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Islamic Law Frameworks for Addressing Marriage Delays during Public Health Crises

Desminar

Fakultas Agama Islam, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Barat,
Kota Padang, Indonesia

email: desminar30@gmail.com

Habibulloh

Fakultas Agama Islam, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Barat,
Kota Padang, Indonesia

email: habibizuan@gmail.com

Romi Saputra

Fakultas Agama Islam, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Barat,
Kota Padang, Indonesia

email: romisautra87@gmail.com

Dinil Abrar Sulthani

Institute of Social Sciences, Yildiz Technical University,
Istanbul, Turkey

email: dinil.sulthani@std.yildiz.edu.tr

Andi Irawan

Fakultas Agama Islam, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Barat,
Kota Padang, Indonesia

email: andiirwan@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study examines the postponement of marriages at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in Koto Tangah District during the COVID-19 pandemic as an effort to address health and social challenges, focusing on the perspective of Islamic law. The government's social restrictions led many couples to postpone or cancel their weddings, especially during the large-scale social restrictions period. This research aims to understand marriage postponement as a strategy to navigate pandemic challenges from an Islamic law perspective in Koto Tangah District, Padang City, and its impact on couples and society. The method used is field research with a descriptive qualitative approach. The findings show that marriage postponement was effectively carried out through schedule coordination with couples despite pressure from the brides and grooms. Health protocols were the primary reason for the delay, and KUA strictly limited the number of weddings if safety standards were not met. The postponements had significant psychological and economic effects on the couples, while society had mixed responses to the policy. KUA faced challenges in implementing marriage delays, especially regarding facilities and communication with engaged couples.

[Penelitian ini mengungkap penundaan pernikahan di Dinas Agama (KUA) Kecamatan Koto Tangah selama pandemi COVID-19 sebagai upaya mengatasi tantangan kesehatan dan sosial, dengan fokus pada perspektif hukum Islam. Pembatasan sosial oleh pemerintah menyebabkan banyak pasangan menunda atau membatalkan pernikahan mereka, terutama selama periode pembatasan sosial berskala besar. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami penundaan pernikahan sebagai strategi untuk menjelaskan tantangan pandemi dari perspektif hukum Islam di Kecamatan Koto Tangah, Kota Padang, dan dampaknya terhadap pasangan dan masyarakat. Metode yang digunakan yaitu penelitian lapangan dengan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa penundaan pernikahan secara efektif dilakukan melalui koordinasi jadwal dengan pasangan, meskipun ada tekanan dari pengantin pria. Protokol kesehatan merupakan alasan utama penundaan tersebut, dan KUA secara ketat membatasi jumlah pernikahan jika standar keselamatan tidak terpenuhi. Penundaan tersebut memiliki efek psikologis dan ekonomi yang signifikan pada pasangan, sementara masyarakat memiliki tanggapan yang beragam terhadap kebijakan tersebut. KUA menghadapi tantangan dalam menerapkan penundaan pernikahan, terutama terkait fasilitas dan komunikasi dengan pasangan yang bertunangan.]

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic; health protocols; Islamic law; KUA; marriage postponement

Introduction

Marriage is one of the important events in the lives of individuals and societies, and it has not only a social and cultural dimension but also the legal aspects that govern it.¹² In the context of marriage law in Indonesia, some regulations govern the implementation of marriage, both in terms of positive laws that apply in this country and Islamic law, which is the basis for most people.³ Marriage law in Indonesia is based on Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage, which stipulates that marriage must be carried out by meeting certain conditions and recorded in authorized agencies, such as the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) for Muslims.⁴ From the perspective of Islamic law, marriage is seen as a contract that binds two individuals in a sacred bond, where the rules of fiqh are the reference in its implementation.⁵

¹ Desminar Desminar et al., “The Role of Religious Education on Islamic Legal Awareness in Relation to Marriage in Kuantan Hilir: Case Study of Unrecorded Marriage Practices,” *Syamil: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam (Journal of Islamic Education)* 12, no. 1 (2024): 41–56, <https://doi.org/10.21093/sy.v12i1.8601>.

² Hadi Pajarianto and Junaidi Junaidi, “The Contribution of Family Edification, Mutualism, and Kinships Against The Tolerance Values in Tana Toraja,” *Karsa Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* 28, no. 2 (2020): 234–51, <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v28i2.3483>.

