

The Role of Religious Education in Adolescents' Readiness for Early Marriage in Fishermen Communities

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Article info	Abstract
Article History Recieved: 16/06/2026 Revised: 02/07/2026 Accepted: 15/07/2026 ✉ Corresponding author	<i>Early marriage remains a serious social and educational issue in fishermen communities, especially when adolescents have not developed sufficient mental, moral, social, and spiritual readiness for family life. This study aims to analyze the role of religious education in shaping adolescents' readiness for early marriage in the fishermen community of Kuala Lama Village. This research employed a qualitative phenomenological approach involving nine main informants, consisting of three adolescents who married at an early age and six parents, supported by religious and community figures. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation. The findings show that religious education is practiced through family habituation, Qur'an recitation, moral guidance, parental advice, mosque activities, Islamic learning groups, and community religious traditions. This study contributes by highlighting family-based religious education in coastal communities as a contextual framework for strengthening adolescents' self-control, moral awareness, and responsibility before entering marriage.</i> Keywords: Family Religious Education, Adolescent Readiness, Early Marriage, Fishermen Community, Phenomenological Study Abstrak Pernikahan usia dini masih menjadi persoalan sosial dan pendidikan di masyarakat nelayan, terutama ketika remaja belum memiliki kesiapan mental, moral, sosial, dan spiritual yang memadai untuk menjalani kehidupan berkeluarga. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran pendidikan keagamaan dalam membentuk kesiapan remaja menghadapi pernikahan dini di masyarakat nelayan Desa Kuala Lama. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif fenomenologis dengan melibatkan sembilan informan utama, terdiri atas tiga remaja yang menikah pada usia dini dan enam orang tua, serta didukung oleh tokoh agama dan tokoh masyarakat. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña melalui kondensasi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan kesimpulan. Keabsahan data diperkuat melalui triangulasi sumber dan teknik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan keagamaan dilaksanakan melalui pembiasaan ibadah dalam keluarga, membaca Al-Qur'an, pembinaan akhlak, nasihat orang tua, aktivitas masjid, pengajian, dan tradisi keagamaan masyarakat. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada penegasan pendidikan keagamaan keluarga nelayan sebagai kerangka kontekstual dalam

membangun kontrol diri, kesadaran moral, dan tanggung jawab remaja sebelum memasuki pernikahan.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Keagamaan Keluarga, Kesiapan Remaja, Pernikahan Usia Dini, Masyarakat Nelayan; Studi Fenomenologi

INTRODUCTION

Religious education is an important foundation in shaping adolescents' character, personality, and social responsibility. From an Islamic perspective, religious education does not merely function as a process of transmitting religious knowledge, but also serves as a means of internalizing values that shape attitudes, behavior, morals, moral awareness, and self-control in daily life. The family, as the first educational environment, has a strategic position in instilling religious values from an early age. Through religious habituation, role modeling, advice, supervision, and moral guidance, religious education is expected to shape adolescents' readiness to face various stages of life, including family life.

In Islamic teachings, marriage is part of *sunnatullah* and aims to build a family characterized by *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*. However, the success of marriage is not only determined by the formal fulfillment of its requirements and pillars, but also by the readiness of the couple to carry out family responsibilities. In this study, adolescents' readiness is understood as their ability to understand the meaning of marriage, exercise self-control, consider the consequences of their decisions, possess moral and social responsibility, and have basic mental, emotional, spiritual, and economic readiness before entering family life. Therefore, religious education has an important role in shaping adolescents' understanding of the rights and obligations of husband and wife, family responsibilities, and the moral values that must be maintained in marriage (Lestari et al., 2019).

Early marriage remains a complex social issue in various regions of Indonesia. Adolescents who enter marriage at an early age often do not yet have adequate psychological, emotional, social, and economic readiness. This condition shows that early marriage is not only related to age, but also to individual readiness to carry out roles as a spouse and family member. Marriage during adolescence is closely related to education, health, psychological conditions, and the quality of human resources (Maisarah et al., 2024). Several studies also show that early marriage can hinder access to formal education, increase psychological vulnerability, and reduce opportunities for adolescents to develop their potential optimally (Cameron et al., 2023).

At the national level, the practice of early marriage is influenced by social, economic, cultural, and educational factors. During the COVID-19 pandemic, applications for marriage dispensation for children under the age of 19 increased, and most of these applications were approved by religious courts (Hasudungan, 2022). This phenomenon indicates that early marriage is not solely caused by the culture of marrying young, but is also related to economic pressure, the declining role of

education, and weak social protection for adolescents in determining their life choices (Fitriahadi et al., 2025). In this context, religious education needs to be positioned as a form of guidance that not only instills worship values, but also builds adolescents' critical awareness in understanding the consequences of marriage.

This phenomenon is also found in coastal and fishermen communities. Fishermen communities have distinctive socio-economic characteristics, such as dependence on natural conditions, uncertain income, limited access to education, and family life patterns influenced by fishing activities. These conditions can affect parenting patterns, supervision, and children's education within the family. In this context, religious education becomes an important instrument for strengthening family resilience, building adolescents' self-control, and helping them understand the consequences of marriage before entering family life (UNICEF, 2018).

