

Analysis of the Success of Religious Courts in Reducing the Number of Marriage Dispensations as an Effort to Support the Government in Preventing Child Marriage

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Abstract

Dispensation for marriage is actually considered a *simalakama* fruit, because changes to the age limit for marriage seem futile if in the end minors can legally marry with dispensation from the Court. The facts on the ground show that the ambiguity in Article 7 of Law No. 16/2019 on Marriage leaves more serious problems. As a result, several court institutions have been flooded with applications for dispensation for various reasons submitted by parents of children who wish to marry. Malang District, which contributed the highest number of marriage dispensations in East Java in 2022, has conducted various policy programs that have succeeded in reducing the number of marriage dispensations. This article analyzes the success of the Religious Court in reducing the number of marriage dispensations as an effort to support the government in preventing child marriage and what the level of success is by using descriptive qualitative research methods with Allan McConnell's Policy Success theory. This article explores the success of preventing child marriage from the program dimension and its level of success. The results showed that in the indicator of implementation according to the objectives, the level of success was included in Success. Meanwhile, in the indicator of achieving the expected results, the level of success is included in Resilient Success because although there is a decrease in applications for marriage dispensation every year, the number is still high. And finally, the indicator provides benefits to the target group, the level of success is included in Success.

I. Introduction

Child marriage is one of the social problems that remains a major challenge in Indonesia. The practice of child marriage, legally defined as marriage under the age of 19, has far-reaching implications for the health, education and well-being of children, especially girls. Child marriage is a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon involving various social, economic, cultural and religious aspects (UNICEF, 2021).

Socially, child marriage often occurs in societies with strong traditional norms, where gender roles and age hierarchies influence marriage decisions (Psaki et al., 2021). Economically, poverty is one of the main drivers, as poor families see child marriage as a way to reduce economic burden and gain financial security through dowries or reduced child dependency (Suadi & Candra, 2022a). Culture also plays a significant role, with certain practices and traditions supporting marriage at a young age as part of community or tribal identity (Suadi & Candra, 2022b). In addition, religious factors can influence this decision, especially if interpretations of religious teachings support or oppose child marriage (Lau Yaa Yuen, 2022).

The practice of child marriage has a range of negative consequences, both for the individuals who enter into the marriage and for society as a whole (Idrus, 2022). Various studies have shown that child marriage has a significant negative impact on life. Child marriage is often associated with an increased risk of domestic violence, with girls who marry young being more vulnerable to physical, emotional and sexual violence from their partners. In addition, child marriage can lead to a range of reproductive health problems, including higher pregnancy and childbirth complications, and a greater risk of maternal and infant mortality. Children who marry young are also often forced to drop out of school, compromising their education and opportunity to reach their full potential in their careers and personal lives. This inability to continue education can result in an ongoing cycle of poverty and economic dependence on a spouse (Subekti & Ulfah, 2023).

Thus, child marriage is not only detrimental to the individuals involved, but also has far-reaching negative impacts on society and the socio-economic development of the country. Tackling child marriage requires concerted efforts from various parties, including the government, non-governmental organizations, and communities to protect children's rights and ensure a better future (Faiz et al., 2023). In an effort to address this issue, the Indonesian government has adopted various policies and programs, one of which is the revision of Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage through Law Number 16 of 2019 which raises the minimum age limit for marriage.



Article 7 paragraph (1), which originally stated that the minimum age limit for women to marry was 16 years old, was amended by raising it to 19 years old on par with men. The government hoped that the amendment to the Marriage Law would reduce the number of child marriages, so this article change led to expectations that there would be a significant reduction in the number of child marriages. However, Article 7 paragraph (2) states that if there is a deviation from the age provision, the parents of the male and female parties are allowed to apply for dispensation of marriage to the Court for urgent reasons and accompanied by supporting evidence. This provision seems to again break the great expectations of the changes to Article 7 paragraph (1) (Government of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019).