³ Firdaus et al., “Views of Usul Fiqih and Islamic Family Law on Concerned Marriage Cases in Padang City,” *Dusturiyah: Jurnal Hukum Islam, Perundang-Undangan, dan Pranata Sosial* 13, no. 2 (2023): 215–33, <https://doi.org/10.22373/dusturiyah.v13i2.20373>; Firdaus Firdaus et al., “The Protection of Islamic Women in Indonesia: Evaluation of Polygamy Sanctions and Its Implications,” *Karsa Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* 31, no. 1 (2023): 79–108, <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v31i1.10611>.

⁴ Desi Asmaret et al., “Peningkatan Pemahaman Siswa SMA Muhammadiyah Satu Padang Tentang Akibat Pernikahan Dini,” *Journal of Human And Education* 3, no. 4 (2023): 307–12, <https://www.jahe.or.id/index.php/jahe/article/view/445>; Hamlan Andi Baso Malla, Khaeruddin Yusuf, and Nur Rohim Yunus, “Indigenous Monikah Tajio Ethnic of Islamic Cultural Heritage at Kasimbar, Central Sulawesi,” *Karsa: Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* 28, no. 2 (2021): 363–89, <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v28i2.3301>.

⁵ Firdaus et al., “Menjelajahi Penerapan Konsep Masalah Mursala dalam Hukum Keluarga Islam: Studi Kasus Istri Mencari Nafkah dan Suami Bertanggung Jawab Atas Pekerjaan Rumah Tangga,” *Jurnal Darussalam: Jurnal Pendidikan, Komunikasi dan Pemikiran Hukum Islam* 15, no. 1 (2023): 185–203, <https://doi.org/10.30739/darussalam.v15i1.2545>; Syaflin Halim et al., “The Communication Patterns of Husband and Wife Couples in Resolving Household Conflicts: Islamic Family Law Perspectives,” *Karsa Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* 32, no. 1 (2024): 33–71, <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v32i1.13280>.

Islamic law in Indonesia provides a strong foundation for the organization of marriage by prioritizing the principles of justice, welfare, and benefit for all parties involved.⁶

The phenomenon of postponing marriage is an important issue that has emerged as a direct impact of the COVID-19 pandemic that has hit the world. This virus not only disrupts public health aspects but also changes social and economic dynamics, including in terms of organizing marriages.⁷ Many couples have been forced to postpone their wedding plans due to the social distancing policy implemented by the government to overcome the spread of the virus.⁸ In Koto Tangah District, Padang City, this delay can be seen in couples who had previously planned to get married in 2020. This situation creates challenges for them, where hopes to celebrate a happy day have to be postponed, even canceled.

Marriage rules during the COVID-19 pandemic have also been in the spotlight, especially related to government policies that regulate the implementation of marriages amid emergencies. The Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia issued a circular letter No: P-004/DJ. III/Hk.00.7/04/2020, which emphasizes large-scale social restrictions and the designation of several areas as red zones, which has an impact on marriage services in KUA.⁹ In the proclamation

⁶ Firdaus et al., "The Principles of the Concept of Maslahah in Islamic Family Law of a Wife Looking for Living Husband Taking Care of Household Work," *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 9, no. 1 (2024): 259–84, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jhi.v9i1.8464>; Hiba Fajarwati, Iffatin Nur, and Fatkul Hidayat, "Legal Consequences of Establishing the Civil Rights of Illegitimate Children from the Progressive Fiqh Perspective," *Karsa Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* 32, no. 1 (2024): 90–118, <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v32i1.13646>

⁷ Shah Md Atiqul Haq et al., "Early Marriage of Girls in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Literature Review," *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 11, no. 697 (2024): 1–11, <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-03085-3>.

⁸ Ellen Pramesti Wijaya, Yuhastina Yuhastina, and Nurhadi Nurhadi, "Krisis Kebudayaan Pada Masa Pandemi COVID-19 dalam Perubahan Tata Cara Pernikahan Masyarakat Desa Celep," *Sosiohumaniora: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Sosial dan Humaniora* 8, no. 2 (2022): 134–45, <https://doi.org/10.30738/sosio.v8i2.12572>.

⁹ Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, "Surat Edaran P-004/DJ.III/Hk.00.7/04/2020 Tentang Pengendalian Pelaksanaan Nikah di Masa Darurat Bencana Wabah Penyakit Akibat COVID-19," 2020, https://bengkulu.kemenag.go.id/file/file/Sirandang/SE_Dirjen_Bimas_Islam_No_P-004.pdf.

of the Indonesian National Police Number MAK/2/III/2020, it is explained that every activity involving a crowd must comply with strict health protocols.¹⁰ Therefore, the implementation of the marriage contract is limited, only attended by a predetermined number of people, and carried out by adhering to strict health procedures. This is one of the main factors causing the postponement of weddings in various regions, including Koto Tangah.