This context is found in the fishermen community of Kuala Lama Village, Pantai Cermin District. Based on data from the Religious Court of Serdang Bedagai, approximately 13 adolescents were recorded as having entered underage marriages from 2024 to 2025 (Pengadilan Agama Serdang Bedagai, 2025). This figure indicates that early marriage remains a problem requiring attention from families, educational institutions, religious figures, communities, and the government. Kuala Lama Village has a socio-religious life supported by kinship relations, mosque activities, Islamic study groups, TPA/MDTA, and various community religious activities. However, at the same time, adolescents also face challenges such as promiscuity, uncontrolled use of social media, school dropout, and family economic pressure.

In this situation, parents play an important role as the main educators in the family. Parents are not only responsible for fulfilling children's physical needs, but also for providing religious education through role modeling, religious habituation, advice, supervision, and moral guidance (Talia & Arifin, 2024). This role is important because religious education within the family becomes the foundation for adolescents in understanding the meaning of marriage, family responsibility, and the ability to face household problems wisely. However, the implementation of religious education in fishermen families cannot be separated from various obstacles, such as parents' busy work schedules at sea, economic limitations, the low educational background of some parents, limited supervision of adolescents' social interactions, and increasingly complex social influences.

Early marriage also affects the continuity of adolescents' education, especially for girls. Adolescents who marry at an early age tend to drop out of school and lose opportunities to develop intellectual capacity, life skills, and social independence (Tresiana & Duadji, 2021). Education is a basic right of every citizen, as stated in Article 31 Paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which affirms that every citizen has the right to obtain education (Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945, 1945). National education is also directed toward developing individuals who are faithful, pious, knowledgeable, competent, creative, independent, and responsible, as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning

the National Education System (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional, 2003).

Legally, Law Number 20 of 2003 affirms that every citizen has the same right to obtain quality education and that citizens aged seven to fifteen are required to attend basic education. In its development, the government has expanded education policy through the 12-year compulsory education program, covering elementary, junior high, and senior high/vocational school levels (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, 2023). However, the implementation of education policy still faces obstacles, especially in rural and coastal areas, such as family economic factors, geographical conditions, limited educational facilities, and low public awareness of the importance of education (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024).

Islamic Religious Education has a strategic role in shaping adolescents' values, attitudes, and readiness. Religious education does not merely function as the transmission of normative knowledge, but also as a process of internalizing values that influence the way adolescents understand life, responsibility, and the consequences of every decision (Said et al., 2022). Comprehensive religious understanding can shape adolescents' framework of thinking in assessing their mental, social, and economic readiness before entering marriage (Hejazziey, 2016). Thus, religious education has the potential to become a preventive instrument against early marriage. However, in the context of fishermen communities, religious education still faces several limitations, such as limited access to formal education, limited educational resources, and the dominance of unstructured non-formal education patterns. In certain conditions, religious education emphasizes ritual aspects and formal obedience, while critical and contextual dimensions receive less attention (Latifiani, 2019).

The conceptual framework of this study positions religious education as a process of shaping adolescents' readiness through three main spaces: family, socio-religious environment, and adolescents' lived experiences in fishermen communities. Religious education within the family shapes basic values through religious habituation, advice, and supervision. Socio-religious environments such as mosques, Islamic study groups, and TPA/MDTA strengthen guidance through collective activities. Meanwhile, the socio-economic context of fishermen communities influences the effectiveness of religious education because it is related to parents' time, economic pressure, access to education, and social norms regarding marriage. Religious education that is able to integrate religious values with social reality can help adolescents understand that marriage is not merely the fulfillment of social or religious norms, but an institution that requires multidimensional readiness (Miqat et al., 2023).

Previous studies have discussed religious education, early marriage, and the role of the family. Some studies emphasize that religious education contributes to the formation of adolescents' character, morals, and behavior. Other studies show that early marriage is influenced by economic, educational, cultural, and social environmental factors. However, previous studies tend to discuss religious education and early marriage separately. Studies that specifically connect religious education in fishermen

families with the formation of adolescents' readiness to face early marriage remain limited. In addition, previous research has not sufficiently placed the socio-economic characteristics of fishermen communities as factors that influence the effectiveness of religious education in shaping adolescents' readiness.

Based on this gap, this study focuses on the role of religious education in shaping adolescents' readiness for early marriage in the fishermen community of Kuala Lama Village. The novelty of this study lies in examining religious education in fishermen families as a contextual framework for shaping adolescents' readiness to face early marriage. The theoretical contribution of this study is to expand the study of Islamic family education by incorporating the socio-economic context of coastal communities as a factor that influences the internalization of religious values, self-control, and adolescents' sense of responsibility. Practically, this study is expected to serve as a basis for strengthening family religious education, community religious activities, and adolescent guidance in fishermen communities. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, this study aims to analyze the condition of religious education in fishermen families, the role of parents in implementing religious education, and the obstacles faced in shaping adolescents' readiness for early marriage.

