

Merariq Kodek as a Structural Victimization of Sasak Women: Maqashid Sharia Analysis of Reproductive Health Rights in Central Lombok

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Abstract

*This study aims to analyze the practice of **merariq kodek** as a form of structural victimization against Sasak women and to examine its impact on women's reproductive health rights from the perspective of **maqashid sharia** in Central Lombok. The study employs a qualitative method using a socio-legal approach and a critical paradigm through literature review of various journals, previous studies, regulations, and studies on Sasak culture. The findings reveal that **merariq kodek** is no longer merely understood as a traditional Sasak marriage custom, but has transformed into a social mechanism that reinforces patriarchal culture and the subordination of women. In practice, women often lose the right to determine their own life choices due to customary pressures, social stigma, and family honor constructions that force them into early marriage. This condition causes women to experience structural victimization resulting in loss of access to education, economic dependency, psychological pressure, anxiety, social trauma, and emotional unpreparedness in facing married life. In addition, early marriage practices also increase reproductive health risks such as anemia, preeclampsia, miscarriage, low birth weight, and premature birth. From the perspective of **maqashid sharia**, such practices contradict the principles of **hifz al-nafs**, **hifz al-nasl**, and **hifz al-'irdh** because they threaten the protection of life, lineage, and women's dignity. This study emphasizes the importance of reinterpreting local culture through religious, educational, and legal protection approaches to prevent child marriage practices and strengthen the protection of Sasak women's reproductive health rights in Central Lombok.*

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis praktik merariq kodek sebagai bentuk viktimisasi struktural terhadap perempuan Sasak dan untuk mengkaji dampaknya terhadap hak kesehatan reproduksi perempuan dari perspektif maqashid syariah di Lombok Tengah. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan **socio-legal** dan paradigma kritis melalui studi literatur terhadap berbagai jurnal, penelitian terdahulu, regulasi, dan kajian budaya Sasak. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa **merariq kodek** tidak lagi sekadar dipahami sebagai tradisi perkawinan adat masyarakat Sasak, melainkan telah mengalami transformasi menjadi mekanisme sosial yang memperkuat budaya patriarki dan subordinasi perempuan. Dalam praktiknya, perempuan sering kehilangan hak menentukan pilihan hidup akibat tekanan adat, stigma sosial, dan konstruksi kehormatan keluarga yang memaksa mereka menerima perkawinan usia dini. Kondisi tersebut menyebabkan perempuan mengalami viktimisasi struktural yang berdampak pada hilangnya akses pendidikan, ketergantungan ekonomi, tekanan psikologis, kecemasan, trauma sosial, serta ketidaksiapan emosional dalam menjalani kehidupan rumah tangga. Selain itu, praktik perkawinan dini juga meningkatkan risiko kesehatan reproduksi seperti anemia, preeklamsia, keguguran, bayi berat lahir rendah, dan kelahiran prematur. Dalam

perspektif *maqashid syariah*, praktik tersebut bertentangan dengan prinsip *hifz al-nafs*, *hifz al-nasl*, dan *hifz al-'irdh* karena mengancam keselamatan jiwa, kualitas keturunan, dan kehormatan perempuan. Penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya reinterpretasi budaya lokal melalui pendekatan keagamaan, pendidikan, dan perlindungan hukum untuk mencegah praktik perkawinan anak serta memperkuat perlindungan hak kesehatan reproduksi perempuan Sasak di Lombok Tengah.

Keywords : *Maqasid al-Shariah, Merariq Kodek, Reproductive Health, Sasak Women, Structural Victimization,*



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A. Introduction

The *merariq kodek* tradition in the Sasak community in Central Lombok is a socio-cultural phenomenon that is still debated in the perspective of law, religion, health, and human rights. In Sasak culture, *merariq* is understood as part of the mechanism of traditional marriage which is carried out through the process of "carrying away" the bride-to-be as a symbol of male courage and respect for local customs. However, modern social developments show that the practice has been transformed into *merariq codek*, which is marriage involving minors or adolescents who are biologically and psychologically immature. This phenomenon is no longer understood simply as cultural heritage, but has developed into a social problem that is closely related to the neglect of women's rights, especially reproductive health rights. In practice, Sasak women are often placed as the most vulnerable to social, psychological, and health impacts due to the practice of early marriage. In fact, cultural pressure and family honor are often reasons for social legitimacy against the practice of *merariq codek* even though it is contrary to the principle of protection of women and children.¹