The author's initial observation in 2020 was that as many as 1509 couples registered for marriage amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Of these, seven couples postponed their weddings, with details of 1 couple postponing in June, one couple in December, two couples in November, and three couples in August. Meanwhile, another 1502 couples are unknown whether they canceled their marriages or continued to force them during the pandemic.¹¹ One of the couples who participated in the wedding postponement rule, Alief Defino and Elsha Putri Sulaiman, indicated that they had to postpone the wedding that was previously planned for June 9, 2020. As a result of the implementation of Large-Scale Social Restrictions, the implementation of new marriages can be carried out on November 1, 2020. This delay was caused by the family's desire to carry out the marriage contract and the reception at the same time.¹²

Based on the existing situation, it is known that government policies have caused many couples to experience delays and even cancellation of marriages in the community. This shows that couples who have planned a wedding choose to postpone or cancel their plans during the pandemic, especially during the implementation of the large-scale social restrictions in KUA Koto Tangah District. However, some couples continue to get married even though they are in risky

¹⁰ Idham Azis, "Maklumat Kepala Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia Nomor: Mak/2/III/2020 Tentang Kepatuhan Terhadap Kebijakan Pemerintah dalam Penanganan Penyebaran Virus Corona (COVID-19)," 2020, <https://tribatanews.maluku.polri.go.id/index.php/informasi/maklumat/maklumat-kepatuhan-terhadap-kebijakan-pemerintah-dalam-penanganan-penyebaran-virus-corona-covid-19>.

¹¹ Ramlan, "Interview with the Head of KUA Koto Tangah District," November 15, 2020.

¹² Alief Defino and Elsha Putri Sulaiman, "Interview with Couples Who Postponed Marriage During COVID-19 in the KUA Area, Koto Tangah District", November 15, 2020.

conditions, so the number of marriages in KUA Koto Tengah District has increased even though it is taking place during an outbreak.

Through this event, the author is worried that in the field of an emergency, consideration is needed to carry out the interests of individuals and groups, such as marriage. This makes it a consideration for the author to conduct research and consideration for further research that social activities in emergencies, such as large-scale social restrictions due to the pandemic, need to be educated the public. One of them is education about the postponement of marriage, which will be written in this study for many prospective brides who are currently in various uncertain conditions.

Relevant research related to postponing marriage during the pandemic shows some useful findings. *First*, research by Jannah (2020) on the impact of COVID-19 on marriage in the community shows that many couples postpone marriage due to concerns about the spread of the virus.¹³ Meanwhile, this research focuses more on the perspective of Islamic law in postponing marriage in KUA Koto Tengah District. *Second*, research by Widiyanto (2020) also noted an increase in the number of marriage postponements in KUA as a direct impact of social restriction policies.¹⁴ Meanwhile, this study will investigate how the delay was carried out and regulated at KUA Koto Tengah during the pandemic. *Third*, a study by Karyono (2023) examines couples' adaptation in responding to the pandemic, where some couples choose to get married online.¹⁵ However, the study focuses on procrastination as a strategy to deal with the challenges of the pandemic without taking steps to get married online. *Fourth*, a study by Irwan et al. (2023) highlights the legal challenges faced by couples in holding a wedding during a pandemic.¹⁶ Meanwhile, this study aims to understand the

¹³ Shofiatul Jannah, "Penundaan Perkawinan Ditengah Wabah COVID-19," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ahwal Syakhshiyah (JAS)* 2, no. 1 (2020): 41–50, <https://doi.org/10.33474/jas.v2i1.6840>.

¹⁴ Hari Widiyanto, "Konsep Pernikahan dalam Islam (Studi Fenomenologis Penundaan Pernikahan di Masa Pandemi)," *Jurnal Islam Nusantara* 4, no. 1 (2020): 103–10, <https://doi.org/10.33852/jurnal.in.v4i1.213>.

¹⁵ Quoies Hassan Karyono, "Akad Nikah Daring (Studi Kasus Akad Nikah Shaffira Gayatri dan Max Walden)," *UNES Law Review* 6, no. 2 (2023): 7314–20, <https://doi.org/10.31933/unesrev.v6i2.1619>.