METHOD

Research Design and Participants

This study employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design. This approach was chosen because the study sought to understand the experiences, perspectives, and meanings constructed by informants regarding the role of religious education in shaping adolescents' readiness for early marriage in fishermen communities. Phenomenology was used to explore the lived experiences of informants, particularly how adolescents and parents interpret religious education, marriage readiness, family responsibility, and socio-religious obstacles that emerge in the life of fishermen communities (Creswell, 2022; Moleong, 2021).

The phenomenological procedure in this study was carried out through several stages. First, the researcher identified informants' experiences related to family religious education and early marriage. Second, the researcher collected narratives of experience through observation and semi-structured interviews. Third, the interview data were read repeatedly to identify significant statements related to religious habituation, parental roles, supervision of social interactions, marriage readiness, and obstacles to religious education. Fourth, these significant statements were grouped into major themes that described the meaning of religious education in shaping adolescents' readiness. Through this procedure, this study not only describes the phenomenon of early marriage, but also interprets the socio-religious experiences of informants in the context of fishermen communities.

This research was conducted in Kuala Lama Village, Pantai Cermin District, Serdang Bedagai Regency, North Sumatra Province. This location was selected because

it is a coastal area where the majority of the community works as fishermen and where the phenomenon of early marriage among adolescents is still found. The research informants were selected purposively based on their involvement and understanding of religious education, fishermen family life, and the practice of early marriage. The main informants consisted of nine people, including three adolescents who married at an early age and six parents of adolescents. In addition, this study also involved supporting informants, such as religious figures, community leaders, and religious educators who played a role in guiding adolescents in the fishermen community.

The number of informants was determined based on the need for data depth rather than statistical quantity. Informant selection continued until the data obtained were considered sufficient and showed recurring patterns. Data saturation was reached when information from the informants no longer produced substantively new themes, particularly regarding the forms of religious education in the family, parental roles, obstacles to adolescent guidance, and adolescents' understanding of marriage readiness. Thus, the number of informants was considered adequate to explain the experiences and meanings of religious education in the context of the fishermen community of Kuala Lama Village.

Instruments and Data Collection Procedures

The main instrument in this study was the researcher as the key instrument, supported by observation guidelines, semi-structured interview guidelines, and documentation. Observation was conducted to examine religious education practices in the fishermen community, such as religious habituation in the family, Islamic study activities, TPA/MDTA, mosque activities, and interactions between parents and adolescents in daily life. Observation was also directed at understanding the social context of the fishermen community, including family economic activities, adolescents' social environment, and community religious activities that supported adolescent guidance.

Semi-structured interviews were used to explore informants' experiences, perspectives, and meanings regarding religious education, adolescents' readiness, parental roles, and obstacles faced in shaping adolescents' readiness for early marriage. The interviews were conducted gradually by adjusting to the time and availability of the informants. The interview questions were designed openly so that informants could explain their experiences more broadly, while remaining directed toward the focus of the study. Interview data were managed through field notes, summaries of interview results, identification of significant statements, and grouping of informants' responses according to the research themes. In this way, interview data could be traced back and compared with the results of observation and documentation.

Documentation was used to complement and strengthen the data obtained from observation and interviews. Documentary data included archives or records of adolescents' religious activities, photographs of religious activities, documents from religious institutions, community profiles, and other documents related to religious

education in the fishermen community. Documentation functioned as a secondary data source that could increase research credibility through data triangulation (Sugiyono, 2021). The data collection procedure was carried out gradually through field observation, interviews with informants, data recording, document review, and rechecking the suitability of the data with the research focus.

Analysis Techniques and Ethical Considerations

The data analysis technique in this study used the interactive analysis model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles et al., 2014). Data condensation was carried out by selecting, focusing, simplifying, and grouping data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation according to the research focus. These focuses included the condition of religious education in fishermen families, the role of parents in shaping adolescents' readiness, obstacles to religious education, and the contribution of religious education to adolescents' readiness for early marriage.

The analysis process was conducted through thematic coding. For example, informants' statements about habituating prayer, reading the Qur'an, daily supplications, and parental advice were grouped under the theme of "religious education in the family." Statements about Islamic study groups, TPA/MDTA, mosque activities, and wirid were grouped under the theme of "community religious education." Statements about parents' busy fishing work, economic pressure, peer influence, digital media use, and the culture of marrying young were grouped under the theme of "obstacles to religious education." Meanwhile, statements about self-control, responsibility, moral awareness, and understanding the meaning of marriage were grouped under the theme of "adolescents' readiness for marriage." The condensed data were then presented in the form of thematic narratives and tables of findings so that data patterns could be understood systematically. Furthermore, the data were verified repeatedly to obtain conclusions that were consistent with field realities.

