ISSN 2621- 458X

Policy Strategies of the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in Preventing Unregistered Marriages (Nikah Siri) in Barru District, Barru Regency: A Qualitative Study Using NVivo-Based Thematic Analysis

Marsuki
ITBA Al Gazali Barru
marsuki@algazali.ac.id
Aidah
ITBA Al Gazali Barru
aidah@algazali.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study examines the policy strategies of the Office of Religious Affairs (Kantor Urusan Agama or KUA) in preventing unregistered marriages (nikah siri) in Barru District, Indonesia. It focuses on marriage registration policies, public education, factors contributing to unregistered marriages, implementation challenges, and community expectations regarding KUA services. The study employs a qualitative approach to explore the implementation of preventive policies. Interview data are analyzed thematically using NVivo, with information organized into research questions, codes, and thematic categories. The analysis identifies interconnected dimensions of KUA's preventive role, including administrative services, regulatory implementation, public socialization, counseling, marriage consultation, and legal awareness. The findings also indicate that the persistence of unregistered marriages needs to be understood in relation to economic conditions, cultural influences, religious understanding, limited information, social barriers, community participation, and institutional coordination. The NVivo visualizations further highlight the importance of improving service quality, information accessibility, institutional collaboration, and legal protection. These themes suggest that preventing unregistered marriages requires more than communicating formal registration procedures; it also requires accessible services and sustained engagement with the social and cultural contexts shaping marriage practices. The study concludes that KUA has a role as both a marriage registration institution and a provider of public education, consultation, and administrative assistance. A collaborative approach involving village governments, religious leaders, community organizations, and families is necessary to strengthen legal awareness and encourage marriage registration. The study recommends improving counseling, simplifying access to procedural information, and strengthening inter institutional coordination. Further research should incorporate broader community perspectives to assess the effectiveness of these preventive strategies.

Keywords: KUA Policy; Unregistered Marriage; Marriage Registration; Legal Awareness; Public Services.

lisensi CC BY

A.INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a social and legal institution that plays an essential role in establishing families, ensuring the continuity of future generations, and maintaining social order. In Indonesia, marriage is not merely understood as a religious bond between a man and a woman but also carries legal and administrative consequences concerning the protection of the rights of husbands, wives, and children. Therefore, the Indonesian government regulates marriage through Law No. 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage, as amended by Law No. 16 of 2019. Article 2 stipulates that a marriage is legally valid when conducted in accordance with the laws of each religion and belief, and that every marriage must be registered in accordance with applicable legislation. Marriage registration serves as an essential legal instrument for providing certainty and formal recognition of marital relationships. However, in practice, some marriages are conducted according to religious requirements without being officially registered through authorized government institutions. This phenomenon is commonly known as nikah siri or unregistered marriage. Such circumstances indicate a gap between marriage practices within society and the national legal and administrative framework governing marriage registration. Consequently, unregistered marriage remains an important issue requiring institutional attention, particularly from government agencies responsible for religious and marriage administration (Republic of Indonesia, 1974; Republic of Indonesia, 2019).

The phenomenon of nikah siri represents a complex social and legal issue because it involves religious understanding, legal awareness, socioeconomic conditions, cultural values, and access to marriage registration services. Some members of society believe that fulfilling the religious pillars and requirements of marriage is sufficient to establish a legitimate marital relationship, resulting in marriage registration being perceived merely as an administrative formality. However, marriage registration has significant implications for ensuring legal recognition and protecting the rights of family members. Unregistered marriages may create difficulties in proving marital status, obtaining civil registration documents, claiming financial support, distributing marital property, and protecting children's legal rights. Rosyadi and Kahar (2023) explain that marriage registration in Indonesia continues to face legal certainty challenges arising from differences in the regulation of marriage registration across several legal instruments. Meanwhile, Hasbiyalla (2024) highlights the legal protection implications of unregistered

marriages, particularly for women and children, despite the fact that such marriages may be considered religiously valid under certain interpretations. Therefore, nikah siri should not be understood solely as an individual or private matter but also as a public policy issue requiring institutional intervention, community education, and sustainable legal protection mechanisms (Rosyadi & Kahar, 2023; Hasbiyalla, 2024).

The Office of Religious Affairs (Kantor Urusan Agama or KUA), as a technical implementing unit of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs at the subdistrict level, occupies a strategic position in providing marriage registration services for Muslim communities. The institutional responsibilities of KUA extend beyond marriage administration to include family development, marriage counseling, religious education, and public awareness programs concerning marriage regulations. In preventing nikah siri, KUA has an important opportunity to develop educational, preventive, and persuasive service policies. Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 30 of 2024 concerning Marriage Registration provides an important regulatory framework for administering marriage procedures, including marriage registration applications, marriage document verification, marriage solemnization, and official marriage registration. This regulation reinforces the importance of administrative compliance, transparency, and legal certainty in marriage administration. Accordingly, the success of KUA in implementing its institutional responsibilities should not be measured solely by the number of officially registered marriages but also by its ability to improve public legal awareness and encourage couples to follow formal marriage procedures. Accessible services and effective public communication are therefore essential components of institutional strategies to prevent unregistered marriages (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024; Rosyadi & Kahar, 2023).