The phenomenon of *merariq kodek* in Central Lombok also shows the existence of an unbalanced power relationship between men and women in the patriarchal cultural structure of the Sasak society. This tradition places women as social objects who must maintain family honor through compliance with customary norms and social pressure of society. In many cases, women who have been "taken away" by men are considered inappropriate to return to their family homes because it will cause social shame and stigma. This condition causes adolescent girls to lose their right to determine their own future, including the right to education, health, and reproductive protection. The literature on patriarchy shows that a culture of honor and control over women's bodies is often used as a tool of social legitimacy to maintain male dominance

¹ Saidun and Encung Encung, "Sasak Islam in the Merariq Tradition in Central Lombok, Tumpak Village," *Lectures Journal of Islamic and Education Studies* 2, no. 4 (2023): 211–27, doi:10.58355/lectures.v2i4.69.

in traditional societies.² In addition, patriarchal culture also gives birth to women's subordination through social supervision of women's behavior that is considered deviant from customary and religious norms.³ Thus, *merariq codec* cannot be understood only as a cultural practice, but must be analyzed as a social mechanism that produces structural injustices against Sasak women.

In a broader context, *the practice of merariq codec* can be categorized as a form of structural victimization of women. Structural victimization is a condition when a person becomes a victim due to social, cultural, and legal systems that do not provide adequate protection for their rights. Women in *the practice of merariq codec* often do not have the space to refuse marriage because of the strong cultural and social pressures that require them to accept the situation. The theory of structural victimization explains that victims are not always harmed directly by a particular individual, but rather by social systems that unconsciously shape injustice and inequality in power relations.⁴ In practice, the socio-cultural structure of a society can produce a form of symbolic violence that makes women lose autonomy over their own bodies and futures. In fact, social mechanisms such as stigma, shame, and respect for customs are often a tool of control that reinforces women's subordinate positions in Sasak society.⁵ Therefore, *merariq codec* must be understood as a form of structural violence that has a direct impact on the lives of Sasak women, both socially and psychologically.

The impact caused by the practice of *merariq codec* is not only limited to socio-cultural aspects, but also has a serious impact on women's reproductive health. Various studies show that early marriage is closely related to increased maternal and child health risks, such as anemia, preeclampsia, miscarriage, low birth weight (BBLR), and premature birth. This risk arises because women who marry in adolescence generally do not have the biological readiness to undergo the pregnancy and childbirth process.⁶ In addition, women of early age are also vulnerable to health complications due to a lack of knowledge about reproductive health and lack of access to maternal health services. This condition shows that *the practice of merariq codec* has indirectly ignored women's reproductive health rights that should be protected by the state and society. From a human rights perspective, reproductive health is part of a woman's basic rights that includes the right to safety, health, and freedom to make her

² Maria Charles et al., "Complicating Patriarchy: Gender Beliefs of Muslim Facebook Users in the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia," *Gender & Society* 37, no. 1 (2022): 91–123, doi:10.1177/08912432221137909.

³ Mehtap Hamzaoglu, "Honor Killings in Traditional Societies: Revisiting the Case of Türkiye After Istanbul Convention Withdrawal," *Lectio Socialis* 8, no. 2 (2024): 73–98, doi:10.47478/lectio.1454452.

⁴ Z Y Li, "Marital Rape as Structural Violence in the Legal System," *Lecture Notes in Education Psychology and Public Media* 42, no. 1 (2024): 146–51, doi:10.54254/2753-7048/42/20240693.

⁵ Sandra Walklate and Kate Fitz-Gibbon, "Why Criminalise Coercive Control? The Complicity of the Criminal Law in Punishing Women Through Furthering the Power of the State," *International Journal for Crime Justice and Social Democracy* 9, no. 4 (2021), doi:10.5204/ijcsd.1829.