Data validity was maintained through the principles of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as used in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility was established through source and technique triangulation by comparing data from adolescents, parents, religious figures, community leaders, observation results, interviews, and documentation. Transferability was maintained by presenting the research context in detail, dependability was carried out by recording the research process systematically, while confirmability was conducted by examining the consistency between field data and the researcher's interpretation. Ethically, this study paid attention to informants' consent, the use of data solely for academic purposes, and the inclusion of informants' names based on the consent of the informants involved in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The findings show that religious education in the fishermen community of Kuala Lama Village takes place through the involvement of families, non-formal religious institutions, religious figures, and the social environment of the community. Kuala Lama Village is a coastal area in Pantai Cermin District, Serdang Bedagai Regency, whose socio-economic life is largely influenced by the marine sector, fisheries, agriculture, and informal work. The character of coastal communities, which is simple, hardworking, upholds social solidarity, mutual cooperation, deliberation, and kinship relations, becomes an important social capital in the implementation of religious education. However, dependence on marine products and unstable income also affects the intensity of parenting, supervision, and religious guidance for adolescents within the family. Thus, religious education in fishermen communities cannot be understood merely as a worship activity, but also as a value-forming process influenced by economic conditions, parents' work patterns, and the social dynamics of coastal communities.

Socially and religiously, the fishermen community of Kuala Lama Village still has a fairly strong religious awareness. This can be seen from the existence of mosques, prayer rooms, TPA/MDTA, regular Islamic study groups, Qur'an learning, Islamic holiday commemorations, *wirid*, and various community religious activities. The mosque does not only function as a place of worship, but also serves as a space for social guidance, moral education, and strengthening religious values among adolescents. TPA/MDTA functions as a non-formal religious education institution that helps children and adolescents learn to read the Qur'an, daily supplications, worship practices, and moral guidance. This condition indicates that religious education in fishermen communities occurs through three complementary channels: family, non-formal religious institutions, and the socio-religious environment of the community. This pattern is in line with the view that religious education does not only take place formally, but also through habituation, role modeling, and a social environment that supports the internalization of religious values (Daradjat, 2012; Ulwan, 2015).

The informants in this study consisted of adolescents who married at an early age and parents of adolescents. The adolescent informants who married at an early age consisted of Sri Rahayu, Yola Ayunda, and Nur Jannah, aged between 20 and 21 years, with junior and senior high school educational backgrounds. Meanwhile, the parent informants consisted of Ita, Zulkifli, Zainal Abidin Tarigan, Supiani, Darman, and Amelia Lubis, aged between 48 and 56 years, with elementary, junior high, and senior high school educational backgrounds, and occupations as housewives and fishermen. The composition of these informants shows that the phenomenon of religious education and adolescents' readiness for early marriage needs to be viewed from two sides: the experiences of adolescents who entered early marriage and the experiences of parents in guiding, supervising, and instilling religious values amid the socio-economic limitations of fishermen families. Differences in parents' educational backgrounds, occupations,

and family conditions also become factors that influence patterns of religious guidance, particularly in terms of the intensity of supervision, advice, and assistance given to adolescents before entering married life.

Table 1. Main Findings on Religious Education and Adolescents' Readiness

Finding Aspect	Forms of Field Findings	Meaning of Findings
Religious education in the family	Habituation of prayer, Qur'an recitation, daily supplications, advice, politeness, and supervision of social interactions	The family becomes the initial space for shaping adolescents' spiritual, moral, and responsibility values
Community religious education	Islamic study groups, TPA/MDTA, mosque activities, wirid, and Islamic holiday commemorations	The religious environment strengthens family guidance and creates a socio-religious space for adolescents
Parental role	Educators, guides, role models, supervisors, and providers of advice on marriage readiness	Parents become the main actors in shaping adolescents' understanding of religion and family responsibility
Obstacles to religious education	Busy fishing work, family economic conditions, peer influence, social media, and the culture of marrying young	Religious education has not been fully optimal because it is influenced by the socio-economic conditions of fishermen communities
Contribution of religious education	Strengthening character, self-control, moral awareness, and understanding of marital responsibility	Religious education helps adolescents understand that marriage requires mental, moral, social, and spiritual readiness

Field findings show that religious education in Kuala Lama Village does not only take place through formal learning, but has become part of the community's way of life. Religious values are instilled through religious habituation, Islamic study groups, mosque activities, parental advice, and the role modeling of religious and community figures. Islamic study groups in mosques or prayer rooms become important spaces because they not only function as places for delivering religious lectures, but also as media for social interaction that strengthen community relations and provide understanding of worship, morals, family life, and adolescents' social interactions. Thus, religious education in fishermen communities serves as a mechanism for internalizing values that shape the way adolescents understand social boundaries, moral responsibility, and social readiness before entering married life.

The role of the religious environment is strengthened by parents' encouragement for adolescents to participate in religious activities. One informant stated, *"I encourage my child to join Islamic study groups, TPA, and mosque activities whenever available. I am happy when my child is close to a good environment, because if the environment is good, children are usually more guided"* (Ita, personal communication, 2026). Religious education in the family is also carried out through simple habituation, such as teaching prayer, Qur'an recitation, supplication, and respect for parents. This is reflected in the statement of an informant: *"I usually start with small things, such as teaching prayer, Qur'an recitation, and the habit of praying. If there is time, I also invite my child to join Islamic study groups. I try to make sure my child knows religion"*

from home first” (Zulkifli, personal communication, 2026). These statements indicate that the family and the religious environment have a complementary relationship. The family becomes the initial space for instilling religious values, while Islamic study groups, TPA/MDTA, and mosque activities strengthen the guidance that has begun at home. This pattern is important in fishermen communities because parents' limited time due to work means that adolescent guidance cannot rely solely on the family, but also requires support from the socio-religious environment.