¹⁶ Irwan, Hamzah Hasan, and Muh. Jamal Jamil, "Problematisa Penanganan Pernikahan di Masa Pandemi COVID-19 Perspektif Hukum Islam di Kantor Urusan Agama Kecamatan Turatea Kabupaten Jeneponto," *Qadauna: Jurnal Ilmiah*

challenges of implementing the postponement of marriage from the perspective of Islamic law. *Fifth*, research by Habibi et al. (2022) revealed that there are difficulties in fulfilling administrative requirements for marriage.¹⁷ Meanwhile, this study will explore the psychological and economic impact of marriage delays on couples and the community in Koto Tangah. Although many studies highlight this aspect, the gap is the lack of an in-depth study of the perspective of Islamic law in the postponement of marriage in Koto Tangah, Padang City.

The novelty of this study lies in the focus of the study that explores the postponement of marriage from the perspective of Islamic law, as well as the efforts of couples to overcome the challenges that arise due to the pandemic. This research seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how Islamic law can provide solutions in dealing with difficult situations such as pandemics, as well as how KUA can adapt to existing conditions.

Methods

The research method used in this study is field research with a qualitative descriptive approach. The object of the study is KUA Koto Tangah District in postponing marriage during the pandemic. The purpose of this study is to understand the postponement of marriage as a form of effort to face the challenges of the pandemic from the perspective of Islamic law in Koto Tangah District, Padang City. The research data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews with various sources, including KUA employees of Koto Tangah District, couples who postponed marriages, and local religious leaders who provided views on the application of Islamic law in this context. Observation techniques are also used to observe the efforts of the KUA based on applicable Islamic law in dealing with the phenomenon of postponing marriages during the pandemic. Secondary data are collected from literature, books, and journals relevant to the theme of marriage and Islamic law,

Mahasiswa Hukum Keluarga Islam 4, no. 2 (2023): 399–416, <https://doi.org/10.24252/qadauna.v4i2.29101>.

¹⁷ Muhammad Habibi, Miftakhul Marwa, and Norma Sari, “Akad Nikah Virtual Perawat Saat COVID-19: Tinjauan Hukum Perkawinan Islam dan Hukum Kesehatan,” *Jurnal Hukum Ius Quia Iustum* 29, no. 3 (2022): 674–97, <https://doi.org/10.20885/iustum.vol29.iss3.art10>.

including previous research and laws and regulations related to marriage. The data analysis was conducted thematically, emphasizing the key issues that emerged from interviews and observations, and comparing findings from primary and secondary data to provide a deeper understanding of marriage from the perspective of Islamic law and the challenges facing society today.

Results

During the COVID-19 pandemic, marriage was one of the affected sectors, including in the KUA of Koto Tengah District. Postponing marriage is a step that many couples have taken to overcome various challenges that have arisen, such as social restrictions and strict health protocols. This postponement is not only related to health aspects but also economic and administrative factors, which influence the couple's decision to postpone or continue their wedding plans. This study focuses on the analysis of factors that delay marriage as a strategy for dealing with pandemic conditions in this region. Data collection and reduction have been successfully passed by the author of this study. The results of the reduction will be described and analyzed by the author as follows:

Table 1. Observation of the Performance of KUA Koto Tengah District in the COVID-19¹⁸

No.	Indicator	Observation Notes
1	Marriage Delay Process by the Authorities	KUA conducted intensive coordination with the couple regarding rescheduling. The official letter of postponement is issued after deliberation with the bride-to-be. The new schedule is prepared according to pandemic conditions.
2	Implementation of Health Protocols in Postponing Marriage	KUA prioritizes health protocols by limiting the number of guests. Weddings during the pandemic emergency are postponed if they cannot meet strict protocols.
3	The Impact of Marriage Delay on Couples	Couples and families experience emotional distress, especially due to the uncertainty of the marriage time. Some couples have suffered

¹⁸ Author, "Observation of E-Court Performance in Class 1A Religious Court Padang City" (Padang, 2024).

		economic losses related to the cancellation of events.
4	Public Response to Marriage Delay by KUA	The public is divided in response to this policy, some understand the importance of postponing for the sake of health, while others are disappointed that weddings are delayed.
5	Challenges Faced by KUA in Postponing Marriage	KUA faces obstacles in rearranging the schedule amid limited capacity. There were some couples who refused the postponement but finally agreed after a detailed explanation.