From a public policy perspective, preventing unregistered marriages requires integration among regulatory frameworks, institutional capacity, service quality, and community participation. The existence of regulations alone is insufficient unless they are translated into practical programs and institutional actions capable of addressing community needs. KUA needs to strengthen public communication through marriage regulation socialization, education regarding the importance of marriage registration, consultation services for prospective couples, and coordination with subdistrict administrations, village governments, religious leaders, and community representatives. These strategies are important because decisions to conduct nikah siri

may be influenced by various factors, including limited knowledge of marriage procedures, economic considerations, family circumstances, and the desire to avoid certain administrative requirements. Reports published by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in 2025 concerning marriage registration and child marriage in Indonesia highlight continuing challenges in marriage registration systems, including differences in service quality and administrative integration. These findings suggest that preventing unregistered marriages requires improvements in public service systems and institutional coordination. Therefore, KUA policies need to be examined in terms of the relationship between policy objectives, implementation strategies, community conditions, and achieved outcomes (UNFPA, 2025; Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024).

In the local context, Barru District, Barru Regency, provides a relevant setting for examining how KUA policies are implemented in addressing the phenomenon of unregistered marriages. The social characteristics of the community, levels of understanding of marriage regulations, religious values, and patterns of interaction between government institutions and local communities are important aspects in understanding this issue. This study considers that preventive policies against nikah siri cannot be separated from KUA's ability to establish effective communication and public trust in official marriage registration services. Furthermore, policy implementation is influenced by the capacity of KUA personnel to provide clear information regarding administrative requirements, procedures, and the legal consequences of unregistered marriages. Although national regulations establish a legal framework for marriage registration, their implementation requires adaptation to the social conditions and characteristics of communities at the subdistrict level. Rosyadi and Kahar (2023) demonstrate that marriage registration issues are closely associated with legal certainty and regulatory consistency, whereas Hasbiyalla (2024) emphasizes the importance of legal protection for women and children in the context of unregistered marriages. These perspectives provide a conceptual foundation for understanding the importance of KUA's institutional role within the social and administrative context of Barru District (Rosyadi & Kahar, 2023; Hasbiyalla, 2024).

The main challenge in preventing unregistered marriages concerns how established policies can be translated into effective institutional actions that are acceptable to the community. KUA must balance the enforcement of administrative requirements with social and religious

approaches that correspond to the characteristics of the local population. Preventive strategies should not be limited to communicating prohibitions or obligations concerning marriage registration but should also emphasize the benefits of official registration in protecting family rights. Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 30 of 2024 provides a procedural framework for marriage registration that can serve as a foundation for strengthening KUA service quality. On the other hand, UNFPA (2025) highlights that unregistered marriage issues are also associated with barriers to access and the quality of administrative systems. These circumstances indicate the importance of identifying supporting and inhibiting factors originating from both internal organizational conditions and the external social environment. Therefore, this study focuses on examining KUA's institutional strategies, public communication and educational initiatives, and community responses to efforts aimed at preventing unregistered marriages in Barru District (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024; UNFPA, 2025).

To obtain an in-depth understanding of these issues, this study employs a qualitative research approach using NVivo-assisted thematic analysis. This approach enables the researcher to identify patterns of meaning, experiences, perceptions, and informants' perspectives based on interview data, observations, and documentation. The analytical process involves familiarization with the data, coding, categorization, theme development, and interpretation of relationships among emerging themes. Allsop et al. (2022) explain that NVivo software can assist researchers in organizing, coding, and systematically analyzing qualitative data, thereby supporting transparency throughout the analytical process. Similarly, Byrne (2022) emphasizes that thematic analysis requires careful interpretation to develop meaningful themes that correspond to the research questions and objectives. In this study, NVivo is utilized to analyze interview data obtained from six informants consisting of the Head of KUA, an Operational Service Officer, KUA administrative staff, and three community members from Barru District. The coding results are subsequently used to compare the perspectives of institutional representatives and community members while identifying patterns of relationships among policies, preventive strategies, implementation barriers, and public legal awareness. Through this analytical process, the study seeks to generate a comprehensive understanding of how KUA policies are implemented and experienced at the local level (Allsop et al., 2022; Byrne, 2022).

Based on the preceding discussion, this study aims to analyze the policy strategies implemented by the Office of Religious Affairs in preventing unregistered marriages in Barru District, Barru Regency, with particular emphasis on policy implementation, public awareness strategies, marriage registration service quality, and factors supporting and hindering policy implementation. Furthermore, the study seeks to understand how community members perceive marriage registration and how they respond to educational programs conducted by KUA. Academically, this research is expected to contribute to the development of public administration studies, particularly concerning the implementation of religious public service policies and the legal protection of families at the local level. Practically, the findings are expected to provide an evaluation framework for KUA Barru District in formulating communication strategies, improving service quality, and strengthening coordination with relevant stakeholders. The application of NVivo-assisted thematic analysis is expected to provide a systematic understanding of informants' perceptions and experiences without compromising the interpretative depth of qualitative research. Ultimately, this study positions unregistered marriage not merely as a social and legal phenomenon but also as a public service governance issue in which KUA plays an important institutional role in promoting marriage registration compliance, legal awareness, and the protection of family rights (Rosyadi & Kahar, 2023; Allsop et al., 2022).

Previous studies on unregistered marriages (nikah siri) in Indonesia have predominantly focused on legal certainty, marriage validity under Islamic law, and the legal consequences for women and children. Rosyadi and Kahar (2023) examined the legal certainty of marriage registration regulations in Indonesia, while Hasbiyalla (2024) analyzed unregistered marriages from the perspectives of Indonesian positive law and Islamic law. Although these studies provide important contributions to understanding the legal and normative dimensions of unregistered marriages, they have not sufficiently addressed the practical implementation of institutional policies by the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in preventing such practices at the local level. In particular, limited attention has been given to how KUA develops preventive strategies through public education, marriage consultation, administrative services, and coordination with local stakeholders. This situation highlights a research gap concerning the relationship between institutional policy implementation and community awareness of marriage registration.