⁶ Yanxia Xie et al., "Characteristics and Adverse Outcomes of Chinese Adolescent Pregnancies Between 2012 and 2019," *Scientific Reports* 11, no. 1 (2021), doi:10.1038/s41598-021-92037-x.

own reproductive decisions.⁷ Therefore, the practice of child marriage in *the merariq codek* culture must be seen as a serious problem that requires cross-sectoral attention, both legal, cultural, and health.

In addition to the impact of physical health, the practice *of merariq codek* also has a significant psychological impact on adolescent girls. Women who marry at an early age tend to experience mental distress due to their unpreparedness to take on the role of wife and mother at a very young age. Research on the psychological impact of child marriage shows that adolescent girls are prone to anxiety, depression, social trauma, and emotional instability due to domestic and social pressures.⁸ This emotional unpreparedness is exacerbated by the family's unstable economic conditions and the loss of opportunities to obtain a proper education. In many cases, women also experience social isolation because they have to leave their adolescence and live a married life early. This situation shows that *merariq codek* is not only a customary issue, but has created psychological vulnerability that affects the quality of life of Sasak women in a sustainable manner. Thus, the protection of women's reproductive health rights cannot be separated from efforts to protect women's mental health and social welfare itself.

From the perspective of Islamic law, the practice *of merariq codek* needs to be analyzed through the approach *of maqashid sharia* as the main goal of Islamic sharia in safeguarding human welfare. The concept *of maqashid sharia* places the protection of the soul (*hifz al-nafs*), the protection of offspring (*hifz al-nasl*), and the protection of honor (*hifz al-'irdh*) as the main principles in maintaining the sustainability of human life. The practice of early marriage that threatens women's reproductive health and increases the risk of maternal and infant death is certainly contrary to the principle of life protection in Islam.⁹ In addition, the psychological condition of women who experience social pressure and loss of the right to education is also contrary to the purpose of sharia which requires the creation of benefits and protection of human dignity. Some research also shows that the *maqashid sharia* approach can be used as a basis for reinterpretation of local traditions to remain in line with the value of protecting the rights of women and children.¹⁰ Therefore, the analysis of *sharia maqashid* is important to see the extent to which the practice *of merariq codek* can still be maintained as a culture without sacrificing the basic rights of Sasak women.

⁷ Alicia E Yamin, "Power, Politics and Knowledge Claims: Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in the <sc>SDG</Sc> Era," *Global Policy* 10, no. S1 (2019): 52–60, doi:10.1111/1758-5899.12598.

⁸ Rhadika Ningrum, Dhesi A Astuti, and Anjarwati, "The Relationship Between Early Marriage and Mental Health in Adolescent Girls in the KUA Ngemplak Yogyakarta," *Jurnal Promkes* 11, no. 2 (2023): 141–48, doi:10.20473/jpk.v11.i2.2023.141-148.

⁹ Arifah M Agustina, "Contestation Between Fiqh and Culture in Indonesia: The Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah Paradigm in Dangers of Forced Marriage Against Women," *Sanwa Jurnal Studi Gender* 18, no. 2 (2023): 147–68, doi:10.21580/sa.v18i2.17280.

¹⁰ Darlin Rizki, Frina Oktalita, and Ali Sodikin, "Maqasid Sharia Perspective in Changes the Marriage Age Limits for Women According to Law Number 16 of 2019," *Al-Istinbath Jurnal Hukum Islam* 7, no. 2 (2022): 501, doi:10.29240/jhi.v7i2.4016.

Based on this description, this study formulates several main problems that are the focus of the study. First, how the practice of *merariq codec* in the Sasak community in Central Lombok can be understood as a form of structural victimization of women. Second, what is the social, psychological, and reproductive health impact experienced by women due to the practice of *merariq codec*. Third, how does the perspective of *maqashid sharia* view the practice of *merariq codec* in relation to the protection of women's reproductive health rights. The formulation of this problem is important to study because until now the practice of child marriage in Sasak culture is still often seen as part of the custom that must be preserved, without considering the negative impact it has on women. In fact, the development of national law and global awareness of women's rights require a reinterpretation of local culture to remain in line with the principles of human rights protection. Thus, this research is expected to be able to make an academic contribution in explaining the relationship between local culture, Islamic law, and the protection of women's reproductive health rights.