The conclusions obtained from observations related to the postponement of marriage by KUA during the pandemic show several important things. *First*, the KUA of Koto Tengah District effectively postponed the wedding by re-coordinating the schedule with the couple and family, despite pressure from the bride-to-be. *Second*, the implementation of health protocols is the main reason for the delay, and KUA is firm in limiting the number of marriages if health standards cannot be met. *Third*, postponing marriage has a significant psychological and economic impact on couples and their families, who feel uncertainty and financial burden. *Fourth*, the public has a mixed response to this policy, with some supporting KUA's move, while others are disappointed that the event is delayed. *Fifth*, KUA faces internal challenges such as limited facilities and initial rejection from prospective brides before finally providing understanding related to the policies taken.

In a relevant study, research by Sari (2021) also found that the implementation of health protocols in KUA during the pandemic was the main reason for the postponement of marriage, in line with the findings in Koto Tengah District.¹⁹ As a comparison, a study by Dorni et al. at KUA Bandung City stated that despite the challenges, people in the region were more cooperative in accepting the postponement policy, in contrast to Koto Tengah, who showed higher resistance at the

¹⁹ Ayu Nur Indah Sari, "Perubahan Perilaku Masyarakat Ponorogo dalam Menyelenggarakan Pernikahan di Era Pandemi COVID-19," *Islamika Inside: Jurnal Keislaman dan Humaniora* 7, no. 1 (2021): 79–101, <https://doi.org/10.35719/islamikainside.v7i1.140>.

beginning of the policy implementation.²⁰ This study shows that the local context greatly affects the effectiveness of KUA policies during the pandemic.

Table 2. Interview with the Head of KUA Kec. Koto Tengah Regarding the Postponement of Marriage²¹

No.	Indicator	Answer
1	Marriage Delay Process by the Authorities	KUA postponed the marriage by the Ministry of Religion Circular Letter No: P-004/DJ.III/Hk.00.7/04//2020. Communication with the couple is done online, and the wedding schedule is reset after the agreement. Socialization is carried out to ensure public understanding.
2	Implementation of Health Protocols in Postponing Marriage	KUA implements strict health protocols such as guest restrictions, mask use, and social distancing. Handwashing stations are provided, and rooms are sterilized. Violation of protocols can lead to the postponement of the event.
3	The Impact of Marriage Delay on Couples	Procrastination has a psychological and economic impact on couples, especially uncertainty and additional costs. However, with safety-related explanations, most couples accept the policy.
4	Public Response to Marriage Delay by KUA	Initially, the community was disappointed, but after an explanation related to "Maslahah Ammah" for public safety, most were able to accept the postponement policy.
5	Challenges Faced by KUA in Postponing Marriage	The main challenges are the initial rejection of the couple and the limitations of the facilities. KUA addresses this with intensive communication, socialization of Islamic law related to emergencies, and cooperation with local governments and the police.

The conclusions obtained from interviews with KUA regarding the postponement of marriages during the pandemic show several important things. *First*, KUA actively postpones weddings by

²⁰ Heesam Dorni et al., "Marriage Services at the Office of Religious in the Pandemic Era of COVID-19," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Administrasi Publik* 10, no. 2 (2020): 307–18, <https://doi.org/10.26858/jiap.v10i2.15776>.

²¹ Ramlan, "Interview with the Head of KUA Koto Tengah District."

coordinating with couples online and rearranging wedding schedules according to agreements while continuing to socialize the importance of this policy. *Second*, the implementation of strict health protocols, such as limiting the number of guests, using masks, and sterilizing venues, is key to protecting public health, with violations of protocols that could lead to further delays. *Third*, this delay has a psychological and economic impact on the couple, but most couples accept this decision after understanding the health reasons behind it. *Fourth*, the public, although initially disappointed, eventually accepted this policy after a more in-depth explanation. *Fifth*, KUA also faces challenges in the form of initial rejection from spouses and limited facilities, but they have managed to overcome this through intensive communication and cooperation with the government and law enforcement.

The research of Husnaini et al. confirmed that good coordination of KUA and the implementation of strict health protocols are very important in maintaining safety during the pandemic, which is in line with the findings in Koto Tangah District.²² For comparison, a study by Xaverius and Ginting found that people in the region are more likely to accept the delay policy due to better levels of education and understanding of the law.²³ This comparison shows that local context and communication approaches play a significant role in the successful implementation of the marriage postponement policy during the pandemic.