This marriage dispensation is actually considered a simalakama fruit, because changes to the provisions of the marriage age limit seem futile if in the end minors can legally marry with dispensation from the court (Ernawati et al., 2023). The facts on the ground show that the ambiguity in Article 7 of the Marriage Law also leaves more serious problems (Efrinaldi et al., 2023). As a result, several court institutions were flooded with applications for dispensation for various reasons submitted by parents of children who wanted to marry, resulting in a significant increase in applications for marriage dispensation in 2020 after the amendments to the Marriage Law (Islam; Yetta et al., 2024).

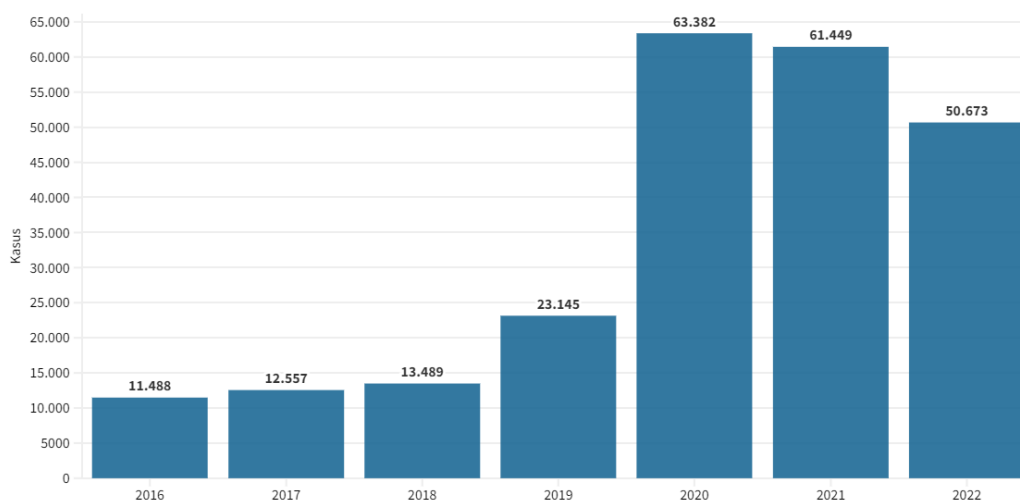


Figure 1: Data on Dispensation for Child Marriage Decided by the Religious Courts 2016-2022

Source: Direktorat Jenderal Badan Peradilan Agama

Seeing the trend of marriage dispensation in Indonesia jump dramatically in 2020, along with the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. This condition occurs



because many families are experiencing economic problems during the pandemic, so they choose to marry off their children at an early age. This dispensation is also often given because girls are pregnant or worried about having sex. In addition, there are parents who think that marrying early is necessary to avoid adultery (Takdir et al., 2022). As the Covid-19 pandemic subsided, the practice of child marriage was observed to continue to decline, if you look at the data in 2022 there were 50,673 cases of marriage dispensation, this number was 17.54% lower than in 2021, namely 61,449 cases. Even though the trend has decreased, this does not mean that the condition is safe, because the number of child marriages is still very high when compared to 2019 (Supraptiningsih, 2021).

East Java Province is one of the provinces that contributes to the highest number of child marriages in Indonesia. The number of child marriage cases in East Java in 2019 was 11,211 cases, in 2020 there were 9,453 cases, in 2021 there were 17,585 cases, and in 2022 there were 15,253 cases. In 2022, East Java became the province with the highest rate of child marriage, which was 10.44 percent higher than the national average (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2022). In addition, the number of marriage dispensation cases in East Java Province was the highest in Indonesia, with 15,337 cases or 29.4 percent of national cases. The following are the districts/cities with the highest child marriage cases in East Java based on a recap of data on the types of marriage dispensation cases in 2022 in the jurisdiction of the Surabaya High Court of Religion (PTA) (Directorate General of Religious Courts, 2022).