Another research gap concerns the methodological approach used to examine unregistered marriage policies. Previous studies have generally emphasized normative legal analysis and descriptive discussions of marriage registration, with relatively limited integration of institutional and community perspectives through systematic thematic analysis. This study addresses that gap by employing a qualitative approach supported by NVivo software to analyze interview data from six informants, consisting of the Head of KUA, an Operational Service Officer, administrative staff, and three community members in Barru District, Barru Regency. Through coding, thematic categorization, and comparative analysis, the study identifies patterns of institutional strategies, community perceptions, and factors supporting or hindering policy implementation. Allsop et al. (2022) emphasize the usefulness of NVivo in organizing and analyzing qualitative data systematically, while Byrne (2022) highlights the importance of rigorous thematic interpretation in developing meaningful research findings.

The novelty of this study lies in integrating three analytical dimensions: KUA's institutional policy strategies, community legal awareness, and NVivo-assisted thematic analysis within the local context of Barru District, Barru Regency. Unlike previous studies that primarily examine unregistered marriages from legal and normative perspectives, this research focuses on how KUA translates marriage registration regulations into practical preventive measures and how these measures are perceived by the community. The study also investigates institutional and social barriers that influence the implementation of preventive policies. By comparing the perspectives of institutional officials and community members, this research is expected to provide empirical insights into the relationship between public service delivery, institutional capacity, and community participation in preventing unregistered marriages. Consequently, the findings are expected to contribute to public administration scholarship and provide practical recommendations for strengthening KUA's preventive policies, improving marriage registration services, and increasing public legal awareness.

B.RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a descriptive design to examine the policy strategies of the Office of Religious Affairs (Kantor Urusan Agama or KUA) in preventing unregistered marriages (nikah siri) in Barru District, Barru Regency, South Sulawesi,

Indonesia. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables the researcher to explore institutional practices, informants' experiences, perceptions, and social conditions surrounding the implementation of marriage registration policies. The research focused on understanding the preventive strategies implemented by KUA, the role of institutional personnel, and community responses to marriage registration services. The research informants consisted of six individuals selected through purposive sampling based on their knowledge, institutional responsibilities, and relevance to the research objectives. These informants included the Head of KUA (Mukhlis Jawad), an Operational Service Officer (Kuderiah), administrative staff (Arrijalu), and three community members (Fatmawati, Rismawati, and Susilawati). This research design enabled an in-depth examination of the phenomenon within its actual social and institutional context (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, field observations, and documentation to obtain comprehensive information regarding KUA's policy implementation and preventive strategies. Interviews were conducted with the six informants to explore institutional policies, public education initiatives, marriage registration procedures, implementation challenges, and community perceptions of unregistered marriages. Observations were used to understand institutional activities and the implementation of marriage registration services, while documentation provided supporting information from relevant regulations, administrative records, and institutional documents. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis through several stages, including data familiarization, initial coding, categorization, theme development, and interpretation. The analytical process followed the principles of systematic qualitative data analysis, involving data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles et al., 2018). Furthermore, thematic analysis was applied to identify recurring patterns and relationships among institutional strategies, supporting and inhibiting factors, and community legal awareness (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

To facilitate systematic data management and analysis, this study utilized NVivo qualitative data analysis software. The software was employed to organize interview transcripts, classify informants' statements, develop coding categories (nodes), and identify relationships among emerging research themes. The analysis involved five main thematic categories: (1) KUA policy implementation; (2) strategies for preventing unregistered marriages; (3) marriage

registration services; (4) supporting and inhibiting factors; and (5) the social and legal implications of unregistered marriages. NVivo-assisted analysis also enabled the researcher to compare institutional perspectives with community experiences through coding comparisons, matrix coding queries, and thematic visualizations. The findings were subsequently interpreted by examining the consistency of information across interviews, observations, and documentary evidence. NVivo served as an analytical support tool rather than a substitute for the researcher's interpretative role in developing meaningful findings (Allsop et al., 2022).