²² Husnaini et al., “Tanggungjawab Negara dalam Melindungi Hak Warga Negara Untuk Berpartisipasi dalam Pemilu Serentak di 2020 Pada Masa Pandemi COVID-19,” *Lex Librum : Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 6, no. 2 (June 2020): 211–23, <https://doi.org/10.46839/ljih.v6i2.259>.

²³ Franciscus Xaverius and Yuni Priskila Ginting, “Sosialisasi Penyelenggaraan Resepsi Pernikahan Pada Masa Pandemi,” *JCES (Journal of Character Education Society* 5, no. 3 (2022): 563–70, <https://journal.ummat.ac.id/index.php/JCES/article/view/8371>.

Table 3. Interview with Religious Leaders of KUA Koto Tengah District Regarding the Postponement of Marriage²⁴

No.	Indicator	Answer
1	Marriage Delay Process by the Authorities	The postponement is carried out following government policy for the sake of common health. Religious leaders give advice to couples to be patient and follow the rules as a form of obedience in maintaining public safety.
2	Implementation of Health Protocols in Postponing Marriage	Health protocols such as restricting guests and using masks are following Islamic principles about safeguarding life and health. The protocol is considered in line with the purpose of Sharia in safeguarding the benefits.
3	The Impact of Marriage Delay on Couples	Procrastination has an emotional and spiritual impact, but couples are encouraged to be patient and trusting. This test can strengthen their faith and relationships through prayer and worship.
4	Public Response to Marriage Delay by KUA	Communities were initially diverse in accepting policies, but after being given an understanding of common safety in Islam, the majority began to accept postponement as a necessary step.
5	Challenges Faced by KUA in Postponing Marriage	The biggest challenge is the limited acceptance of the community and facilities. It is recommended that communication be maintained with the partner, as well as that the postponement be carried out based on Sharia principles on emergencies that allow certain measures to overcome the situation.

The conclusion of interviews with religious leaders regarding the postponement of marriage during the pandemic shows that, *first*, the process of postponing marriage by the authorities is carried out in an orderly manner according to government policy, and couples are advised to be patient and follow existing rules to maintain safety. *Second*, the implementation of health protocols in marriage is seen as following Islamic principles, which are concerned with the safety of life, such as restricting guests and using masks. *Third*, postponing

²⁴ Arzolib Husni, "Interview with Religious Leaders of Koto Tengah District," November 15, 2020.

marriage has an emotional and spiritual impact on couples, but they are encouraged to put their trust and strengthen spiritual relationships through worship. *Fourth*, society was initially diverse in responding to this policy, but after further explanation of the importance of maintaining mutual safety, most began to accept the decision. *Fifth*, the challenges faced by KUA include public acceptance and limited facilities, but with a good communication approach and sharia principles, these challenges can be overcome.

This study is relevant to research from Bangunan et al. which stated that the pandemic forced many religious policies to adapt to health protocols, especially in the implementation of marriages that demanded social restrictions.²⁵ Abdullah also highlighted the importance of good communication between religious institutions and society to ensure compliance with the rules.

Table 4. Interviews with Couples Who Postpone Marriage²⁶

No.	Indicator	Answer
1	Marriage Delay Process by the Authorities	Information on the postponement of the wedding was submitted by KUA. After that, the couple contacted KUA to reschedule.
2	Implementation of Health Protocols in Postponing Marriage	KUA informed about health protocols such as the use of masks and social distancing. Couples support this for safety.
3	The Impact of Marriage Delay on Couples	Procrastination leads to anxiety and disappointment. However, couples support each other in dealing with emotional pressure.
4	Public Response to Marriage Delay by KUA	Family and friends are generally supportive of the delay and understand the importance of health despite the disappointment.
5	Challenges Faced by KUA in Postponing Marriage	The main challenge is adjusting the plan. Couples cope with good communication and focus on preparing for the wedding ahead.

²⁵ Richard Johanes Bangunang, Titiek Mulianti, and Djefry Deeng, "Dampak Sosial Budaya Masyarakat Akibat Pandemi COVID-19 di Desa Leilem Kecamatan Sonder Kabupaten Minahasa," *Jurnal Holistik* 15, no. 4 (2022): 1–20, <https://ejournal.unsrat.ac.id/v3/index.php/holistik/article/view/45723>.

²⁶ Defino and Sulaiman, "Interview with Couples Who Postponed Marriage During COVID-19 in the KUA Region of Koto Tangah District." November 15, 2020.