Table 1. Data on Marriage Dispensation of Regency / City Religious Courts in East Java in 2022

No	Regency / City	The number of cases
1	Malang Regency	1,433
2	Jember Regency	1,388
3	Kraksaan Regency	1,141
4	Banyuwangi Regency	876
5	Lumajang Regency	849
6	Bondowoso Regency	722
7	Pasuruan Regency	703
8	Kabupaten Kediri Regency	584
9	Bojonegoro Regency	527
10	Tuban Regency	511

Source: Direktorat Jenderal Badan Peradilan Agama

Based on these data, the marriage dispensation issued by the Malang Regency Religious Court (PA) in 2022 was the highest in East Java. PA Malang Regency certainly does not remain silent, as one of the institutions that has an important



role in reducing the number of marriage dispensations as a form of supporting the government in preventing child marriage has done several things to reduce the number of marriage dispensations in Malang Regency. PA Malang Regency collaborates with the Faculty of Psychology, Muhammadiyah University of Malang with the “Counseling Corner” program with the aim of conducting counseling with a psychologist. The child applicant for Dispensation of Marriage (DK) will be assessed whether the child is mentally ready or not to face marriage. In addition, children who apply for marriage dispensation will be given guidance about marriage with the aim that if they still want to marry a child, the child already understands the attitudes or steps that must be taken in the world of marriage (Riskhaturahma Elfa, 2023).

The efforts made by PA Malang Regency have produced results and have been able to reduce the number of marriage dispensations, this can be seen from the number of marriage dispensations in Malang Regency each year has decreased. The following is data on the number of marriage dispensations in Malang Regency in the last 5 years:

Table 2. Number of marriage dispensations in Malang Regency in 2019-2023

No	Tahun	Jumlah
1	2019	917
2	2020	1788
3	2021	1747
4	2022	1433
5	2023	1009

Source: Religious Court of Malang Regency

The table above contains data on the number of marriage dispensation applications in Malang District from 2020 to 2023. In 2020 there were 1788 marriage dispensation cases filed in Malang District. In 2021 the number of marriage dispensation applications decreased slightly to 1747 cases. In 2022 there was a significant decrease in the number of marriage dispensation applications, with only 1433 cases filed. In 2023 the number of marriage dispensation applications decreased further to 1009 cases.

This decrease reflects that the efforts made by the local government in overcoming the problem of child marriage have paid off, especially efforts in the form of public policy. According to Dye (1981), public policy is whatever governments choose to do or not to do (Dye, 2017). Through public policy the government has enormous potential to shape the lives of its citizens, actions taken at a certain time can affect current and future conditions. However, it is not easy to make a successful public policy, because the nature of public policy is complex (cannot be strictly controlled or predicted) which greatly contributes to



making the policy fail or unable to achieve the set goals (Mueller, 2020).

PA Malang Regency has succeeded in making public policies that are able to influence the conditions of marriage dispensation applications which have direct implications for child marriage cases for the better, it can be seen that the preventive and intervention steps taken are able to suppress the application for marriage dispensation in Malang Regency. Speaking of success, McConnell has a comprehensive heuristic framework that allows analysts to assess policy success. The framework identifies three dimensions of policy success, namely the process dimension includes maintaining policy objectives and instruments, ensuring policy legitimacy and sustainable coalition building. The program dimension includes implementation according to objectives, achieving expected results, and benefiting target groups. The political dimension includes improving electoral prospects, and making government business easier. Under each dimension and its indicators, McConnell identifies success levels ranging from Success, Resilient Success, Conflicted Success and Failure (McConnell, 2017).

Table 3 Program Success Levels

<i>Success</i>	<i>Resilient Success</i>	<i>Conflicted Success</i>	<i>Failure</i>
Implementation in Accordance with Objectives	The implementation objectives were generally achieved, although there were some failures and deviations.	Results were mixed, with some successes, but also unexpected and controversial failures.	Despite minor progress towards the expected implementation, the program was plagued by chronic failure, proving highly controversial and difficult to sustain.
Achieving expected results	The results achieved were extensive, although there were some shortcomings.	Some successes, but the partial achievement of expected outcomes was offset by undesirable outcomes, giving rise to substantial controversy.	Some minor results were achieved as intended, but were overwhelmed by controversial and notable failures in producing results.
Benefit Target Group	There are some shortcomings and perhaps some unnatural cases, but the intended target group will benefit greatly.	Some benefits were realized, but not as widely or deeply as expected due to substantial failures.	Small benefits are accompanied and overshadowed by damage to the groups that are supposed to benefit. It also tends to produce prominent stories of injustice and suffering.

