

Social Innovation in Faith-Based Organizations: The Role of Nahdlatul Ulama in Preventing Early Adultery and Sexual Violence Among Indonesian Youth

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Abstract

Family issues are at the heart of challenges like early marriage and sexual violence. Historically, these problems have been regarded as private matters, making them difficult to address. As the smallest unit of society, the family plays a vital role in tackling these issues. Nahdlatul Ulama, the largest mass organization in Indonesia, has pioneered an important approach by emphasizing the family as a key solution to these challenges. This article explains social innovation in preventing early marriage and sexual violence among young people with a study of the *Gerakan Keluarga Masalah Nahdlatul Ulama* (GKMNU) movement. This research uses a qualitative approach with participatory observation and in-depth interviews taking locations in three regions, including Pekalongan Regency, Pekalongan City and Batang Regency. This research analyzes social movement theory and incorporates social innovation concepts. The results of this research show that the GKMNU has implemented several empowerment programs for the community including (1) *Maṣlahah* and *Ma'rūf* Relations, Good Parenting; (2) Healthy Family (3) Prosperous Family which contains messages of increased income, assets, resilience and (4) Educated Family. The GKMNU program runs using a cultural and structural approach in building a movement that has been proven to have a significant impact on society. The results of this research recommend that GKMNU become a movement that continues to be carried out by continuing to involve all elements and stakeholders of society and continuing to innovate.

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INTRODUCTION

Religious social movements have become increasingly widespread following the fall of Suharto in 1998 (Pabbajah et al., 2019). A more inclusive democracy has opened the door for various social groups to express themselves in pursuit of specific goals (Rosser et al., 2005; Yazid & K. Pakpahan, 2020). Studies on religious movements have included discussions of contemporary social movements that mobilize the masses through actions that highlight religious identity (Kuswana et al., 2024). Examples include faith-based gender movements (Qibtiyah, 2009; Setiyani et al., 2024), faith-based environmental movements (Arofah et al., 2025; Reuter, 2015; Setiawan et al., 2022; Smith et al., 2024), and Muslim youth movements leveraging social media (Rahman & Mufti, 2021) all of which are part of the landscape of religion-based movements in Indonesia. However, existing research on religion-based social movements has yet to address social issues within informal spheres, such as the family. Although the family is considered a small unit, it plays a fundamental role and requires urgent attention. For the most part, family matters are still regarded as private, which has made it difficult to resolve related issues effectively.

Weak family foundations can lead to problems such as early marriage, divorce, and poor parenting practices, all of which can have negative long-term impacts. In Indonesia, there were 463,654 reported divorce cases (Khoeron, 2024). On a more localized scale, the Central Java

Databook reported that 235 divorce cases in the province were attributed to domestic violence (Darmawan, 2024). Additionally, the rate of early marriage in Central Java remains significantly high (Kompas TV, 2023). These conditions must be addressed wisely and require serious and concrete steps to resolve the underlying problems.

Research to date has positioned the prevention of divorce and early marriage as a primary responsibility of the government (Djawas et al., 2021a, 2021b; Husin, 2023; Nasution, 2019a, 2019b; SH et al., 2022). The involvement of civil society organizations is still rarely observed or recorded in scholarly works regarding their role in addressing these issues. Although the activities of such organizations are often felt to be beneficial, many activists are reluctant to produce knowledge as part of the historical documentation of their organizational contributions. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the largest Islamic organization in the world, has been striving to make tangible contributions in addressing various societal problems in Indonesia. According to a survey by the Indonesian Survey Institute, 56.9% of Indonesia's population identifies with NU. With an estimated population of 280 million, this suggests that around 159 million Indonesians are affiliated with NU (Taufani, 2024) one of NU's key contributions is through the *Gerakan Keluarga Masalah Nahdlatul Ulama* (GKMNU) movement. This initiative was proposed by KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf during the 34th NU Congress in Lampung, held from December 23 to 25, 2021. The movement began implementation in 2023, gradually rolling out in various regions across Indonesia.