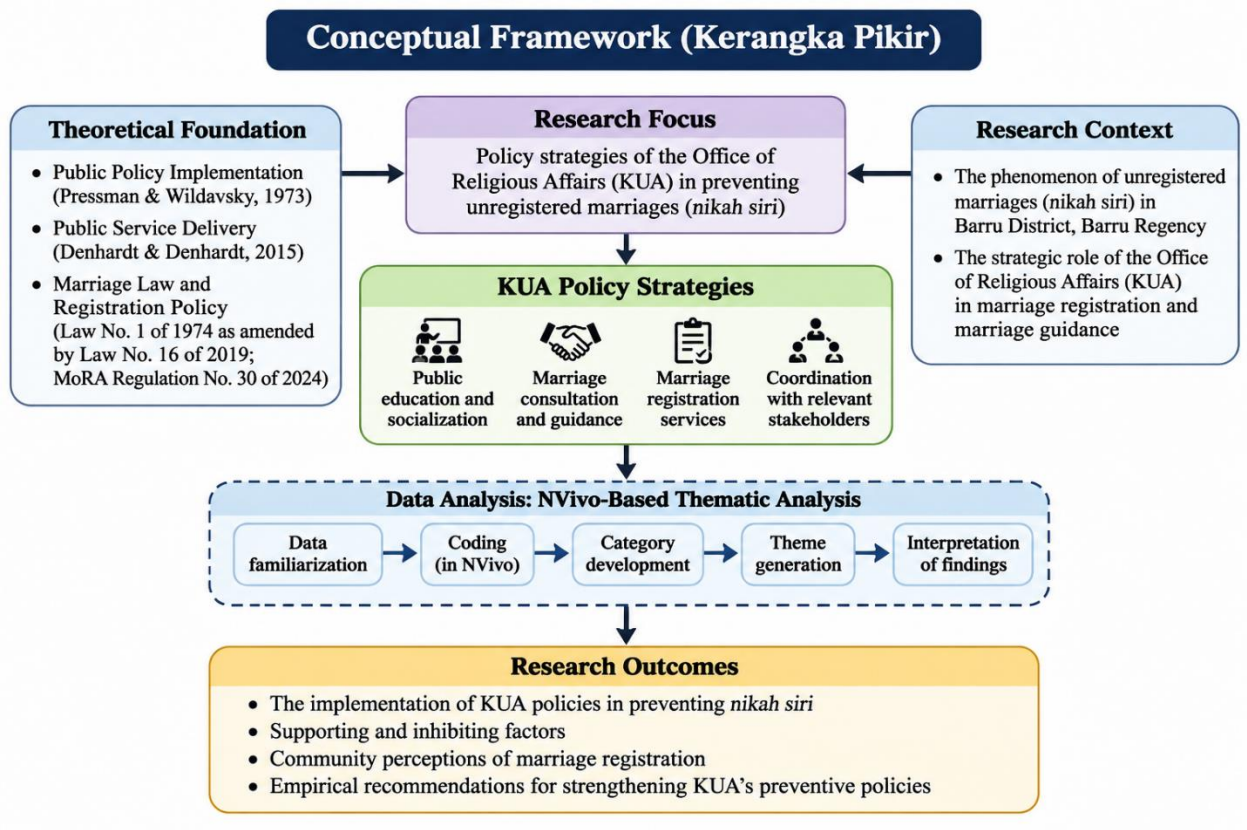


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of KUA Policy Strategies for Preventing Unregistered Marriages (Nikah Siri) in Barru District, Barru Regency

The conceptual framework illustrates the research process concerning the policy strategies of the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) in preventing unregistered marriages (nikah siri) in Barru District, Barru Regency. The framework is based on public policy implementation theory, public service delivery, and marriage registration regulations. The study focuses on four main institutional strategies implemented by KUA: public education and socialization, marriage consultation and guidance, marriage registration services, and coordination with relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, research data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation are analyzed using NVivo software through several stages, namely data familiarization, coding, category development, theme generation, and interpretation of findings. This analytical process aims to identify the implementation of KUA policies, supporting and inhibiting factors, and community perceptions of marriage registration. Ultimately, this study is expected to provide empirical insights into the effectiveness of KUA's institutional strategies and generate policy recommendations to strengthen efforts to prevent unregistered marriages, improve public legal awareness, and promote orderly marriage administration and legal protection for families.

C.RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- Results

The research involved six informants selected purposively based on their institutional positions, professional responsibilities, and relevance to the research topic. The informants consisted of three representatives from the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) Barru District and three community members. The institutional informants included Mukhlis Jawad, serving as the Head of KUA Barru District; Kuderiah, serving as an Operational Service Officer; and Arrijalu, serving as administrative staff at KUA Barru District. Meanwhile, the community informants consisted of Fatmawati, Rismawati, and Susilawati, who represented the community members of Barru District. The involvement of these informants enabled the study to examine the prevention of unregistered marriages from both institutional and community perspectives.

The implementation of KUA policies in preventing unregistered marriages constitutes the first major analytical theme of this study. This aspect focuses on the institutional responsibilities of KUA in ensuring that Muslim marriages are conducted in accordance with applicable religious and administrative regulations. The analysis examines the role of institutional leadership, administrative personnel, and service providers in implementing marriage registration policies. In this context, the interview with Mukhlis Jawad, as the Head of KUA Barru District, is particularly relevant for understanding institutional policy direction, organizational responsibilities, and preventive measures. The perspectives of Kuderiah and Arrijalu are also important in identifying how these policies are translated into daily administrative practices and public services.

Public education and socialization represent another important dimension in examining KUA's preventive strategies against nikah siri. This theme explores how information concerning marriage registration, legal requirements, and the consequences of unregistered marriages is communicated to the community. The analysis focuses on the communication channels, educational activities, and forms of public engagement undertaken by KUA. The perspectives of institutional informants are compared with those of Fatmawati, Rismawati, and Susilawati to understand the extent to which information concerning marriage registration is understood by community members. This comparison is intended to identify possible differences between institutional communication objectives and community-level understanding.

Marriage consultation and guidance constitute an important preventive approach in strengthening public awareness before marriage takes place. This research examines the extent to which KUA provides consultation services to prospective couples and community members who require information regarding marriage procedures and legal requirements. The analysis includes the availability of information, accessibility of consultation services, and the role of KUA personnel in explaining the importance of official marriage registration. The experiences and perspectives of community informants are essential for evaluating how these services are perceived and whether the information provided addresses their needs. This theme also considers the importance of communication between KUA personnel and the community in preventing misunderstandings regarding religious marriage requirements and state marriage registration procedures.