Source: Source: Adapted from McConnell (2017)



Based on the explanation above, this article will answer the research question: how successful is the Religious Court in reducing the number of marriage dispensations as an effort to support the government in preventing child marriage? and what is the level of success? The analysis is conducted using McConnell's Policy Success framework, focusing on the program dimension with three indicators of success, namely: implementation in accordance with objectives, achieving expected results, and benefiting target groups, and assessing the level of success.

2. Research Method

This study analyzes the success of the Religious Court in reducing the number of marriage dispensations as an effort to support the government in preventing child marriage and how the level of success uses McConnell's Policy Success theory, focusing on the dimensions of the program with three indicators of success, namely: implementation in accordance with the objectives, achieving the expected results, and benefiting the target group. This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach to determine the success of the child marriage prevention and reduction program directly, in depth, and systematically. This research collected data using in-depth interviews and documentation. The interviewees were stakeholders in efforts to prevent and reduce the number of child marriages in Malang Regency, including the Chairperson of the Malang Regency Religious Court (PA), the Deputy Registrar for Requests of the Malang Regency Religious Court (PA), 2 children who applied for marriage dispensation, and 2 parents of children who applied for marriage dispensation. Meanwhile, documents were obtained from each of the Malang District Religious Courts (PA), downloaded from the internet and other media. Descriptive analysis explains phenomena in three levels: data reduction, where data is analyzed by transforming raw data from the field, presenting data, and finally assembling complex data into a systematic form so that conclusions can be drawn. Furthermore, the data is analyzed and arranged systematically to produce research results.

3. Results and Discussion

Program success has become synonymous with successful policy in most western-style democracies with their focus on evidence-based policymaking and policy improvement. For governments that want to show that governing is in the public or national interest, equating success with evidence can create an impression of neutrality and avoid partisanship. The simple concept of public policy can be interpreted as an action taken or not taken by the government aimed at the interests of society or the public using a program or other form. Measuring the success of implementation can be seen from the process determined by asking whether the implementation of the program is in accordance with what has been determined, namely looking at the program action of the individual project and secondly whether the program objectives are achieved. McConnel provides indicators to assess a



successful program by identifying the following:

Implementation in Accordance with Objectives

Many policy traditions assign a central role to goal attainment, with the implicit and sometimes explicit assumption that goal attainment equals success (McConnell, 2017). Much of the United States-based policy analysis literature focuses heavily on goal attainment as the achievement of bureaucratic objectives, and sidelines issues around political will and policy (David L. Weimer & Aidan R. Vining, 2017). Classical continental European bureaucratic and legalistic assumptions about public administration also focus on the need for policies to be implemented in accordance with the objectives that were set when the policy was approved. Therefore, goal achievement can also include goal-compliant implementation (McConnell, 2020).

By focusing on goal achievement, many policy proponents can claim policy success, where in essence, the government does what they have set out to do. Effective and efficient policy implementation is key in ensuring that goals are not only achieved, but also achieved in the right way and in accordance with established principles. In other words, goal achievement is not only focused on the end result, but also on the integrity and consistency of carrying out the policy in accordance with the set objectives. So, the entire implementation process must refer to the previously set goals, so that the success of achieving goals also includes implementation in accordance with these goals.

Based on Law Number 16 of 2019 amending Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning marriage, Article 7 paragraph (1) states that a man and a woman may enter into marriage if both are 19 years of age or older. However, the age limit as stated in paragraph (1) has not been reached, in paragraph (2) provides legitimacy for male or female guardians to apply for exceptions in terms of age limits by applying for marriage dispensation to the Court for urgent reasons and accompanied by supporting evidence. The Malang Regency Religious Court (PA) as an institution that has the duties and functions to provide marriage dispensation as mandated by the Law has carried out its duties well, even the Malang Regency PA is trying to reduce the number of marriage dispensations in order to support the government to prevent child marriage.

