are largely influenced by eating habits and environmental factors. As for time of the Prophet (PBUH), the age of maturity of women are relatively faster and it was the norm for women to marry at an early age therefore making it impractical in today's day and age. As for Malaysia, although there are no restriction in terms of evidences in the Shariah, the negative aspects of child marriage is enough to grant the Islamic Family Law Act to determine that sixteen is the minimum age for marriage.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Factors Leading to Child Marriage

4.1.1. Poverty

Poverty, not only in Malaysia, even globally has been studied and recognised as the biggest factor for child marriage. Poor household conditions, children becoming a burden in the household, and the inability to support the education of child makes the family chooses the easiest way to somewhat release themselves from the responsibilities towards a child or children. This is especially true for young girls because in some countries raising boys is considered a better investment than girls. This is because they consider boys in the future will provide more for the family whereas girls are probably will contribute more to the in-laws family.

There were cases where the parents of a girl from a poor family arranged her marriage with a wealthier man with a good job and she had to only accept the circumstances as it will help her family. One other case was the girl that was forced to marry a man by her family, did not resisted because she herself felt like her family could not take care of her anymore due to their poverty, and she needed someone else to can look after her. Therefore she just went with her family's decision. This is what poverty does to these girls in a very early age.

Unfortunately, this factor is a very complicated subject and the outcome from the early marriage can also lead to poverty. Girls who married early most of the time are forced to end their education, takes the role as the housewife and will take care of her husband and children. This closes the window and opportunities for them for higher education and career potentials. Contrary to marrying a rich person, the ones who are married to somewhat a poor partner will become a burden as they have less avenue to contribute to the family's income. Often times they also fell into poverty and causes this vicious cycle of underage marriage and poverty or even child neglect.

4.1.2. Social and Cultural Norms

The social and cultural norms are also a very largely contributing factor to child marriage in Malaysia. Firstly, there are still misconceptions on the early marriage of the Prophet (PBUH) that is used as an argument for marrying a child although it is illegal in Malaysia. This is caused by the lack of knowledge and understanding on the real reasons and wisdom behind the Prophet's marriage. A more worrisome claim is marrying early or young girls are associated with the image of pioussness. Although this is not the mainstream idea but there are still areas where these things are occurring and are the norm.

Several cases recorded in other studies have shown that there is still a negative perception of child marriage in Malaysia as if it is seen as too tolerant from the family without making a careful judgment and is too open such as the case of a girl who married underage saying that her family and relatives all support his marriage and also his teacher. Therefore, there is still a long way to go to solve this problem in Malaysia until there is more progressive awareness and action on the issue. Even so, the State Department of Islamic Religion usually has a specific procedure in the issue of underage marriage with initiatives that have been taken such as calling the parents or guardians of the underage bride to provide awareness and explanation of the effects of the underage marriage. In

addition, the State Department of Islamic Religion has also tried to create seminars and courses that have a special emphasis on the issue of underage marriage for public awareness. In addition, the enforcement must be in line with the existing policy unless the policy is changed with the technicalities made in solving the issues that occur in this underage marriage. Therefore, parents and the general public need to provide good cooperation in this matter and the need to further improve any methods and techniques to further increase the public's awareness and knowledge on this issue.

Moreover, child marriage is often a solution to premarital sex and unwanted pregnancy. In Malaysia, premarital sex is considered one of the biggest shame for a family. However, these does happen and one of the solution in order to protect the family's name and dignity is by making their children marry. It is the same in an unwanted pregnancy, there are factors of the status of the child that are the concern making it necessary for the child to marry their partner. This are related to the weaknesses of sex education in Malaysia where the youth are not well exposed to the dangers of sex and largely unaware. Although the means for saving the family's honor and protecting the child's status are justified, it is still harmful for the children to marry at an early age because many other problems will surface in the future. However, this is a very complex problem and it must be handled properly to find a suitable solution.