This study aims to analyze the practice of *merariq codec* as a form of structural victimization of Sasak women in Central Lombok. In addition, this study also aims to examine the psychological and reproductive health impacts experienced by women due to the practice of early marriage in Sasak culture. This study seeks to show that cultural practices cannot be defended absolutely if they are contrary to the principles of life protection and human rights. Through the approach of *maqashid sharia*, this study wants to build an argument that the protection of women is part of the main goal of Islamic law. Thus, this research not only contributes to the development of the study of Islamic law and local culture, but also provides recommendations for efforts to protect women and children in the Sasak community. In addition, this research is expected to be a consideration for local governments, traditional leaders, and religious leaders in formulating policies to prevent child marriage in Central Lombok.

The research method used in this study is a qualitative research method with a critical paradigm and *socio-legal* approach. This research seeks to understand *the practice of merariq codec* as a socio-cultural reality related to power relations, customary law, Islamic law, and the protection of women's rights. Research data was obtained through literature studies on various journals, scientific articles, regulations, and previous research results on Sasak culture, structural victimization, reproductive health, and *sharia maqashid*. The *socio-legal approach* is used to look at the interaction between customary law, state law, and Islamic law in the practice of child marriage in the Sasak community.¹¹ Data analysis was carried out in a descriptive-analytical manner by interpreting various research findings from the perspective of protecting women's rights and the goals of Islamic law. Through this method, the research is expected to be able to provide a comprehensive understanding of *the practice of merariq codec* as a cultural phenomenon that has social, psychological, and legal implications for Sasak women.

¹¹ Mursyid Djawas et al., "Harmonization of State, Custom, and Islamic Law in Aceh: Perspective of Legal Pluralism," *Hasanuddin Law Review* 10, no. 1 (2024): 64, doi:10.20956/halrev.v10i1.4824.

Research on *merariq kodek* has actually been done by many researchers before, but most of it still focuses on aspects of culture, customary law, and child marriage in general. Several studies explain that *merariq* is a Sasak cultural tradition that has undergone a process of acculturation with Islamic law and is still maintained as a cultural identity of the Lombok people.¹² Other research has also shown that the practice *of merariq kodek* is closely related to patriarchal culture, social control, and family honor in Sasak society.¹³ In addition, the study of child marriage discusses the impact of reproductive health and the legal aspects of marriage dispensation without connecting it to structural victimization theory and the perspective of *maqashid sharia* in depth. Therefore, this study has novelty because it positions *merariq kodek* as a form of structural victimization of Sasak women which is analyzed through the approach *of sharia maqashid* and women's reproductive health rights. Thus, this research is expected to be able to make a new contribution to the development of the study of Islamic law, gender, and local culture in Indonesia.

Research Results

The practice *of merariq kodek* in the Sasak community in Central Lombok shows that there is a very close relationship between local culture, social power relations, and the neglect of women's rights. In the context of the Sasak community, *merariq* was initially understood as part of a cultural identity that has symbolic value for male courage, family honor, and the social legitimacy of traditional marriage. However, modern social developments show that the practice has undergone a transformation into *merariq kodek*, which is the practice of marriage involving early adolescents and even minors. This change shows that culture no longer only functions as a social identity, but also as an instrument that can create inequality and vulnerability to certain groups, especially women. In practice, women often do not have the space to reject the marriage process due to customary pressures, family shame, and social stigma that develops in society. This situation shows that *merariq kodek* cannot be understood solely as a cultural practice, but has become a social mechanism that has the potential to give birth to structural injustice against Sasak women. This finding is in line with the research of Saidun and Encung¹⁴ who explained that *the merariq tradition* has undergone a transformation due to modern social and legal influences, but still maintains a pattern of patriarchal social relations that places women in subordinate positions.