The fifth paragraph examines the implementation of marriage registration services as a fundamental component of KUA's institutional responsibilities. The analysis focuses on administrative procedures, document requirements, service accessibility, and the provision of information to prospective married couples. The roles of Kuderiah and Arrijalu are particularly relevant in understanding the administrative dimension of marriage registration, while the Head of KUA provides an institutional perspective regarding service implementation and supervision. Community perspectives are incorporated to examine public understanding of registration procedures and the administrative challenges they may encounter. Through this analysis, the study seeks to understand the relationship between service quality, administrative accessibility, and community compliance with marriage registration requirements.

Coordination among government institutions and community stakeholders is another analytical dimension of KUA's preventive policy strategies. Preventing unregistered marriages requires institutional engagement that extends beyond the internal responsibilities of KUA. This theme examines potential coordination mechanisms involving village governments, subdistrict administrations, religious leaders, community leaders, and other relevant institutions. The analysis focuses on institutional communication, information exchange, collaborative activities, and the involvement of community stakeholders in promoting marriage registration awareness. The perspectives of the institutional informants are used to examine the organizational dimension of coordination, while community informants provide complementary insights into the visibility and accessibility of such initiatives. Actual coordination practices and their implementation need to be established through interview and documentary evidence.

The implementation of KUA policies may be influenced by institutional and social factors. This research examines supporting factors such as institutional commitment, staff capacity, regulatory frameworks, public service facilities, and stakeholder participation. Meanwhile, potential inhibiting factors include limited public legal awareness, socioeconomic considerations, cultural perceptions, administrative difficulties, and insufficient access to marriage-related information. The analysis compares the institutional perspectives of Mukhlis Jawad, Kuderiah, and Arrijalu with the experiences of Fatmawati, Rismawati, and Susilawati. This comparison is intended to identify whether the challenges experienced by institutional personnel correspond with

the difficulties perceived by community members. The findings should distinguish between factors actually identified in the interviews and factors that are only theoretical possibilities.

Community perceptions constitute an important aspect of understanding the social context of unregistered marriages in Barru District. This theme explores how community members understand the relationship between religious marriage requirements and official marriage registration. The interviews with Fatmawati, Rismawati, and Susilawati provide the primary data for examining their knowledge, experiences, attitudes, and considerations regarding nikah siri. Their perspectives are analyzed in relation to the explanations provided by KUA personnel concerning marriage registration policies. This comparative analysis is expected to reveal patterns of agreement or differences between institutional expectations and community understanding. Particular attention is given to legal awareness, perceptions of marriage legitimacy, and recognition of the importance of official documentation for protecting family rights.

The qualitative interview data are organized and analyzed using NVivo software to identify recurring themes and relationships among the research categories. The coding process is structured around five principal themes: KUA policy implementation, preventive strategies, marriage registration services, supporting and inhibiting factors, and community perceptions of unregistered marriages. Each interview transcript is coded according to relevant statements and grouped into corresponding nodes and sub-nodes. The analysis also involves comparing the institutional informants with community informants through matrix coding queries. Word frequency analysis, hierarchy charts, and thematic visualizations may be used as supplementary analytical tools to present the distribution and relationships of coded information. However, the interpretation of findings remains grounded in the meaning and context of the informants' statements rather than relying solely on coding frequency.

The overall analytical framework integrates institutional policy implementation, preventive strategies, marriage registration services, stakeholder coordination, and community perceptions to understand KUA's role in preventing unregistered marriages in Barru District. The synthesis of the findings is intended to establish how institutional responsibilities are translated into practical public services and how these services relate to community legal awareness. By comparing the perspectives of three KUA representatives and three community members, the study

seeks to identify institutional strengths, implementation challenges, and opportunities for improving preventive policies. The NVivo-assisted thematic analysis provides an organized basis for examining the relationships among these dimensions. Ultimately, the research findings will serve as the empirical foundation for formulating recommendations to strengthen KUA's institutional capacity, improve marriage registration services, expand public education, and promote legal awareness concerning the importance of officially registered marriages.

- Data Analysis Using NVivo

Data analysis in this study was conducted using a qualitative approach supported by NVivo 12 Pro software. The utilization of NVivo was intended to assist the researcher in managing, organizing, coding, and systematically analyzing qualitative data related to the policy strategies of the Office of Religious Affairs (Kantor Urusan Agama or KUA) in preventing unregistered marriages (nikah siri) in Barru District, Barru Regency. The analyzed data were obtained from in-depth interviews with six key informants, consisting of Mukhlis Jawad, Head of KUA Barru District; Kuderiah, Operational Service Officer at KUA Barru District; and Arrijalu, administrative staff at KUA Barru District. In addition, interviews were conducted with three community members, namely Fatmawati, Rismawati, and Susilawati, to obtain perspectives regarding marriage registration, public awareness, and the social implications of unregistered marriages. To strengthen the credibility of the findings, interview data were complemented by field observations and documentary evidence, including marriage registration regulations, administrative documents, institutional records, and relevant policy documents concerning marriage administration. The application of NVivo enabled the researcher to systematically organize qualitative data, identify recurring patterns, and explore relationships among emerging concepts. Through this process, themes associated with KUA policy implementation, public education and socialization, marriage consultation services, marriage registration procedures, institutional coordination, legal awareness, and challenges in preventing unregistered marriages were identified and analyzed comprehensively.

Through NVivo, the analysis was organized using three coding stages: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. During the open coding stage, the researcher identified initial concepts emerging from interview transcripts, field observations, and supporting documents.