4.2. Laws and Regulations Regarding Child Marriage

A reality in the child marriage issue in Malaysia, it has been discussed in the social media earlier this year since there was a *tweet* on Twitter that uploaded a video from TikTok that shows a husband sending his wife to school by driving a car. Then, there was also another user replied under the *tweet* regarding a video from TikTok that a girl that looks like a child were showing off her pregnancy test 'positive' result with her adult husband besides her. The first video showed the husband is an adult when he showed he was driving a car where car licensed only be given to those who are 18 and above. The girl from the second video then revealed her age which is in form 2 of high school that is equivalent to 14 years old and her husband is confirmed an adult. The videos have gone viral that made everyone online came out with their opinions and perspectives as a reaction towards the videos. Many portrayed their anger and disappointments in their social media accounts and some even questioned the government roles and marriage laws in preventing child marriage that has been happening since years ago.

"In Malaysia, there are two sets of laws that are applicable in personal matters of intestacy, marriage, divorce, custody of children and division of assets on the breakdown of a marriage: the laws governing non-Muslims that is civil law, and the laws governing Muslims that is Islam Shariah law (Ngo, Dhaliwal, & Foo, 2020). Laws that are regarded to the child marriage issue often include the Law Reform (Marriage & Divorce) Act 1976 for the non-Muslims and State's Family Law Acts for the Muslims. The Law Reform (Marriage & Divorce) Act 1976 stipulates under subsection 3 (3) that:

"This Act shall not apply to a Muslim or to any person who is married under Islamic law and no marriage of one of the parties which professes the religion of Islam shall be solemnized or registered under this Act."

So, the non-Muslims minimum age to marry under the Law Reform (Marriage & Divorce) Act 1976 is 18 years old for men and women, but women can marry at 16 years old only if approved legally. It is in accordance to the Section 10 and Section 21(2) of the Act:

"Section 10. Any marriage purported to be solemnized in Malaysia shall be void if at the date of the marriage either party is under the age of eighteen years unless, for a female who has completed her sixteenth year, the solemnization of such marriage was authorized by a licence granted by the Chief Minister under subsection 21(2)."

"Section 21. (2) The Chief Minister may in his discretion grant a licence under this section authorizing the solemnization of a marriage although the female party to the marriage is under the age of eighteen years, but not in any case before her completion of sixteen years."

According to the Islamic Family Law Enactment which applies in all states, the minimum legal age for marriage is 18 years for a male and 16 years for a female. Those under the legal minimum age will only be permitted for marriage if they obtain consent from the Syariah court as well as from their parents” (Makhtar & Ab Kadir, 2019). The following is a statement from Section 8 of the Islamic Family Law (Federal Territories) Act 1984 on the minimum age for marriage:

“No marriage may be solemnized under this Act where either the man is under the age of eighteen or the woman is under the age of sixteen except where the Syariah Judge has granted his permission in writing in certain circumstances.”

The same stipulation is stated in the state’s Enactments and Ordinance as below:

1. Islamic Family Law (State of Terengganu) Enactment 1985 (Section 7).
2. Islamic Family Law (State of Sarawak) Ordinance 2001 (Section 7).
3. Islamic Family Law (State of Kelantan) Enactment 2002 (Section 8).
4. Islamic Family Law (State of Melaka) Enactment 2002 (Section 8).
5. Islamic Family Law (State of Johor) Enactment 2003 (Section 8).
6. Islamic Family Law (State of Negeri Sembilan) Enactment 2003 (Section 8).
7. Islamic Family Law (State of Selangor) Enactment 2003 (Section 8).
8. Islamic Family Law (State of Penang) Enactment 2004 (Section 8).
9. Islamic Family Law (State of Perak) Enactment 2004 (Section 8).
10. Islamic Family Law (State of Sabah) Enactment 2004 (Section 8).
11. Islamic Family Law (State of Pahang) Enactment 2005 (Section 8).
12. Islamic Family Law (State of Perlis) Enactment 2006 (Section 8).
13. Islamic Family Law (State of Kedah) Enactment 2008 (Section 8).

Both laws do not specify the exact criteria under which minors can be married. This is because the civil law uses the phrase "at his discretion" while the Islamic Family law says, "in certain circumstances" and leaves this decision to the Syariah judge" (Makhtar & Ab Kadir, 2019). Although this may seem unclear, it allows decision makers to assess the reasons for the marriage, as well as current societal and cultural concerns, before approving or denying it:

“It is no longer seen as a ‘healthy’ practice and the consequences of this marriage do more harm than good especially from the health and psychological aspects of the children involved. Child marriage can only be allowed provided it is done solely to meet the welfare of the child according to syariah. Muzakarah also agreed to decide that the relevant authorities tighten the conditions of child marriage and ensure its implementation is carried out in accordance with procedures” (JAKIM, 2014).