2.1 The Practice *of Merariq Kodek* as a Form of Structural Victimization of Sasak Women

Based on the results of the analysis of the *merariq kodek* phenomenon in Central Lombok, this practice shows characteristics that are in accordance with the

¹² Wahyu Azwar et al., "Exploration of the Merariq Tradition in Sasak Lombok, Indonesia: Analysis in Islamic Law and Socio-Cultural Dynamics Perspectives," *Ibda Journal of Islamic and Cultural Studies* 22, no. 1 (2024): 23–38, doi:10.24090/ibda.v22i1.10766.

¹³ Andre Fairiza and Rendra Widyatama, "Merariq in Sasak Tribal Marriage: Communication Analysis and Social Dynamics in Kidnapping Rituals," *Journal of Sociological Analysis* 13, no. 1 (2024), doi:10.20961/jas.v13i1.74926.

¹⁴ Saidun and Encung, "Sasak Islam in the Merariq Tradition in Central Lombok, Tumpak Village."

concept of structural victimization. Structural victimization occurs when a person suffers losses due to social and cultural systems that do not provide protection for their rights. In the context of Sasak society, women are often victims not because of direct physical violence, but because of cultural pressures and social norms that require them to accept early marriage as a consequence of maintaining family honor. Women who have been "taken away" by men are considered unfit to return to their family homes because it will cause shame and social stigma in the community. As a result, women lose the right to make their own life choices, including the right to education, health, and psychological protection. This condition shows how culture can function as a tool of social domination that indirectly creates victims. The perspective of structural victimization explains that social structures built through customs, stigma, and power relations can produce injustices that persist without being aware of it by society itself.¹⁵

This phenomenon also shows that patriarchal culture has a dominant role in maintaining the practice of *merariq codec*. In patriarchal societies, women are often placed as a symbol of family honor so that women's bodies and behaviors are under the social control of society. Family honor in Sasak culture is often associated with women's adherence to customary norms, including in marriage issues. When a woman is taken away by a man until late at night, people tend to think that the woman must be married immediately in order to maintain the good name of the family. In such a situation, women are no longer seen as individuals with autonomous rights over their bodies and their future, but rather as representations of the family's social honor. Research on patriarchal culture shows that social control over women's bodies is a form of cultural domination that maintains gender inequality in traditional societies.¹⁶ In fact, the practice is often legitimized in the name of customs and religion, making it difficult to be criticized by local communities. This condition shows that *merariq codec* is not only related to the culture of marriage, but also concerns power relations that place women in vulnerable and unequal positions.

In addition, the practice of *merariq codec* shows a clash between customary law, state law, and Islamic law. By national law, child marriage is limited through the Marriage Law which sets the minimum age of marriage as a form of protection for women and children. However, in the social practice of the Sasak community, customary norms are often more dominant than state rules. Many families prefer to follow socio-cultural pressures rather than consider the legal and health risks that women will experience. This situation shows the existence of legal pluralism or legal pluralism, which is the existence of several legal systems that coexist in society. The *socio-legal* approach explains that law is not only understood as a written rule of the state, but is also influenced by the social and cultural norms that live in society.¹⁷ In the context of *merariq codec*, customary norms still have strong social legitimacy so that people tend to maintain them even though they are contrary to the principles of

¹⁵ Li, "Marital Rape as Structural Violence in the Legal System."

¹⁶ Charles et al., "Complicating Patriarchy: Gender Beliefs of Muslim Facebook Users in the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia."

¹⁷ Djawas et al., "Harmonization of State, Custom, and Islamic Law in Aceh: Perspective of Legal Pluralism."

child and women's protection. This also shows that formal legal changes are not always able to change cultural practices if they are not followed by changes in people's social consciousness.