The Malang Regency Religious Court supports the implementation of activities in the context of the Government's efforts to reduce the number of applications for Marriage Dispensation through socialization activities for maturing the age of marriage (PUP). PUP is an effort to increase the age at first marriage, which is a minimum age of 21 years for women and 25 years for men. PUP is not just delaying until a certain age but providing understanding and awareness to adolescents so that in planning a family, they can consider various aspects related to family life, physical, mental, emotional, educational, social, economic readiness and determine the number and spacing of births.

The Religious Court of Malang Regency in order to support the implementation of activities in the context of the Government's efforts to reduce the number of applications for Marriage Dispensation through the marriage age maturing program (PUP) builds



synergy with Stakeholders including the Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Malang Regency Health Office, Malang Regency Personnel and Human Resources Development Agency, Malang Regency Ministry of Religion.

The cooperation agreement includes, First, cooperation on the protection of women and children to reduce the number of marriage and divorce dispensations and disability services. Second, cooperation on guarantees of protection in the divorce trial process and the fulfillment of the rights of ex-wives and children after divorce for state civil servants (asn) within the Malang district government. Third, cooperation on efforts to overcome underage marriage in Malang Regency. Fourth, in addition there was also the signing of a MoU between the Religious Court of Malang Regency and the Faculty of Psychology, Malang Muhammadiyah University.

In addition, the Malang Regency Religious Court carried out several other activities to support reducing the number of marriage dispensations, including getting a visit from the Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia for Family Resilience and Welfare. A visit from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) based on KPAI Letter Number 302/9/KPAI/V/2023 dated May 10, 2023. The PA Chairperson of Malang District participated in the Coordination Meeting of the Stunting Reduction Acceleration Team (TPPS) / Stunting Rembuk at the Malang District Level. Deputy Head of Malang District PA participated in an activity organized by the East Java Provincial Office of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection and Population. The Deputy Registrar of Petitions participated in the dissemination of the results of the 1st District Level Stunting Case Audit (AKS). Visit from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) based on KPAI Letter Number 302/9/KPAI/V/2023 dated May 10, 2023.

The Religious Court of Malang Regency in reducing the number of Marriage Dispensations, in addition to PUP and cooperation with various parties, also makes counseling efforts. Of course, as part of the counseling process, they will receive advice that can be used in the future if they decide to apply for marriage dispensation. This advice includes: 1) Reminding those applying for marriage dispensation about what marriage is. 2) Providing guidance on financial management and the rights and responsibilities of husband and wife in a marriage. 3) If the marriage dispensation application is filed due to pregnancy outside of marriage, reminding them of the status of the children in the marriage. 4) Reminding them of the negative impact of choosing to marry young, including on their mental health, psychological health and reproductive system.

Another effort made by the Malang Regency Religious Court is to tighten the requirements for applying for marriage dispensation. First, it is mandatory to include a certificate from a psychologist obtained from the "Counseling Corner" service. The Malang Regency Religious Court collaborates with the Faculty of Psychology, Muhammadiyah University of Malang to work together in providing counseling corner services. Secondly, it is obligatory to include a Certificate of Health Examination Results



for the Prospective Bride and Groom, where each applicant for Marriage Dispensation is required to conduct a general health examination and examination of the catin at the Puskesmas before the marriage.

After all the requirements have been met, the Religious Court also does not remain silent, but in the trial there is Advice, Guidance for Catin in the courtroom, where the Judge must provide advice to the Applicant, Child, Prospective Husband / Wife and Parents / Guardians of Prospective Husband / Wife. The advice is given to ensure that the applicant, children, prospective husband/wife and parents/guardians of the prospective husband/wife understand the risks of marriage. It is not uncommon for religious courts to reject marriage dispensation applications by considering the existing conditions in accordance with the regulations for deciding marriage dispensation cases.

The Malang District Religious Court conducted legal counseling activities to various villages in Malang District, in collaboration with the Regional Government of Malang District. This program aimed to educate the community about changes to the law, particularly the marriage law, which could affect their lives. In the counseling, the community is given an understanding of their rights and obligations in marriage, divorce procedures, and other legal issues relevant to their daily lives. In addition, the counseling also serves to increase legal awareness among village communities, help them understand the legal implications of their actions, and encourage compliance with applicable regulations.