Even the power to allow or disallow child marriage falls under the Syariah Court, it is crucial that the judges to look ahead on the child’s welfare, health conditions and rights due to the child marriage as stated by the Fatwa. “On the civil side, certain laws have been introduced that can be seen as progressively taking the interests of the child into consideration, such as the Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017 which protects children against the recent concern of sexual predators and child grooming” (Makhtar & Ab Kadir, 2019). “Currently, five states – Penang, Sabah, Johor, Malacca and Perak, and Federal Territories – are open to amending the legal minimum age like Selangor, but the implementation process is slow-going. While on the other hand, seven other states – Sarawak, Pahang, Terengganu, Perlis, Negeri Sembilan, Kedah and Kelantan – have demurred at such move” (Jason & Tan, 2022). Amending the state constitutions to raise the minimum legal age for marriage would be a long-term plan including multi-stakeholder negotiations on a delicate subject. As a result, sensitivities must constantly be considered while keeping the child's rights, interests, and welfare in mind.

However, according to *Malay Mail* reported by Ayamany (2022) Datuk Seri Rina Harun, the Minister of Women, Family and Community Development said the government has no plans in banning child marriage. She added, “This is because the causes of underage marriage need to be addressed not only through legislative change, but also through education, advocacy, health, the strengthening of family institutions, as well as socioeconomic

support for the public. At the same time, the Steering Committee that has been established will continue to monitor implementation and development of the designed programme” (Ayamany, 2022). In addition to that, since the marriage of Muslim falls under the authority of the states, Malaysia Department of Islamic Development (JAKIM) sees there is no necessity to raise the legal marrying age for Muslims to 18 because most states have rejected the proposal, according to Islamic Affairs Minister Datuk Idris Ahmad, on December last year. Hence, the amendments of law regarding child marriage seems impossible that other initiatives to prevent child marriage is necessary to save and preserve the young generations who will one day, hold the pinnacle of national leadership.

4.3. Ways to Prevent Child Marriage

Due to differences in thinking, understanding, and interpretation of the law as well as the impact of underage marriage, the percentage of child marriages in Malaysia has increased where according to a report stated by the Department of Statistics Malaysia, as many as 90% of child marriages involve girls while about 83% of those involved in child marriage are Muslims and in 2018, a total of 1,856 minors were married (Noor & Mohd, 2021). Despite the fact that a minimum age limit is in place, the law is viewed as being ineffective in light of the effects of underage marriage, which are particularly harmful to children in terms of health and education. Thus, a solution is needed to prevent the marriage of these underage children from becoming a normal thing nowadays. Therefore, the ways that can prevent the child marriage are:

4.3.1. By Looking After, the Welfare of Children

When discussing the welfare of the child, it will include providing financial support, good education, and government-sponsored skill-building initiatives. This is due to the fact that most children married under the age of 18 happened due to financial difficulties arising from low-income families. However, it is undeniable that some come from well-off households, but due to the extreme love or enjoyment without consideration for the future, has led to the occurrence of child marriage.

First and foremost, what can be done to protect the welfare of these children is for the government to propose that students' attendance be made compulsory in either primary or secondary schools throughout the country because if the government imposes this requirement, the issue will be avoided and they will not fall behind in their education. This is due to the fact that they must fulfil their duties as a spouse. Then, the measure can be done through government financial support specifically for the B40 group. For example, with covid -19 financial assistance – *Bantuan Keluarga Malaysia* (BKM), *Bantuan Prihatin Rakyat* (BPR), and so on, parents can save a bit and spend it for their children's educational needs, preventing their children from being used as scapegoats to pay off debts or such. Parents in rural areas must be aware that the marriage of their underage children will have an impact on their children's future, as these issues are more common in rural areas (Malayandy & Ismail, 2022).