The practice *of merariq codek* also shows how women experience limited access to education and self-development due to early marriage. Many women who marry in their teens end up having to drop out of school and lose the opportunity to obtain higher education. This condition causes women to be in a circle of economic dependence on their husbands and families. This economic dependence further strengthens the subordinate position of women in households and society. Previous research has shown that child marriage is closely related to women's low levels of education and limited opportunities to get decent work.¹⁸ From the perspective of structural victimization, this condition shows that women experience social marginalization due to cultural systems that do not provide space for optimal women's capacity development. Thus, *merariq codek* not only has an impact on women's home life, but also affects the social and economic future of Sasak women more broadly.

2.2 Psychological and Reproductive Health Impacts in the Practice of *Merariq Kodek*

The results of the analysis showed that *the practice of merariq codek* had a quite serious psychological impact on adolescent women. Women who marry at an early age tend to experience mental unpreparedness in carrying out the roles of wives and mothers. This unpreparedness arises because at the age of adolescents individuals are still in an unstable phase of psychological development. The sudden social pressures and household responsibilities cause women to experience prolonged anxiety, fear, and emotional distress. In many cases, women also experience psychological conflict due to the loss of their adolescence and having to live a married life before they mature emotionally. Ningrum's research¹⁹ shows that early marriage has a significant relationship with an increased risk of depression, anxiety, and social trauma in adolescent girls. In addition, women who marry early are also more susceptible to psychological distress due to family economic instability and lack of social support. This condition shows that the practice of *merariq codek* not only has a social impact, but also affects women's mental health deeply.

The psychological impact is further exacerbated by the culture of society that considers that women must accept the condition of marriage as a form of devotion to the family and customs. In patriarchal societies, women are often encouraged to harbor emotional pressure and accept the situation without resistance. As a result, many women experience unchanneled inner pressure and lead to mental health disorders. Syamsiah and Rianti's research²⁰ explains that women who marry at a young age tend to experience low self-concept and fear of the future due to unpreparedness for

¹⁸ Taufiq Kurniawan, Febria Syifa'unnufus, and Remanda N Tamara, "A Review of Criminal Law on Merariq Customs in Central Lombok Society," *Journal of Social Research in Humanities and Education* 2, no. 1 (2023): 127–39, doi:10.56444/soshumdik.v2i1.566.

¹⁹ Ningrum, Astuti, and Anjarwati, "The Relationship Between Early Marriage and Mental Health in Adolescent Girls in the KUA Ngemplak Yogyakarta."

²⁰ Syamsiah and Adisa C Rianti, "Social Construction of Young Married Couples in Parenting Children in South Jakarta," *Ijess International Journal of Education and Social Science* 3, no. 2 (2022): 49–54, doi:10.56371/ijess.v3i2.99.

domestic life. In fact, women often experience social isolation because they have to leave their friendships and educational environment. This situation shows that the culture of early marriage in *merariq codec* has created psychological vulnerability that has a long-term impact on the quality of life of Sasak women. Therefore, the protection of women cannot only be seen from the formal legal aspect, but must also pay attention to the psychological condition and social welfare of women as a whole.

In addition to the psychological impact, the practice *of merariq codec* also poses a serious risk to women's reproductive health. Women who are married and pregnant in their teens have a higher risk of developing pregnancy complications than adult women. These risks include anemia, preeclampsia, postpartum bleeding, miscarriage, and other complications of childbirth. The biological condition of adolescent women who are immature causes the body to not be ready to undergo the reproductive process optimally. Xie's research²¹ shows that teenage pregnancy is closely related to an increased risk of obstetric complications and maternal mortality. In addition, women of early age also often experience a lack of access to reproductive health services and a lack of knowledge about maternal health. This situation shows that the practice *of merariq codec* directly threatens women's reproductive health rights that should be guaranteed by the state and society. Thus, cultural practices that maintain child marriage are actually contrary to the principle of protecting women's health and safety.

These health risks not only impact women, but also on babies who are born. Children born to mothers in their teens are more likely to experience premature birth and low birth weight (BBLR). This condition occurs because the mother's reproductive organs have not developed perfectly, affecting the growth of the fetus during pregnancy. Chakole²² and Kassa²³'s research shows that early marriage is closely related to increased rates of BBLR and prematurity in infants. In addition, women who marry early are also more susceptible to malnutrition and health problems during pregnancy due to unstable family economic conditions. This impact shows that *merariq codec* not only creates vulnerability to women, but also affects the quality of the generation to be born. Therefore, the issue of child marriage in Sasak culture must be understood as a multidimensional issue related to public health, generational quality, and the protection of children's rights.