President Joko Widodo, in his opening speech at the National Conference of Religious Scholars and Grand Congress of NU on September 18, 2023, expressed his appreciation for NU's efforts: "The government welcomes the PBNU initiative to establish the GKMNU – the NU Prosperous Family Movement – which is very important for improving the quality of Indonesian families, especially for grassroots communities," (Tvnu, 2023). A similar sentiment was echoed by the Coordinating Minister for Human Development and Cultural Affairs, Pratikno, who praised GKMNU as a form of social organization movement that assists the government in solving human development issues, including stunting, education, family development, and community economic empowerment (kemenko Pmk, 2024). This research aims to explain the implementation process of GKMNU, which is being carried out simultaneously across Indonesia, with a focus on three regions in Central Java: Pekalongan City, Pekalongan Regency, and Batang Regency. These three areas have divorce rates of 414, 1,550, and 1,677 respectively (Badan Pusat Statistik Jawa Tengah, 2023) with the latter two considered relatively high.

This study aims to provide an overview of three key aspects. First, a general introduction to the *Gerakan Keluarga Masalah Nahdlatul Ulama* (GKMNU) movement. Second, an analysis of GKMNU as a social movement. Third, an exploration of social innovations initiated through GKMNU to prevent early marriage and sexual violence among youth. The recommendations from this research are directed toward civil society organizations and other socio-cultural institutions, encouraging them to play a direct and active role through concrete actions in addressing urgent social issues within communities.

METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative research approach, which is particularly suited to socio-religious research that seeks to understand individual behavior within its specific context, including location, activity, and the meaning behind the behaviour (Maxwell & Reybould, 2015). One of the strengths of this method is the use of in-depth interviews, which are highly productive in exploring complex social and religious issues. This method also allows for the discovery of insights that quantitative methods may not capture (Bremborg, 2013).

The research utilizes participatory observation and in-depth interviews conducted across three regions in Central Java Province: Pekalongan Regency, Pekalongan City, and Batang Regency. This method was deliberately chosen to obtain rich, nuanced data and to reflect the researcher's experiences during the data collection process. Additional data was gathered through mass media and social media platforms discussing issues such as early marriage, divorce, and the *Gerakan*

Keluarga Masalah Nahdlatul Ulama (GKMNU) movement. News sources such as NU Online, the GKMNU application or <https://gkmnu.id/>, and TVNU also served as key references and sources of data for this study.

The fieldwork was conducted from August 1, 2023, to October 31, 2024, involving 26 informants through both face-to-face and virtual meetings. Informants included: Branch leaders of the Nahdlatul Ulama Students Association (IPNU) in Pekalongan Regency, GKMNU administrators in Pekalongan City, Members of the Institute for Research and Human Resource Development (Lakpesdam), Leaders of the Santri Community in Batang, Advocacy team for advanced education scholarships, Village officials, youth organizations (Karang Taruna), and youth representatives in Gebangkerep Village, Pekalongan Regency, Sub-branch leaders of IPNU and IPPNU (the female student wing) in Sragi District, Pekalongan Regency, Administrators of the Qur'anic Learning Center Taman Pendidikan Qur'an Roudlotul Atqiya in Batang Regency, and Central administrators of the Nahdlatul Ulama Family Welfare Movement (GKMNU).

Tabel 1. Reasearch Informants

No	Name/Initial	Gender	Age	Work	GKMNU/Address
1	CAS	Man	24	Student	Pekalongan District
2	DK	Man	23	Student	Pekalongan District
3	JN	Woman	21	Student	Pekalongan District
4	IZH	Woman	40	Lecturer	Speaker
5	KA	Man	39	Lecturer	Pekalongan District
6	AP	Man	35	Lecturer	Pekalongan District
7	AG	Man	30	Employees	Batang District
8	NN	Man	38	Teacher	Batang District
9	MU	Woman	53	Teacher	Batang District
10	MYA	Man	38	Lecturer	Batang District
11	AF	Man	54	Civil Servant	Batang District
12	MY	Man	40	Self-employed	Batang District
13	AA	Man	41	Lecturer	Pekalongan City
14	MF	Man	26	Lecturer	Pekalongan City
15	SMM	Woman	42	Lecturer	Pekalongan City
16	AW	Woman	45	Activism	GKMNU
17	YKS	Man	59	Activism	GKMNU
18	NI	Woman	25	Teacher	Speaker
19	GR	Man	35	Teacher	Speaker
20	IH	Man	38	Lecturer	Speaker
21	DK	Woman	45	Mother	Partisipant
22	DS	Woman	25	Fresh Graduate	Partisipant
23	IK	Woman	34	Activism	Partisipant
24	EA	Woman	34	Lecturer	Partisipant
25	MB	Man	22	Activism	Speaker
26	CW	Woman	57	Mother	Partisipant