Thus, in terms of the criteria for implementation in accordance with the objectives, the level of success of the policy program carried out by the Malang Regency Religious Court in reducing the number of marriage dispensations as an effort to support the government in preventing child marriage is included in the Success category, which is defined as the implementation objectives are generally achieved according to the objectives (McConnell, 2017). All efforts made by the Malang Regency Religious Court began with the socialization of the maturation of the age of marriage (PUP), building synergy with stakeholders with the output of a cooperation agreement, counseling efforts, tightening the conditions for applying for marriage dispensation, advice during the trial and legal counseling. The aim is to make efforts to reduce the number of marriage dispensation applications as an effort to support the Malang district government to prevent child marriage.

Achieving expected results

In Achieving expected policy outcomes is the main goal of any policy. It involves a complex and structured process to plan, implement and evaluate the policy. During the implementation process, continuous monitoring and evaluation is required to ensure that the policy is working as planned and adjustments can be made if necessary. Clear and transparent communication is also important to ensure understanding and support from the community and other stakeholders.

With a holistic and sustainable approach, policies will be able to achieve the desired



results, have a positive impact on society, and support the achievement of broader long-term goals. In Switzerland, for example, legislation to increase home ownership achieved its target of doubling home ownership within 15 years (Debrunner & Hartmann, 2020). However, this suggests that, beyond specific targets or implementation bureaucracy, the broader impacts or outcomes of a policy can be used as a marker of policy success (Bovens & 't Hart, 2016).

All efforts made through various programs carried out by the Malang Regency government, especially the efforts made by the Malang Regency Religious Court when viewed from the data on marriage dispensation, have produced positive results, because in each year, from 2020 to 2023, it has decreased. In 2020 there were 1726 marriage dispensation cases granted by the Malang Regency PA. In 2021 the number of marriage dispensation applications granted fell slightly to 1711 cases. In 2022 there was a significant decrease in the number of marriage dispensation applications granted, with only 1392 cases granted. In 2023 the number of marriage dispensation applications granted decreased further to 936 cases.

Table 4. Decisions on Marriage Dispensation Cases by the Religious Courts of Malang Regency in 2020-2023

N o.	Year	Rema ining Last Mont h	Accep ted	Amou nt	The result of the verdict					
					Withdr aw	Renou nce	Reject	Not Accepted	Drop	Withdr aw
1	2020	11	1783	1788	38	1726	5	4	8	7
2	2021	6	1762	1747	9	1711	14	3	7	3
3	2022	21	1433	1433	19	1392	9	8	4	1
4	2023	21	1009	1030	18	936	65	3	8	0

Source: Malang District Religious Court

During the period 2020-2023, the Malang District Religious Court has handled a number of marriage dispensation cases totaling 6,998 cases. In 2020, 1,788 decisions were recorded, with the majority of 1,726 cases being accepted (kabul), while only 38 cases were revoked, 5 cases were rejected, 4 cases were not accepted, and 8 cases were void and 7 cases were dropped. In 2021, the number of cases slightly decreased to 1,747, with the majority of 1,711 cases accepted, while 9 cases were revoked, 14 cases were rejected, 3 cases were not accepted, and 7 cases failed and 3 cases were dropped. In 2022, there were 1,433 cases decided, with 1,392 cases accepted, 19 cases revoked, 9 cases rejected, 8 cases not accepted, and 4 void cases and 1 case dropped. Finally, in 2023, the number of cases decreased to 1,030, with the majority of 936 cases accepted, 18 cases revoked, 65 cases rejected, 3 cases not accepted, and 8 cases dropped with no cases dropped.