2.3 Sharia Maqashid Analysis of Women's Reproductive Health Rights

In the perspective *of maqashid sharia*, the practice *of merariq codec* that results in harm to women is contrary to the main purpose of Islamic law. The concept of *maqashid sharia* emphasizes that Islamic law aims to protect the welfare of human beings through the protection of religion, soul, intellect, descendants, and property. The practice of early marriage that threatens women's physical and psychological

²¹ Xie et al., "Characteristics and Adverse Outcomes of Chinese Adolescent Pregnancies Between 2012 and 2019."

²² Swarupa Chakole et al., "Unwanted Teenage Pregnancy and Its Complications: A Narrative Review," *Cureus*, 2022, doi:10.7759/cureus.32662.

²³ Getachew M Kassa et al., "Adverse Neonatal Outcomes of Adolescent Pregnancy in Northwest Ethiopia," *Plos One* 14, no. 6 (2019): e0218259, doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0218259.

health is clearly contrary to the principle *of hifz al-nafs* or the protection of the soul. The risk of maternal death, childbirth complications, and psychological distress experienced by women shows the potential for mafsadah or damage that must be prevented in Islamic law. Agustina's research²⁴ explains that *sharia maqashid* must be used as a basis for assessing socio-cultural practices so that they do not conflict with the goals of human welfare. Thus, cultural practices cannot be maintained if they produce greater harm than benefits. This perspective shows that the protection of women and reproductive health is an important part of the goals of Islamic law itself.

In addition to the protection of life, the practice *of merariq kodek* is also contrary to the principle *of hifz al-nasl* or protection of posterity. In Islam, offspring must be maintained through a healthy and responsible reproductive process. However, the practice of early marriage actually increases health risks to mothers and babies, threatening the quality of the generation to be born. The high risk of BBLR, prematurity, and maternal health disorders shows that child marriage is not in line with the goal of safeguarding offspring in Islam. Rizki's research²⁵ emphasizes that the protection of women and children in marriage must be a top priority in the implementation of *sharia maqashid*. Therefore, a reinterpretation of *the merariq kodek culture* needs to be carried out in order to still respect local cultural values without neglecting the safety of women and future generations. In this context, *sharia maqashid* can be a moderate approach that bridges the gap between cultural preservation and the protection of human rights.

The principle *of hifz al-'irdh* or the protection of honor is also an important part of the analysis of *maqashid sharia* on the practice of *merariq kodek*. In Sasak culture, early marriage is often done in the name of maintaining family honor and avoiding social stigma against women. However, the protection of honor in Islam should not be done at the expense of women's rights and safety. Honor cannot be used as an excuse to force women to undergo marriage that is not yet biologically and psychologically ready. Amirah and Eva's research²⁶ shows that the protection of honor in the perspective of *sharia maqashid* must still pay attention to aspects of individual benefits and rights. Thus, cultural practices that force women to marry in order to maintain the good name of the family need to be criticized deeply so as not to contradict the principles of justice in Islam. This perspective shows that religion actually has the principle of protecting women, not legitimizing practices that are detrimental to women.

Based on all the results of the analysis, it can be understood that the practice *of merariq kodek* in Central Lombok is a complex and multidimensional social phenomenon. This practice is not only related to the preservation of local culture, but

²⁴ Agustina, "Contestation Between Fiqh and Culture in Indonesia: The Maqāṣid Al-Sharī'ah Paradigm in Dangers of Forced Marriage Against Women."

²⁵ Rizki, Oktalita, and Sodikin, "Maqasid Sharia Perspective in Changes the Marriage Age Limits for Women According to Law Number 16 of 2019."