Data triangulation was employed in this study. After data collection, the next step involved data verification and categorization based on specific themes. These thematic groupings were aligned with the research questions (Majumdar, 2022). The data were analyzed using theories of social and cultural movements, along with the concept of innovation, and were then narrated through the presentation of images, interview excerpts, observational findings, and diagrams.

In this paper, authors explore social movement theory alongside the concept of social innovation. Sydney Tarrow defines social movements as collective actions characterized by shared goals and social solidarity, demonstrated through ongoing interactions with elites, opponents, and authority figures. For a movement to thrive, it must embody at least three key indicators: a clear set of common goals, a strong sense of social solidarity, and a commitment to resistance politics

(Suharko, 2006). The definition of social movements is dynamic and continually evolving. Manulu (2016) provides a synthesis of various perspectives on social movements, including collective behavior, resource mobilization, political processes, and New Social Movements, each associated with prominent figures in the field.

Nicholls & Dees (2015) describe innovation as both the process and the result of new approaches developed to address social problems and needs, with the aim of creating a better or more productive outcome. According to the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, the term *innovation* is defined as: (1) The introduction or implementation of new ideas; renewal. (2) A novel discovery that differs from what previously existed, which can take the form of ideas, methods, or tools. (3) An element of renewal in modern language. Concepts and theories were productively applied to understand the emergence, implementation, and various forms of activities within GKMNU.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Brief of *Gerakan Keluarga Masalah Nahdlatul Ulama* (GKMNU) Movement

The *Gerakan Keluarga Masalah Nahdlatul Ulama* (GKMNU) movement, was initiated by KH. Yahya Cholil Staquf, the General Chairman of the Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board (PBNU) for the 2021–2026 period, following the 34th Nahdlatul Ulama Congress held in Lampung on December 23–25, 2021. Although the idea was introduced earlier, the movement officially began operating in 2023. The GKMNU Council of Advisors includes prominent figures such as Joko Widodo, K.H. Ma'ruf Amin, K.H. Mustofa Bisri, Nyai Hj. Sinta Nuriyah, and K.H. Miftachul Achyar. The movement was officially launched on September 18, 2023, during the 2023 National Conference of Ulama and the Grand Conference of Nahdlatul Ulama (TVNU Televisi Nahdlatul Ulama, 2023). As a movement, GKMNU represents Nahdlatul Ulama's contribution to addressing societal challenges through practical engagement and community assistance. KH Yahya Cholil Staquf stated:

NU scholars, even before the establishment of Nahdlatul Ulama itself, have always carried out their role as *ri'āyatul ummah*—guardians and companions of the ummah—taking on the responsibility of striving for the well-being (*maṣlahah*) of the people. The everyday lives of community members have always been the focus of our scholars' attention, as they aspire to promote the greater good for the ummah. And the well-being of the ummah as a whole must begin with the well-being of the family (YCS, 2023).

K.H. Yahya Cholil Staquf also emphasized that the GKMNU was designed to serve, accompany, support, and nurture families in addressing their various needs. Through its programs and initiatives, Nahdlatul Ulama is committed to supporting families in realizing their aspirations and improving their quality of life. GKMNU emphasizes the family as the central actor in achieving harmony and *maṣlahah* (well-being) within the spheres of family life, society, and the nation. As stated by Alisa Wahid, GKMNU envisions:

Realizing the *maṣlahah* of Indonesian families—especially NU families—through a solid and integrated service movement (*khidmah*). This movement is built on the perspective that family issues are strategic and central. They are shared concerns among all NU elements. GKM serves as an organizational space for *khidmah* to the *jamā'ah* (AW, 2023).