In addition to religious habituation, parents also instill social values such as responsibility, politeness, maintaining social boundaries, and the ability to distinguish good from bad behavior. One informant stated, *“I emphasize responsibility, politeness, and self-care. Children must know that religion is not only about worship, but also a way of life”* (Zainal Abidin Tarigan, personal communication, 2026). The existence of TPA/MDTA, *wirid*, regular Islamic study groups, and community religious activities also helps fishermen families who have limited time to guide their children. In this context, parents remain the main actors in adolescents' religious guidance through direction, habituation, supervision, and advice, as expressed by an informant: *“I teach my child to pray, recite the Qur'an, and respect parents. I am often outside the house, but I still try to make time to remind them. My child must know religion from home”* (Supiani, personal communication, 2026). These findings show that religious education in fishermen families is not only oriented toward ritual worship, but also functions to shape adolescents' character, self-control, moral awareness, and social readiness. However, the effectiveness of such guidance is strongly influenced by the intensity of parents' presence, family economic conditions, and support from the community religious environment.

The role of parents is also evident through role modeling. Based on the observations, several families habituate their children to participate in worship activities, such as congregational prayer and religious activities at the mosque. These habits are not merely given as commands, but are also demonstrated through examples provided by parents in daily life. One informant explained, *“I make it a habit through example and reminders. When I pray, my child follows. If something is wrong, I immediately tell them. I think children must know from the beginning what is good and what is not”* (Darman, personal communication, 2026). This data shows that religious guidance is carried out through a combination of role modeling and direction. In the perspective of Islamic education, role modeling and habituation are important methods in shaping children's character because religious values are more easily accepted when they are present in the practices of family life (Ulwan, 2015).

In guiding adolescents, parents also direct their children to participate in religious activities outside the home, such as Islamic study groups, TPA/MDTA, and mosque activities. One parent stated, *“I encourage my child to join Islamic study groups when available, and to pray in congregation at the mosque whenever possible. If there is a religious event, I tell them to join so they can listen to religious lectures. Children then do not only know the outside world”* (Amelia Lubis, personal communication,

2026). This statement shows that parents do not only function as educators within the family, but also as guides in shaping children's social environment. Parents realize that adolescents' development is influenced by peer groups and the surrounding environment, so adolescents' involvement in religious activities becomes one form of indirect supervision.

In addition to guiding worship and morals, parents also provide adolescents with an understanding of readiness before entering marriage. Some parents have begun to hold the view that marriage should not be based merely on age or personal desire, but requires readiness in various aspects. One informant stated, *"Marriage must be truly prepared for. It is not only about being old enough, but also about being mentally and economically ready. If one is not ready, there will be many problems in the household"* (Ita, personal communication, 2026). This statement shows that parents have begun to introduce a broader understanding of marriage to adolescents. Marriage is viewed not only as the fulfillment of social or cultural demands, but as a life that requires maturity, responsibility, and readiness to build a family. This is in line with the concept of readiness, which emphasizes that individuals need to have physical, mental, emotional, and social maturity, as well as certain experiences, before facing important situations in life (Slameto, 2015).

Nevertheless, the findings show that parents' roles in guiding adolescents face several obstacles. The main obstacle is limited time due to work as fishermen. Work conditions that require parents to be at sea or earn a living make supervision of children not always optimal. One informant stated, *"My biggest obstacle is time. I am often at sea, so I cannot always monitor my child. Besides that, children nowadays spend more time on their phones and with friends. So I have to remind them more often"* (Zulkifli, 2026). This statement shows that parents' work conditions influence the intensity of religious education in the family. On the one hand, parents have the responsibility to guide their children, but on the other hand, economic demands make some parents spend more time working. This condition is consistent with the characteristics of fishermen communities, whose family lives are largely influenced by fishing work and economic uncertainty (Satria, 2015).

Economic factors also become an important obstacle in religious education within fishermen families. The demand to meet family needs sometimes causes parents' attention to children's guidance to be less than optimal. Parents' main priority is often directed toward fulfilling daily needs, so the process of accompanying adolescents takes place alongside the busyness of earning a living. One informant explained, *"The most difficult things are the economy and supervision. When parents work hard to earn a living, children sometimes get out of control. Moreover, if the environment says that marrying young is normal, children easily follow it"* (Zainal Abidin Tarigan, personal communication, 2026). This statement indicates that economic problems do not only affect the fulfillment of material needs, but also influence parenting patterns and adolescents' supervision.