The following are the Marriage Dispensations and Reasons in Malang District in 2020-2023

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Table 5. Marriage Dispensation and Reasons in Malang District in 2020-2023

No	Year	Total marriage dispensation cases	Reasons for Dispensation of Marriage				
			Pregnancy	Promiscuity	Economy	Culture/ Customs	Avoiding Zina
1	2020	1788	401	7	2	141	1237
2	2021	1747	318	15	5	54	1355
3	2022	1433	226	8	0	41	1158
4	2023	1009	177	15	0	138	679

Source: Religious Court of Malang District

In addition, in the period 2020 to 2023, there was a decrease in the total number of marriage dispensation (DK) cases in Malang District, from 1788 cases in 2020 to 1009 cases in 2023. Most of the reasons underlying marriage dispensation applications over these four years were to avoid adultery, with the highest number recorded in 2020 at 1237 cases and the lowest in 2023 at 679 cases. Pregnancy was also prominent with 401 cases in 2020 and 177 cases in 2023. Meanwhile, promiscuity, economic, and cultural/customary reasons appeared in smaller numbers and varied each year, with economic reasons being used the least.

Overall, there is a downward trend in the number of marriage dispensation applications from year to year in Malang District. This decline reflects the efforts that have been made by the local government and various institutions to address the problem of child marriage. The preventive measures and interventions taken seem to be starting to have positive results in reducing the number of child marriages in the region. Nonetheless, further efforts are still needed to continue combating this problem as a whole, with a focus on community empowerment, education, and stricter monitoring of child rights violations.

Thus, it is hoped that this downward trend can continue and have a broader positive impact on children in Malang District and the community at large. This trend indicates a change in situation or policy that may be affecting the child marriage rate in Malang District. Although there was a spike in cases in 2020, the decline that occurred thereafter shows the success of efforts to overcome this problem, although it has not been completed 100%.

Based on the explanation above, the criteria for achieving the expected results, the success rate of the policy program carried out by the Malang Regency Religious Court in

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reducing the number of marriage dispensations as an effort to support the government in preventing child marriage is included in the Resilient Success category, which is defined as a result that is widely achieved, despite some shortcomings. (McConnell, 2017). Efforts made by the Malang Regency Religious Court have been able to reduce the number of marriage dispensation applications as an effort to support the Malang district government to prevent child marriage, it is evident that the application for marriage dispensation has decreased every year, although if you look at the number each year it is still high.

Benefit Target Group

Another aspect of program success is the benefits provided to specific target groups, interests or actors, based on issues such as class, region, gender, religion and race (McConnell, 2017). Policies that successfully create benefits for their target groups indicate that the policy is effective in having a positive impact directly on them. These direct benefits can be in the form of increased access to needed services or resources, improved living conditions, or increased welfare in general. In addition, the success of the policy can also be seen from the mindset changes that occur in the community. This mindset change can include an increased awareness of the importance of a problem, a change in attitude or behavior, or an increased understanding of the importance of collaboration and participation in achieving common goals. Thus, a successful policy not only provides direct benefits to the target group, but is also able to change the mindset and actions of the wider community, creating a sustainable impact and potentially bringing positive changes in the long run.

A successful program for a particular interest does not mean everyone agrees, hence, contestation is an inevitable feature of program success. Another criterion for success perhaps crossing the policy domain is efficiency, as success in managing resources and cost control is one of the issues on the public agenda in developed countries since the world economic crisis in the mid-1970s (McConnell, 2016).

The programs implemented by the Malang District Religious Court provide various benefits to the community in an effort to reduce the number of marriage dispensation applications. The following is an explanation of the benefits of each program, first, the Socialization of Maturation of Marriage Age (PUP), directly the community, especially adolescents, becomes more aware of the importance of postponing marriage to a more mature age, namely 21 years for women and 25 years for men. The community also understands the importance of physical, mental, and emotional readiness before marriage, so that adolescents are better prepared for family life. The next step is to provide an understanding of family planning that involves social, economic and educational aspects, so that they can be wiser in determining the number and spacing of children.

Secondly, the Malang District Religious Court has built synergy with stakeholders both in Malang District and outside Malang District which will provide direct benefits to the



community where cooperation with various related agencies and institutions (such as the Women's Empowerment Office, Health Office, Ministry of Religious Affairs, etc.) creates better coordination, so that integrated services for the protection of women and children are available. Third, the Counseling Efforts program through the "Counseling Corner" helps prospective brides and grooms understand the meaning and responsibilities of marriage, provides guidance in household financial management, provides insight into the negative impact of marrying young on mental, psychological, and reproductive system health, and explains the legal status of children in marriages proposed due to pregnancy outside of marriage.