Several preliminary codes were developed, including public understanding of marriage registration, awareness of marriage regulations, religious and administrative marriage requirements, public education and socialization, marriage consultation services, administrative accessibility, institutional responsibilities, stakeholder coordination, socioeconomic considerations, cultural influences, and legal protection for women and children. These initial codes reflected the institutional and social dimensions of KUA's strategies in preventing unregistered marriages. The coding process also enabled the researcher to capture different perspectives between KUA officials and community members concerning the implementation of marriage registration policies and the importance of officially registered marriages. By organizing the interview statements into relevant coding categories, the researcher could identify similarities and differences in the experiences and perceptions of the six informants.

The second stage involved axial coding, in which related concepts were connected and grouped into broader thematic categories. The identified categories included KUA policy implementation, preventive strategies through public education and socialization, marriage consultation and registration services, institutional coordination, supporting and inhibiting factors, and community legal awareness. This stage facilitated a deeper understanding of how institutional policies and public service practices influence efforts to prevent unregistered marriages in Barru District. Finally, selective coding was employed to identify the central theme integrating all major categories, namely the role of KUA policy strategies in preventing unregistered marriages through institutional service delivery, public education, and community engagement. The analytical framework was designed to examine the relationship between institutional responsibilities, administrative service quality, and community perceptions of marriage registration. The findings were interpreted by comparing information from institutional and community informants and examining its consistency with observational and documentary evidence. Therefore, the use of NVivo not only facilitated the systematic organization and interpretation of qualitative data but also supported analytical transparency, methodological rigor, and the development of an evidence-based understanding of KUA's policy strategies in preventing nikah siri in Barru District, Barru Regency.

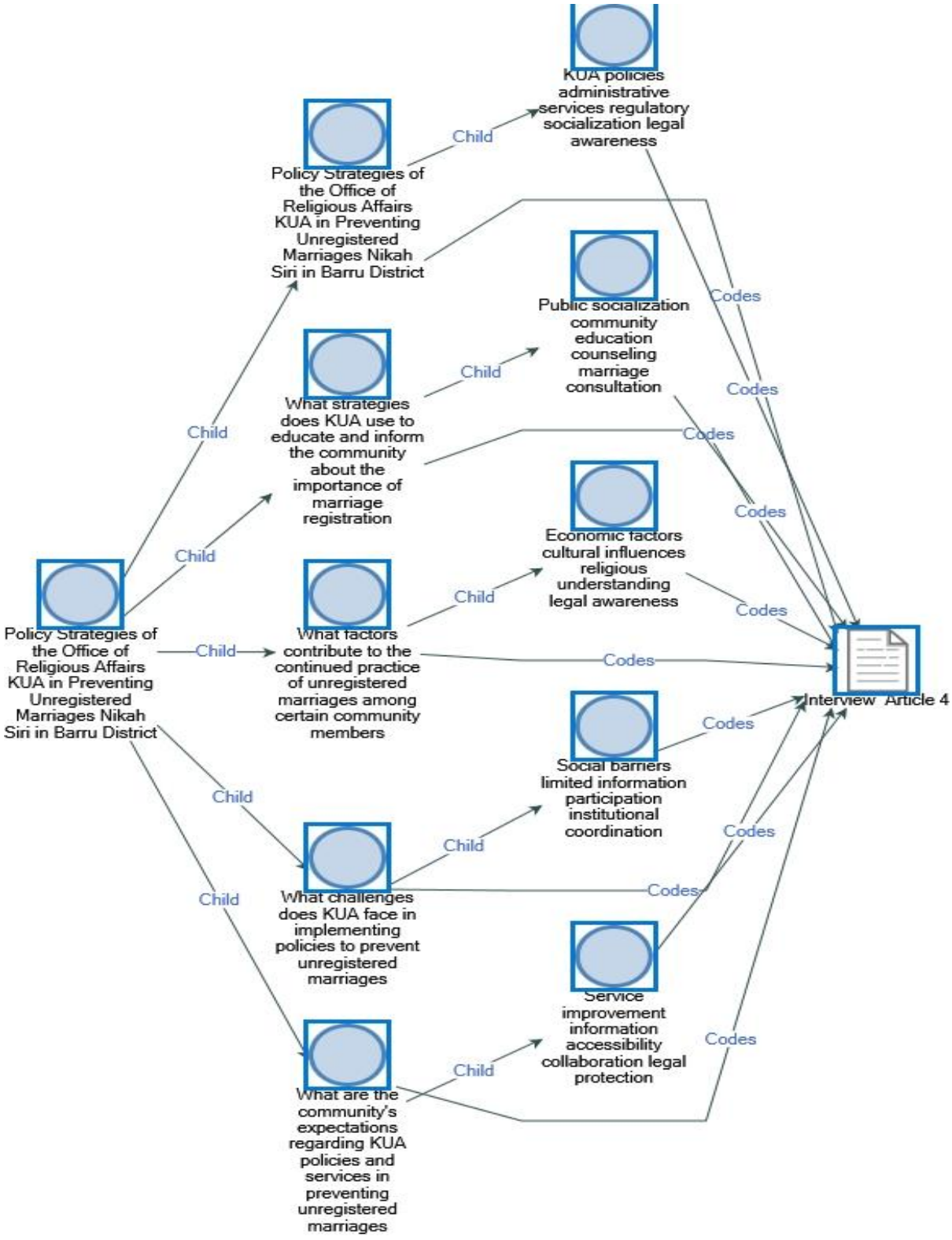


Figure 2 NVivo Coding Structure of KUA Policy Strategies in Preventing Unregistered Marriages (Nikah Siri) in Barru District

Figure 2 illustrates the qualitative data coding structure developed using NVivo to analyze the policy strategies of the Office of Religious Affairs (Kantor Urusan Agama or KUA) in preventing unregistered marriages (nikah siri) in Barru District. The diagram presents four main research questions concerning the strategies implemented by KUA to educate the community about the importance of marriage registration, the factors contributing to the continued practice of unregistered marriages, the challenges faced by KUA in implementing preventive policies, and the community's expectations regarding KUA policies and services. These questions form the main analytical branches that organize the interview data and establish connections between the research focus and the emerging themes.