²⁶ Nabilla Amirah and Yusnita Eva, "The Judge's Refusal of the Application for Marriage Dispensation," *Kavannua International Journal of Multicultural Studies* 4, no. 1 (2023): 69–74, doi:10.30984/kijms.v4i1.592.

also concerns the issue of power relations, women's protection, reproductive health, and the reinterpretation of Islamic law in modern society. The *merariq kodek* culture shows how women can be victims of a social system that maintains tradition without considering the negative impact on women's rights. In this context, *the maqashid sharia* approach provides an important space to reinterpret culture so that it remains in harmony with the principles of protection of women's souls, descendants, and honor. Thus, efforts to protect Sasak women are not enough only through formal legal changes, but also require changes in cultural awareness and the involvement of religious leaders, traditional leaders, and local governments in building a more equitable and humane women's protection system.

Conclusion

This research shows that *the practice of merariq kodek* in the Sasak community in Central Lombok can no longer be understood solely as a local cultural tradition, but has developed into a form of structural victimization of Sasak women. The tradition that was initially positioned as a symbol of honor, male courage, and cultural identity of the Sasak people underwent a social transformation that had an impact on the increasing practice of early marriage. In practice, women are the most vulnerable group to social and cultural pressures because of the construction of family honor inherent in women's bodies and behaviors. Women who have been "taken away" by men tend to be forced to accept marriage in order to maintain the good name of the family and avoid social stigma in society. This situation shows that women lose the space to make their own life choices due to the strong dominance of patriarchal customs and culture. Thus, the practice of *merariq kodek* has created power imbalances that place women in subordinate positions and are vulnerable to various forms of neglect of rights, especially reproductive health, education, and psychological protection rights. This condition shows that local culture can turn into a social instrument that produces injustice if it is not accompanied by a reinterpretation of cultural values that favor the protection of women's and children's rights.

This study also found that the practice of *merariq kodek* has a serious impact on the psychological condition and reproductive health of Sasak women. Women who marry at an early age tend to experience emotional unpreparedness, psychological distress, anxiety, social trauma, and loss of opportunities for education and self-development. The socio-cultural pressure that requires women to accept early marriage makes many women experience mental vulnerability due to too rapid changes in roles in domestic life. In addition to the psychological impact, the practice of early marriage also increases reproductive health risks such as anemia, preeclampsia, miscarriage, postpartum hemorrhage, low birth weight babies (BBLR), and premature birth. These risks indicate that adolescent women do not yet have the biological readiness to undergo the pregnancy and childbirth process safely. In a broader context, these conditions not only impact women, but also affect the quality of the generation to be born. Therefore, this study confirms that *the practice of merariq kodek* is a multidimensional issue related to public health, women's protection, children's rights, and the quality of human resources in the future. Thus, efforts to handle the practice

of child marriage in Central Lombok are not enough only through formal legal regulations, but also require a socio-cultural approach that is able to change the mindset of the community towards the position and rights of women in Sasak culture.

In the perspective *of maqashid sharia*, this study concludes that *the practice of merariq kodek* that causes harm to women is contrary to the main purpose of Islamic sharia in safeguarding human welfare. The risks of reproductive health and psychological distress experienced by women indicate a threat to the principle of *hifz al-nafs* (protection of life), while the impact on the quality of generation and the health of children is contrary to the principle *of hifz al-nasl* (protection of offspring). In addition, the practice of forcing women to marry in order to maintain family honor is also not in line with the principle *of hifz al-'irdh* (protection of honor) because honor in Islam should not be built through the sacrifice of women's rights and safety. This research confirms that the *maqashid sharia approach* can be an important foundation in reinterpreting local traditions to remain in harmony with the values of justice, women's protection, and human rights. Therefore, a multisectoral approach is needed that involves local governments, traditional leaders, religious leaders, educational institutions, and the community in building a more humane and equitable local culture-based women's protection system. The revitalization of Sasak culture needs to be directed at the preservation of positive traditional values without maintaining practices that have the potential to harm women and children. Thus, *the merariq* tradition can remain the cultural identity of the Sasak people, but it will no longer be a social legitimacy for the practice of early marriage and the neglect of women's reproductive health rights.

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