The postponement of marriage during the COVID-19 pandemic by KUA involves clear communication measures with the couple, including the submission of information about rescheduling. The health protocols implemented, such as the use of masks and social distancing, are considered important by couples to maintain the safety of all involved. The psychological impact of this procrastination is felt by the couple, causing feelings of anxiety and disappointment, although support from family and friends is quite helpful. Finally, the challenges that KUA faces in postponing marriage include adjusting plans, which can be overcome through good communication between the couple and KUA.

A relevant study by Jamal and Ikhwan (2021) shows that postponing marriage due to the pandemic can affect the psychological well-being of couples, similar to the findings in this study.²⁷ This is in line with research by Wulandari et al. (2021), which noted that the public generally understands and supports delayed measures for the sake of public health.²⁸ Through an approach that takes into account Islamic legal principles such as *maslahah ammah* and *ad dhorurotu*, this policy of postponing marriage appears to be consistent with efforts to protect the public from greater health risks.

Discussion

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on many aspects of life, including the marriage process regulated by the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA). The marriage postponement policy imposed by the government, including the implementation of strict health protocols, has elicited various responses from the community and affected couples. On the one hand, this policy aims to maintain public safety and health, but on the other hand, it poses emotional, economic, and spiritual challenges for couples who have to postpone their marriage. This discussion will outline the results of observations and interviews with KUA heads, religious leaders, and couples involved

²⁷ Anton Jamal and M Ikhwan, "Kesepakatan Menunda Kehamilan bagi Pasangan Muda Perspektif Hukum Islam: Upaya Menekan Pernikahan Dini di Masa Pandemi," *Al-Manahij: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam* 15, no. 2 (2021): 309–24, <https://doi.org/10.24090/mnh.v15i2.5138>.

²⁸ Denny Wulandari et al., "Faktor – Faktor yang Berhubungan dengan Persepsi Tenaga Kesehatan Terhadap Vaksin COVID-19 di Puskesmas X Tahun 2020," *Jurnal Kesehatan Masyarakat (Undip)* 9, no. 5 (2021): 660–68, <https://doi.org/10.14710/jkm.v9i5.30691>.

in the postponement of marriage and relate them to relevant legal rules and principles.

The process of postponing marriages carried out by KUA during the pandemic was carried out with great caution, following government policies related to restrictions on social activities. From the results of observations at KUA Koto Tengah, the postponement process was carried out effectively through re-coordination with couples and families, ensuring that all parties understood the reasons behind the postponement. The Head of KUA explained that coordination was carried out both in person and online to minimize physical contact and the risk of transmission. Through interviews with religious leaders, it was conveyed that this policy is by Sharia principles that emphasize the importance of safeguarding life and health, which is in line with the concept of *Darul mafasidi awla min jalbi al-masalih* (preventing harm takes precedence over taking benefits). This principle underlies the government's decision to postpone marriage, even though postponing marriage can cause inconvenience to couples. The postponement process carried out by the authorities is also supported by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia through regulation No: P-004/DJ. III/Hk.00.7/04/2020, which requires KUA to follow the postponement procedure if health standards are not met.

The implementation of health protocols is one of the main reasons underlying the postponement of marriage. The observation results show that KUA implements strict measures to limit the number of guests, ensure the use of masks, and provide sanitation facilities at the wedding site. An interview with the head of the KUA confirmed that violations of health protocols could cause further delays, and the KUA is firm in implementing this rule. From the perspective of religious leaders, the implementation of this health protocol is in line with the principle of *maslahah ammah* (public interest takes precedence), where public health is the top priority in every policy. In the legal context, the Proclamation of the Indonesian National Police No. MAK/2/III/2020 emphasizes compliance with government policies in dealing with the spread of the virus so that the implementation of health protocols in marriage is not only a preventive step but also a legal obligation that must be obeyed.²⁹

²⁹ Salman Alfarisy, Nadrya Ning Tias, and Johan Sahbudin, "Pelanggaran Protokol Kesehatan COVID-19: *Ultimum Remedium* atau *Primum Remedium* (Studi Kasus

Marriage postponement undeniably has a significant psychological and economic impact on couples and their families. Observations show that couples who postpone their wedding often feel anxious and disappointed because of uncertainty about when their wedding can take place. Interviews with couples who experienced delays revealed that in addition to the psychological burden, there was also an economic impact, especially related to the costs that had been incurred for wedding preparations. Despite this, most couples accepted the decision to postpone after getting further explanations about the importance of health protocols. The religious leaders interviewed advised couples to be patient and strengthen their spirituality through worship during the postponement period, which is following the principle of *ad dhorurotu tuqadaru biqadariha* (something permissible due to an emergency, should be estimated according to the limits of minimum needs). In this context, the postponement of marriage due to the pandemic is considered an emergency condition in which couples must adjust their expectations to the existing situation.³⁰