Besides, if they were married, this will not guarantee food, clothing, and education of the children will be taken care of because most of the partners also do not have a fixed income, and half of them do not care about their education because as for them, the responsibility that needs to be carried is as a husband or wife and not as a student. Schools can also conduct extracurricular activities and entertainment with the goal of forming a healthy human being in order to educate and shape the personality of the students so that they are pious to God Almighty, and being a skilled, physically and spiritually healthy, strong and independent human, also have a sense of responsibility in society.

4.3.2. Raising the Awareness among the Parents and Society

Awareness is a crucial aspect that needs to be present in society, particularly among parents, in order for underage marriage to not become the norm. This is because if parents are aware of the world, they will be more worried about their children's future. The public also needs to play an important role in not encouraging this issue

as adults are one of the causes of this happening because they do not object or even support this action. Children who have no choice are forced to obey the orders of adults due to greed and shallowness of consciousness in this regard. Without awareness, there will be teenage pregnancies, forcing children who are still young to face adulthood. For example, they must consider finances, family, food, and clothing, which is something that a growing youngster should not go through plus they are in the state of needing to create the memory of their childhood.

Next, community and school activities, for example, can be used to raise awareness, empower girls, and remove patriarchal views. Social media should be used effectively and creatively to raise awareness (Masruroh & Verawati, 2020). The government must also play a part in spreading awareness since their opinions are highly valued in Malaysia, causing the community to consider twice before doing, for example, opinions from religious leaders (Malayandy & Ismail, 2022). As a result, having religious leaders reject or speak out against child marriage will have a bigger impact on shaping society's opinions of the child marriage.

4.3.3. Monitoring of Gadget Usage

In this day and era of globalisation, the use of gadgets is vital for communicating and getting essential information. Previous research indicates that gadgets can give a beneficial impact yet there are also negative effects that hinder the process of interacting with others. However, using gadgets without parental supervision is quite dangerous since youngsters will begin to learn something without realising it and will become addicted to undesirable things. Social media is one of the apps that young people are increasingly using nowadays, and we can see in the application such as TikTok, that minors have developed content to attract the viewers. The use of technology, such as gadgets, among school-age children is said to lead to child marriage since they begin to get to know each other and then progress to the next stage. According to Kenny, Koshin, Sulaiman, and Cislighi (2019) the use of technology that is not monitored by the family will cause adolescent girls and boys to contribute to the growth in child marriage.

Therefore, by monitoring gadgets, parents can learn about their children's activities. limit the time to use gadgets and only give them at certain times so parents can make a schedule to facilitate the process of monitoring children's gadgets. However, parents should not cross the boundary if it involves certain things because if they limit their children's activities too much it will make them stressed because they are often being monitored. It is sufficient to just check what is required and spend more time together so that parents can understand the children since they are at an age where they require a lot of love and attention because they are growing.

5. CONCLUSION

This review summarised that poverty, prevention of premarital sex, solutions for teen pregnancies, and girls' needs and wants to marry were aspects of marriage at the age of under 18. Because this condition was influenced by cultural, social, religious, and religious beliefs, child marriage could not be generalised as a wrong or right act. There was a need for a thorough understanding and strategy to gauging the causes for child marriage. The occurrence of child marriage cannot be viewed from a single point of view but instead, a comprehensive study of all factors that may influence the likelihood of child marriage should be conducted too.

In addition, everybody must understand that each and every child gets the right to reach his or her full possibilities. As a result, families, societies, and governments must take the appropriate measures to provide such opportunities to all children and help them grow into wholesome, happy, effective, and decent people. As clearly stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 (UDHR), Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and many other Conventions debated in the study, each child deserves health, education, a life of violence free, and safety, and every community has the duty to protect such privileges. Violation of such rights as a result of child marriage must be considered a serious human rights violation that must be made extinct. As a matter of fact, Malaysia must enact a precise legal ban on child

marriage. A total prohibition on this practise is required to put pressure on the government to adequately address it and apply effective policies, such as prohibiting our legal system from endorsing child marriage applications among rape victims and their rapists. All must recognise the importance of mandatory education for children. This is due to the fact that education, like converting the beliefs of the overall public and the government, is critical for any substantial changes. Education should focus on slowly evolving and expelling patriarchal views and gender biases, as these are at the root of why child marriages occur, mostly among girls.

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