The coding structure further identifies several thematic categories derived from the interview analysis, including KUA policies, administrative services, regulatory implementation, and legal awareness. Other themes encompass public socialization, community education, counseling, marriage consultation, economic factors, cultural influences, religious understanding, social barriers, limited information, community participation, and institutional coordination. The diagram also highlights service improvement, information accessibility, institutional collaboration, and legal protection as important aspects of the analysis. The connections labeled Child and Codes represent the hierarchical relationships between the research questions, thematic categories, and coded interview data, including the document identified as Interview Article 4. Overall, this coding structure provides an analytical framework for understanding how KUA policies are implemented, what factors influence unregistered marriages, and how institutional services may be strengthened to improve marriage registration awareness and compliance.



Figure 3 NVivo Word Cloud of Interview Data on KUA Policy Strategies for Preventing Unregistered Marriages (Nikah Siri) in Barru District

Figure 3 presents a word cloud generated through NVivo analysis of interview data concerning the policy strategies of the Office of Religious Affairs (Kantor Urusan Agama or KUA) in preventing unregistered marriages in Barru District. The visualization displays frequently occurring words and concepts, with larger words indicating a higher frequency of occurrence in the analyzed data. The most prominent terms include unregistered marriages, community, marriage, registration, public, legal, information, and services. These terms reflect the central focus of the interview discussions, particularly the relationship between unregistered marriage practices, public awareness, marriage registration, and the role of KUA services. Other visible terms, such as religious, family, education, awareness, and consultation, indicate additional dimensions discussed by the research participants.

The word cloud also highlights several supporting themes, including socialization, counseling, coordination, economic, cultural, administrative, protection, and accessibility. These concepts suggest that preventing unregistered marriages involves more than administrative procedures because it is also associated with public understanding, social conditions, religious perspectives, and access to institutional services. The prominence of terms related to community and information emphasizes the importance of public education and accessible marriage registration services in the preventive role of KUA. Meanwhile, the appearance of economic and cultural terms indicates that broader social circumstances should also be considered when examining the persistence of unregistered marriages. Overall, this visualization provides an overview of the dominant vocabulary in the interview data and supports further thematic interpretation of KUA's policy strategies, although word frequency alone does not establish the significance or causal influence of each factor.

- Discussion

The findings illustrate that the prevention of unregistered marriages (nikah siri) in Barru District requires a comprehensive policy approach that combines administrative services, public education, legal awareness, and community engagement. The NVivo coding structure in Figure 2 identifies several interconnected dimensions, including KUA policy strategies, marriage registration, public socialization, counseling, and administrative services. Meanwhile, Figure 3 highlights the prominence of concepts such as unregistered marriages, community, marriage

registration, legal awareness, and public information. These themes indicate that the issue of unregistered marriage cannot be addressed solely through administrative procedures at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA). Rather, preventive policies need to address the community's understanding of the legal importance of marriage registration and the accessibility of official marriage services. Under Law No. 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage, as amended by Law No. 16 of 2019, marriage registration is an important component of the national marriage administration framework. Article 2 paragraph (2) stipulates that every marriage must be recorded in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Therefore, KUA has an important institutional role in facilitating marriage registration and strengthening public understanding of the administrative and legal implications of unregistered marriages.

Public socialization and legal education emerge as important instruments for improving community awareness of marriage registration. The themes of education, information, counseling, consultation, and awareness in the NVivo visualizations suggest that preventive strategies should be directed toward increasing public knowledge of marriage registration procedures and the potential consequences of unregistered marriages. Such activities can be implemented through community meetings, religious gatherings, village-level socialization, and direct consultations with KUA officers. This approach is consistent with the perspective of Cammack et al. (1996), who explain that marriage law reform in Indonesia is closely connected to the relationship between state regulation, religious norms, and social practices. Consequently, public education should not merely communicate administrative requirements but also engage with the religious and cultural understandings that influence marriage decisions. KUA therefore needs to develop accessible communication strategies that involve religious leaders, community figures, village governments, and families. Through sustained socialization and counseling, the community can be encouraged to understand that official marriage registration provides legal certainty and facilitates access to various administrative rights and protections.

The persistence of unregistered marriages also needs to be understood through the economic, cultural, religious, and institutional factors identified in Figure 2. The NVivo coding structure reveals themes related to economic conditions, cultural influences, religious understanding, limited information, social barriers, and institutional coordination. These themes suggest that individuals' decisions to conduct unregistered marriages may be influenced by

circumstances that extend beyond their understanding of legal requirements. Economic limitations, family expectations, social perceptions, and difficulties accessing administrative services may contribute to the continuation of the practice. Rosyadi and Kahar (2023) identify legal uncertainty and regulatory interpretation as important issues in Indonesia's marriage registration framework.