Obstacles to religious education in shaping adolescents' readiness in Kuala Lama Village can be categorized into several factors, namely economic-work factors, social-peer interaction factors, cultural factors, educational factors, and digital media factors. Economic and work factors are reflected in the limited time of some parents due to fishing activities or work to meet family needs, so religious supervision and guidance for adolescents do not always take place intensively. Social-peer interaction factors emerge through the influence of peers, which can shape adolescents' perspectives on relationships with the opposite sex and decisions about marriage. Cultural factors can be seen in the persistence of the view that early marriage is a normal matter in certain communities, leading some adolescents to understand marriage as a decision that does not always require mature readiness. Meanwhile, the use of digital media also becomes a challenge because adolescents receive many influences from outside the family. One parent informant stated, *"Children today are different; the influence of friends and mobile phones is very strong. Sometimes they have been guided at home, but many things from outside also influence them"* (Supiani, personal communication, 2026). This finding shows that religious education in the family faces challenges because adolescent behavior is shaped not only by family values, but also by the social environment and digital media. In the context of adolescent development, peer influence and the social environment can affect the way adolescents make decisions and shape their behavior (Santrock, 2019).

Interviews with adolescents also show that their understanding of marriage readiness is not yet evenly developed. Some adolescents understand marriage as something good from a religious perspective, but they have not fully considered mental, economic, emotional, social, and responsibility-related readiness after marriage (Nur Jannah, personal communication, 2026; Sri Rahayu, personal communication, 2026; Yola Ayunda, personal communication, 2026). This condition indicates that religious education has shaped normative awareness of the importance of marriage, but has not fully developed into reflective awareness for assessing personal readiness maturely. On the other hand, religious education still contributes to building self-control, moral awareness, and understanding of family responsibility. This is reinforced by a parent's statement: *"I emphasize discipline, responsibility, and not socializing carelessly. Children must also know the boundaries between men and women. I always say, do not play around with the future"* (Darman, personal communication, 2026). Islamic study groups and community religious activities also support this guidance because adolescents receive religious direction outside the family. As one informant stated, *"If children join Islamic study groups, they hear more good things. We as parents also feel helped because there are others reminding them besides us at home"* (Amelia Lubis, personal communication, 2026). Thus, religious education does not only shape an understanding of worship, but also adolescents' moral, social, and spiritual readiness in facing married life (Al-Ghazali, 2005).

The contribution of religious education to adolescents' readiness can be seen in the formation of the understanding that marriage is not merely a desire to build a

household, but requires responsibility, self-control, maturity of attitude, and the ability to consider consequences. This understanding is formed through family advice, religious activities, religious habituation, supervision of social interactions, and guidance from religious figures. One parent explained, *"Children who understand religion are usually better able to restrain themselves. They also know that marriage carries great responsibility. Without religion, children are easily driven by emotion"* (Ita, personal communication, 2026). This statement shows that religious education helps adolescents consider impacts and consequences before making decisions, including the decision to marry. However, the influence of religious education cannot be understood as the only factor that determines adolescents' readiness. Religious education plays a role in building moral and spiritual foundations, but its effectiveness is still influenced by family economic conditions, the intensity of parental supervision, the culture of marrying young, peer influence, and adolescents' access to formal education. Therefore, religious education needs to be supported by strengthening family roles, the socio-religious environment, and educational institutions so that it can shape adolescents' readiness more comprehensively.

Religious education also builds moral and social readiness through the instillation of responsibility, politeness, self-control, and the ability to maintain relationships with others. One informant stated, *"I want my child to have a strong religious foundation. Because when they have a family later, it is not only about earning a living, but also about how to behave and be responsible"* (Zulkifli, personal communication, 2026). Thus, religious education contributes to shaping religious understanding, character, self-control, and awareness of family responsibility. However, this contribution has not been fully optimal because it is influenced by parents' limited time, economic conditions, peer influence, technological development, and the uneven understanding of adolescents regarding marriage readiness. Therefore, shaping adolescents' readiness for early marriage requires continuous cooperation among families, religious figures, non-formal educational institutions, and fishermen communities.

Discussion

The findings show that religious education in fishermen families in Kuala Lama Village has an important position as the foundation for shaping adolescents' readiness for early marriage. Religious education does not only function as the transmission of religious knowledge, but also as a process of value habituation through family parenting patterns, community religious activities, and daily social interactions (Fatmawati, 2020). In fishermen families, religious education takes place through the habituation of prayer, Qur'an recitation, advice, the formation of manners, supervision of social interactions, and parental role modeling. These practices indicate that the family becomes the initial space for shaping adolescents' moral, spiritual, and social foundations. Religious education plays a role in shaping faith awareness, moral behavior, and social responsibility so that religious values do not remain merely as knowledge, but are

reflected in adolescents' attitudes, especially when they face important choices such as early marriage (Fauziya & Sarah, 2025; Nata, 2016).