Fourth, tightening the requirements for marriage dispensation, where the community benefits directly from psychological and health checks. Prospective brides and grooms are required to undergo psychological and health checks, which help to ensure their physical and mental readiness for marriage. In addition, stricter requirements reduce the likelihood of marriage of children who are physically and mentally unprepared. Fifth, advice during court sessions, where judges provide direct advice to applicants, children, prospective spouses, and parents/guardians, so that they better understand the risks and responsibilities of marriage, and direct explanations from judges often help delay or even cancel early marriage plans based on the circumstances. Sixth, legal counseling conducted by the Religious Courts provides various benefits to the community, such as increasing community legal awareness of marriage laws, rights and obligations in marriage, and divorce procedures. Encouraging village communities to comply with applicable regulations and understand the legal implications of their actions. Communities become more aware of the legal protections they have, which can help them in complex legal situations.

The programs conducted by the Malang District Religious Court to reduce the number of marriage dispensation applications as an effort to support the Malang district government to prevent child marriage have provided significant benefits to the community, especially in terms of knowledge. With these programs, the community has become more informed about the negative impact of child marriage. This has led to a change in the mindset of the community, where awareness of the need to stop the practice of child marriage has increased. The knowledge gained through these programs helped the community to understand that child marriage is not something that should be done, but is a violation of children's rights and has serious negative impacts on their physical, emotional and social development. As a result, communities are more motivated to take action to stop this practice and ensure that children's rights are respected and protected.

With this knowledge, people can prepare themselves thoroughly to form a prosperous and harmonious family, in accordance with the principle of *sakinah mawadah warohmah* family in religious teachings. This policy also emphasizes the importance of physical and mental health, especially for women who are the main focus of efforts to prevent child marriage. Reproductive health, overall health, and mental and emotional maturity are



aspects that are highly considered in this policy. By maintaining reproductive health, women can minimize the risk of complications when giving birth at too young an age. In addition, mental and emotional maturity is also important to fulfill the role of a strong and responsible family member.

Therefore, the criteria for providing benefits to the target group, the success rate of the policy program carried out by the Malang Regency Religious Court in reducing the number of marriage dispensations as an effort to support the government in preventing child marriage is included in the Success category, which is defined as the target group that is intended to get broad benefits. (McConnell, 2017). The policy programs carried out by the Malang District Religious Court in reducing the number of marriage dispensations as an effort to support the government in preventing child marriage have had a significant impact on the community, especially in increasing knowledge about the negative consequences of child marriage. Through these various programs and services not only impact on community knowledge but also on the protection of children's and women's rights and families to create a better environment.

4. Conclusion

The policy program carried out by the Malang Regency Religious Court in reducing the number of marriage dispensations as an effort to support the government in preventing child marriage from the perspective of Policy Success in the program dimension is seen from three indicators. First, implementation in accordance with the objectives, all efforts made by the Malang Regency Religious Court, starting from the socialization of the maturation of the age of marriage (PUP), building synergy with stakeholders with the output of cooperation agreements, counseling efforts, tightening the conditions for applying for marriage dispensation, advice during the trial and legal counseling. The aim is to make efforts to reduce the number of marriage dispensation applications as an effort to support the Malang district government to prevent child marriage. Thus the level of success is included in Success. Second, achieving the expected results, the efforts made by the Malang Regency Religious Court have been able to reduce the number of applications for marriage dispensation as an effort to support the Malang district government to prevent child marriage, it is evident that the application for marriage dispensation has decreased every year, although if you look at the number each year it is still high. So that the level of success is included in Resilient Success. Third, benefiting the target group, the policy programs carried out by the Malang Regency Religious Court in reducing the number of marriage dispensations as an effort to support the government in preventing child marriage have had a significant impact on society, especially in increasing knowledge about the negative consequences of child marriage. Therefore, the level of success is included in Success.



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