This indicates that KUA's preventive strategies should consider both the normative framework and the practical circumstances experienced by the community. Accordingly, identifying the reasons behind unregistered marriages is essential for developing more responsive policies. KUA needs to strengthen coordination with village governments, religious leaders, and community organizations to identify vulnerable groups and provide appropriate information and assistance. Such collaboration can help ensure that preventive interventions address the social and institutional conditions associated with unregistered marriage practices.

Furthermore, improving the quality and accessibility of KUA services represents an important strategy for strengthening the effectiveness of marriage registration policies. The themes of service improvement, information accessibility, institutional collaboration, and legal protection in Figure 2 indicate that the community's expectations extend beyond administrative procedures to include responsive services and clear information. KUA can strengthen its preventive role by providing accessible consultation, transparent information regarding registration requirements, assistance with administrative procedures, and coordination with relevant institutions. The implementation of Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 30 of 2024 concerning Marriage Registration provides a regulatory framework for improving marriage registration services.

In addition, Fitria et al. (2025) emphasize that marriage registration is closely related to legal certainty, family justice, and the protection of civil rights.Therefore, KUA's policy strategies should integrate legal education, accessible administrative services, and institutional cooperation to strengthen public awareness and encourage official marriage registration. Overall, the NVivo findings suggest that preventing unregistered marriages in Barru District requires a collaborative and service-oriented approach that considers legal, social, economic, cultural, and institutional dimensions.

D. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conclusion

This study concludes that the prevention of unregistered marriages (nikah siri) in Barru District requires comprehensive policy strategies implemented by the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA). The NVivo analysis identifies several important dimensions, including marriage registration policies, public socialization, legal education, counseling, administrative services, and community awareness. These findings indicate that KUA plays an important role not only as an institution responsible for marriage registration but also as a provider of information, consultation, and public education. Strengthening community understanding of the legal importance of marriage registration is therefore essential to encouraging compliance with applicable marriage regulations and providing legal certainty for families.

Furthermore, the persistence of unregistered marriages is associated with interconnected economic, cultural, religious, social, and institutional factors. Limited information, social barriers, and accessibility of administrative services also represent important considerations in implementing preventive policies. Therefore, the effectiveness of KUA strategies depends on improving service quality, strengthening institutional coordination, and involving village governments, religious leaders, community figures, and families. An integrated and collaborative approach is necessary to ensure that preventive policies address not only administrative aspects but also the social conditions influencing marriage practices in the community.

- Recommendations

The Office of Religious Affairs in Barru District should strengthen public socialization and legal education through regular counseling, community meetings, religious activities, and accessible marriage registration information. KUA should also improve the quality of administrative services by providing clear procedural guidance, consultation facilities, and assistance for communities experiencing difficulties with marriage registration. Furthermore, coordination with village governments, religious leaders, community organizations, and other relevant institutions should be enhanced to address economic, cultural, and social barriers contributing to unregistered marriages. Future research should explore the experiences of couples

who have conducted unregistered marriages and examine the effectiveness of KUA's preventive policies through broader field data and direct interviews with community members.

REFERENCES

Allsop, D. B., Chelladurai, J. M., Kimball, E. R., Marks, L. D., & Hendricks, J. J. (2022). Qualitative methods with NVivo software: A practical guide for analyzing qualitative data. Psych, 4(2), 142–159. https://doi.org/10.3390/psych4020013

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Thematic analysis: A practical guide. SAGE Publications.

Byrne, D. (2022). A worked example of Braun and Clarke's approach to reflexive thematic analysis. Quality & Quantity, 56, 1391–1412. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-021-01182-y

Cammack, M. E., Young, L. A., & Heaton, T. B. (1996). Legislating social change in an Islamic society—Indonesia's Marriage Law. The American Journal of Comparative Law, 44(1), 45–73.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Fitria, R. A., Al-Amruzi, M. F., & Sarmadi, A. S. (2025). Reformulating marriage registration law in Indonesia: A review of Article 2(2) of the 1974 Marriage Law. Jaksya. https://doi.org/10.51675/261e3a89

Hasbiyalla, I. (2024). Unregistered marriage in the study of Indonesian positive law and Islamic law. VRISPRAAK: International Journal of Law, 8(1). https://doi.org/10.59689/vris.v8i1.1162

Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia. (2024). Peraturan Menteri Agama Nomor 30 Tahun 2024 tentang Pencatatan Pernikahan.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2018). Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. (2024). Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation No. 30 of 2024 concerning Marriage Registration.

Republic of Indonesia. (1974). Law No. 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage.

Republic of Indonesia. (2019). Law No. 16 of 2019 concerning Amendments to Law No. 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage.

Rosyadi, I., & Kahar, A. (2023). Analysis of legal certainty aspects in Indonesian marriage registration rule. Jurnal Hukum dan Peradilan, 12(3), 469–488. https://doi.org/10.25216/jhp.12.3.2023.469-488

Sari, W. L., & Tjahjadi, A. M. (2025). Marriage registration and child marriage in Indonesia: Findings from the 2023 National Socioeconomic Survey (Susenas). Center on Child Protection and Wellbeing (PUSKAPA), University of Indonesia, and UNFPA Center of Excellence for CRVS.

Saunders, C. H., Sierpe, A., von Plessen, C., Kennedy, A. M., Leviton, L. C., Bernstein, S. L., et al. (2023). Practical thematic analysis: A guide for multidisciplinary health services research teams engaging in qualitative analysis. BMJ, 381, e074256. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj-2022-074256