The pattern of religious education in fishermen families mostly takes place informally through simple, consistent actions embedded in household life. Parents introduce religious values through direct practices, such as inviting children to pray, reminding them to read the Qur'an, giving advice, and guiding them in choosing their social environment. This pattern is in line with the view that children's education in Islam is built through role modeling, habituation, advice, supervision, and educational guidance (Ulwan, 2015). In the context of Islamic education, such habituation needs to integrate cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects so that religious values are not only understood, but also manifested in social behavior (Muhaimin, 2020; Samsudin et al., 2025). Therefore, prayer, Qur'an recitation, and the habituation of manners are not merely ritual activities, but also serve as means of shaping adolescents' discipline, responsibility, self-control, and maturity of attitude. Religious-based character education can strengthen adolescents' respect, responsibility, and moral awareness in facing important decisions, including the decision to enter marriage (Khodijah, 2024; Lickona, 2021).

This finding shows that fishermen families do not only function as the first environment for children's psychological, moral, and religious development, but also as a space of moral protection for adolescents amid social, economic, peer, and early marriage cultural pressures (Daradjat, 2012). In the context of fishermen families, the home becomes a place where adolescents' perspectives on life, social boundaries, responsibility, and the meaning of marriage are formed. Religious education in the family helps adolescents realize that marriage is not merely a social bond or the fulfillment of cultural norms, but a life that requires moral, spiritual, emotional, social, and family responsibility readiness. Therefore, patterns of communication, role modeling, and parental supervision are closely related to the formation of adolescents' behavior (Yulianti et al., 2023). Adolescents' self-awareness also needs to be developed through consistent guidance so that they are able to understand themselves, control their behavior, and consider the consequences of every decision they make (Hafizha, 2022).

In addition to the family, mosques, prayer rooms, Islamic study groups, TPA/MDTA, *wirid*, Islamic holiday commemorations, and community religious activities function as centers of socio-religious education. These activities are not only places for learning religion, but also spaces for social interaction that connect adolescents with a positive environment. From the perspective of Islamic education, education does not merely aim to provide knowledge, but also to form individuals with noble character and balanced relationships with Allah, fellow human beings, and the social environment (Al-Ghazali, 2005). Community-based education is also important because the process of value formation occurs through social interaction, local culture, and community participation in collective activities (Zubaedi, 2020). In coastal communities, religious education cannot be separated from communal solidarity,

dependence on natural resources, and economic dynamics influenced by maritime activities (Nuryahman et al., 2014; Sapulette, 2024).

Nevertheless, adolescents' involvement in religious activities is not yet fully optimal. Some adolescents participate in religious activities because of parental encouragement, rather than because of strong personal awareness. This condition indicates a gap between the social presence of religious education and the internalization of religious values within adolescents. This gap is related to the adolescent developmental phase, which is characterized by identity searching, self-concept formation, emotional changes, social pressure, and the increasing influence of peers (Nur & Daulay, 2020; Umami, 2019). Therefore, religious education needs to be directed in a more communicative and contextual way so that religious values are not only understood as rules, but also become personal awareness that influences adolescents' behavior and life decisions.

Adolescents' readiness for early marriage in this study is not only viewed from their ability to perform worship, but also from their ability to understand the consequences of family life. Religious education provided by parents becomes a provision for adolescents to understand that marriage requires mental, moral, emotional, social, economic, and responsibility readiness. This is important because early marriage is a phenomenon related to legal, religious, social, cultural, educational, and economic aspects. Normatively, marriage has an important position in Islam, but the practice of marriage at an early age can create problems if it is not accompanied by adequate readiness. Previous studies show that early marriage is often influenced by culture, religious understanding, social pressure, economic conditions, and weak access to education (Barkah et al., 2023; Kusuma & Erlina, 2021; Naim et al., 2026). Therefore, religious education needs to play a role not only in explaining the value of marriage, but also in instilling the understanding that marriage requires multidimensional readiness.

Obstacles to religious education in fishermen families are mainly related to socio-economic conditions, parents' work patterns, peer environments, the culture of marrying young, and technological development. Parents' busy work as fishermen makes the intensity of assistance and supervision for adolescents not always optimal. This problem is not merely caused by parents' lack of concern, but is related to economic demands and the characteristics of coastal community life that depend on fishing work. Economic conditions affect the amount of time parents spend at home; limited time leads to weak supervision, while weak supervision opens space for adolescents to be more influenced by peers, social media, and popular culture. In communities where early marriage is still normalized, these influences can shape adolescents' understanding that marriage is a normal choice even without mature readiness. Studies on coastal communities show that early marriage can be influenced by socio-economic conditions, local culture, and limited access to education (Salik, 2020; Suriah et al., 2022). Therefore, religious education in the digital era needs to be directed toward strengthening social values, self-control, and the ability to filter

information so that adolescents are not easily influenced by risky environments (Mukhlis & Saini, 2025).

The findings also show that religious understanding of marriage does not always go hand in hand with practical readiness to live a household life. Some adolescents understand that marriage is part of religious teachings, but they do not fully understand mental, economic, emotional, communication, and family responsibility readiness. A study on child marriage in Indonesia shows differences in perceptions between adolescents and adults in understanding marriage, making family- and community-based education very important (Wibowo et al., 2021). In this context, religious education indeed contributes to shaping self-control, moral awareness, and understanding of responsibility, but it cannot be understood as the only factor determining adolescents' readiness. Religious education needs to be supported by parental supervision, access to formal education, more stable family economic conditions, and a healthy social environment. Therefore, religious education needs to be directed not only toward understanding religious law or values, but also toward developing maturity of thinking, decision-making ability, emotional control, family communication, and social responsibility as part of adolescents' life skills toward adulthood (Nasution et al., 2022).