The public's response to the postponement of marriage varies, depending on their understanding of this policy. Observations on the ground showed that some people supported the postponement policy as a measure to protect public health, while others were disappointed that their weddings were postponed. An interview with the head of KUA revealed that intensive communication and transparent explanations are key to managing people's expectations. The Head of KUA also emphasized the importance of socializing this policy so that the public understands the reasons behind the decision to postpone. From a religious perspective, religious leaders emphasized that this policy is based on Islamic principles emphasizing safety and mental health, which are part of collective responsibility. In addition, the *addhorurotu tahtajuhu ma biqadri ad dharurati* rule (any prohibition can be imposed in an emergency, but only what is needed to eliminate the emergency)

MRHS),” *Indonesia Criminal Law Review* 1, no. 1 (2021): 25–42, <https://scholarhub.ui.ac.id/iclr/vol1/iss1/3/>.

³⁰ Alfi Syahri et al., “Layanan Pelaksanaan Akad Nikah di Kantor Urusan Agama Medan Marelan (Studi Efektivitas dan Hambatannya pada Masa Pandemi COVID-19),” *Al-Fikru: Jurnal Ilmiah* 15, no. 1 (2021): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.51672/alfikru.v15i1.47>.

also supports the policy of postponing marriages during the pandemic as an effort to avoid a greater danger, namely the spread of the virus.³¹

KUA faces various challenges in implementing the marriage postponement policy, especially related to limited facilities and early rejection from couples. The results of the observation show that KUA often has to deal with couples who are initially reluctant to postpone the wedding, especially because they have prepared the event carefully. An interview with the head of KUA revealed that good communication is one of the effective ways to overcome this challenge. KUA tries to provide couples with an understanding of the importance of maintaining the health of all parties involved. In addition, limited facilities such as access to technology for online communication are also an obstacle, although this can be overcome with the cooperation of the government and other parties. In an interview with religious leaders, it was stated that the principle of *ad dhorurotu tuqadaru biqadariha* can be applied in this situation, where the KUA must make decisions that are limited to the existing emergency conditions.³²

KUA's policy of postponing marriages during the COVID-19 pandemic is based on strong health and legal considerations. This postponement process not only involves administrative measures such as rescheduling but also touches on the deep social, economic, and spiritual aspects of the affected couples. The implementation of strict health protocols, despite the psychological and economic impact, was accepted by most couples after getting a comprehensive explanation. Communities, although initially diverse in responding to this policy, eventually accepted the decision after being explained about the importance of maintaining mutual safety. The challenges faced by KUA in postponing marriage can be overcome through good communication, cooperation with the government, and the application of religious principles that emphasize the importance of preserving life and health. This policy, although difficult to implement, is still necessary to protect the public interest and maintain public health during a pandemic.

³¹ Nofar Yakovi Gan-Or, "Going Solo: The Law and Ethics of Childbirth during the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Journal of Law and the Biosciences* 7, no. 1 (2021): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jlb/ljaa079>.

³² Frank Cranmer and David Pocklington, "The Impact of The Covid-19 Pandemic on The Exercise of Religion in The United Kingdom," *General Journal of Canon Law and Ecclesiastical Law of the State* 54 (2020): 1–36, <https://www.churchstate.eu/pdf/COVID19/uk.pdf>.

Conclusion

The research titled this revealed that the KUA of Koto Tangah District effectively postponed marriages during the pandemic by following government guidelines and Islamic Sharia principles. Through online communication, KUA managed to coordinate the reschedule even though she initially faced pressure from her partner. The implementation of strict health protocols, such as restricting guests and using masks, is the main reason for the delay, which is considered to be following Islamic teachings on life safety. The impact of this delay is significant, both psychologically and economically. Couples feel anxious and experience financial uncertainty, but family support and further explanations help them come to terms with the situation. The response of the public was initially mixed, with some supporting the KUA policy and others disappointed. However, a deeper understanding of the importance of maintaining public health has finally increased the acceptance of this policy. The challenges faced by KUA, such as limited facilities and early rejection from prospective brides, were successfully overcome through intensive communication and cooperation with the government and law enforcement. Therefore, this postponement policy is considered effective in maintaining public safety in accordance with Sharia.

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