In addition to family and adolescent factors, community culture also influences the practice of early marriage. In certain environments, marrying young is still considered normal because it is related to social customs, parents' concerns about children's social interactions, or family economic conditions. However, this study also shows a shift in the mindset of some community members, as there is a growing understanding that marriage should be based on readiness, not merely age or environmental pressure. Studies on the acceptance of child marriage show that social acceptance of child marriage needs to be reduced through education, advocacy, and changes in community norms (Ratnaningsih et al., 2022). Thus, religious education can become a protective factor for adolescents because it provides understanding of responsibility, social boundaries, self-control, and the importance of considering the future. Its effectiveness highly depends on the continuity of the roles of families, schools, religious figures, and the community environment (Kistiana et al., 2025; Mauludi, 2023). Early marriage prevention also needs to be carried out through religious education, strengthening adolescents' awareness, educational empowerment, and community involvement (Nurdiah & Abdullah, 2024; Pamessangi et al., 2024).

Specifically, this study emphasizes that fishermen communities have socio-religious characteristics that differ from society in general. Unstable economic conditions, fishing work, parents' limited time at home, and the continuity of religious education within the family are interrelated in shaping adolescents' readiness for early marriage. Thus, obstacles to religious education cannot be understood only as problems of religious learning, but also as social problems influenced by family economic structures, coastal work patterns, access to education, and social norms that develop within fishermen communities. This finding expands the understanding that family

religious education in the context of coastal communities functions not only as a means of internalizing religious values, but also as a family resilience strategy in facing the risk of early marriage.

The prevention of early marriage is not sufficient if it is carried out only through normative prohibitions or the delivery of the risks of marrying young. Prevention efforts need to be conducted contextually through strengthening religious education in the family, improving communication between parents and adolescents, ensuring the continuity of formal education, supervising social interactions and digital media use, and creating a socio-religious environment that supports adolescent development. Strategies for preventing child marriage also need to consider local conditions, access to education, family support, and community social norms so that they are more relevant to the realities of adolescents' lives in coastal areas (Ayudiputri et al., 2024).

The implications of these findings indicate that families have a strategic role in shaping adolescents' readiness, but this role requires support from socio-religious institutions. Mosques, TPA/MDTA, Islamic study groups, and religious figures do not only function as centers of worship, but also as spaces for adolescent guidance. Through cooperation between families and communities, religious education can more effectively shape adolescents who have moral, social, psychological, and spiritual readiness before entering marriage. Thus, religious education in fishermen communities functions as a social mechanism for building awareness, self-control, responsibility, and adolescents' readiness to face family life. However, this study has limitations in terms of location scope, number of informants, and the research approach used. This study was conducted only in Kuala Lama Village with a limited number of informants, so the findings are contextual and cannot be generalized to all fishermen communities. In addition, the phenomenological approach emphasizes informants' experiences and meanings; therefore, future research can be conducted with a broader regional scope, more diverse informants, or quantitative and mixed-method approaches to examine the relationship between religious education, family roles, and adolescents' readiness for early marriage.

CONCLUSION

Religious education in the fishermen community of Kuala Lama Village plays an important role in shaping adolescents' readiness for early marriage. This education takes place through religious habituation, Qur'an recitation, moral cultivation, parental advice, supervision of social interactions, and adolescents' involvement in community religious activities such as Islamic study groups, TPA/MDTA, mosque activities, and other religious traditions. Parents hold a central position as educators, guides, role models, and supervisors in instilling religious values in adolescents. Through religious education, adolescents gain an understanding that marriage is not merely a matter of age or social bond, but a life that requires mental, moral, social, spiritual, emotional readiness, and family responsibility.

However, the implementation of religious education in fishermen families has not been fully optimal because it is influenced by parents' limited time due to fishing work, family economic pressure, peer influence, the use of digital media, limited access to education, and the persistence of community views that consider early marriage as something normal. These findings indicate that religious education can become an important foundation in shaping adolescents' readiness when supported by cooperation among families, religious figures, non-formal educational institutions, schools, and the community. Thus, religious education needs to be directed not only toward religious habituation, but also toward building critical awareness, self-control, decision-making ability, social responsibility, and adolescents' readiness to plan their future before entering family life.

The practical implications of this study show that fishermen families need to strengthen communication, role modeling, and supervision of adolescents, especially in facing the influence of peer groups and digital media. Mosques, TPA/MDTA, Islamic study groups, religious figures, and educational institutions also need to be involved in adolescent guidance through more contextual religious materials, such as family responsibility, social boundaries, marriage readiness, and the importance of continuing education. Future research is recommended to expand the study location to other coastal communities, involve more diverse informants, and use quantitative or mixed-method approaches so that the relationship between religious education, family roles, socio-economic conditions, and adolescents' readiness for early marriage can be analyzed more broadly.

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