The *Gerakan Keluarga Masalah Nahdlatul Ulama* (GKMNU) movement has implemented several community empowerment programs, including: (1) *Maṣlahah* Relations, with indicators such as *Akhlāq Nahdliyyin* (NU values-based character), *Ma'rūf* Relations (righteous relationships), and positive parenting, (2) Healthy Families, which includes goals like reducing stunting, promoting clean and healthy living behaviors, and preventing child marriage, (3) Prosperous Families, with focuses on increased income, asset building, and resilience, (4) Moderate Families, based on the principles of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah* and NU religious practices (*'amaliyah*), (5)

Educated Families, ensuring at least a senior secondary level of education, and (6) Environmentally Conscious Families, which promote awareness in waste management, energy use, green environments, and disaster preparedness. These programs have been implemented nationwide and involve all levels of society, particularly families within the organizational structures of Nahdlatul Ulama at every level.

K.H. Yahya Cholil Staquf, General Chairman of the Nahdlatul Ulama Executive Board (PBNU), stated, *The Maṣlahah Family Movement of Nahdlatul Ulama consists of initiatives that directly engage families at the grassroots level. This PBNU-initiated program was launched as part of NU's scholarly and moral responsibility* (Indiraphasa, 2024). Furthermore, K.H. Yahya Cholil Staquf stated that PBNU continues to expand the scope of its initiatives, not only in the religious domain but also across social, economic, cultural, and political aspects—including national politics, people-centered politics, and political ethics. These programs encompass the establishment of modern schools, universities, economic development initiatives, and other efforts aimed at improving community welfare. As stated during the GKMNU outreach campaign:

GKMNU envisions families that are just, free from violence, moderate, healthy, free from stunting and child marriage, prosperous, well-educated (at least secondary and higher education), environmentally aware, and disaster-conscious—all based on the principles of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah An-Nahdliyah* and the ethics of *Mabādi' Khaira Ummah* (Tvnv, 2023).

In the Pre-Congress NU Education Workshop held on January 18, 2025 Alisa Wahid in Maulidi (2025) emphasized that these values were first articulated in the 1992 National Conference of NU Scholars (*Munas Alim Ulama*) as the *Mabādi' al-Khamsah*, namely: *al-sidq* 'honesty', *al-amānah wa al-wafā bi al-'ahdi* 'trustworthiness and keeping promises', *al-'adālah* 'justice', *ta'āwun* 'mutual assistance', and *istiqāmah* 'consistency' (Mun'im, 2017).

Organizational consolidation efforts were carried out at the provincial level following these initiatives. The launch and socialization of the *Gerakan Keluarga Masalah Nahdlatul Ulama* (GKMNU) movement took place in various provinces: in East Java on June 7, 2023 (Fahoni, 2023); Yogyakarta on June 9, 2023 (NF, 2023). A gathering of provincial and district GKMNU task force leaders in Central Java was held on October 26, 2023 (Gumelar, 2023). A gathering of provincial and district GKMNU task force leaders in Central Java was held on October 26, 2023 (Hilman, 2023), while the event in North Sumatra was held on October 14, 2024 (Provincial Office of North Sumatra, 2024). Its success has reached grassroots communities. As stated by Alissa Wahid, Deputy Head of the National Task Force:

GKMNU has successfully empowered more than 1.5 million families down to the village level throughout Indonesia, in collaboration with various partners on topics such as family well-being, stunting prevention, premarital counseling, and sexual education for youth. GKMNU's family guidance program has been implemented in 891 villages across five provinces, reaching 1,023,680 families. The premarital counseling program has served over 3,100 engaged couples across 62 districts/cities. The family finance program has reached 15,510 families in 16 districts/cities (AW, 2025).

The success of this movement is clearly demonstrated by the increasing number of participants and the diverse regions benefiting from GKMNU. This initiative continues to thrive and expand to the present day. In this paper, the author offers an overview of its implementation across three districts in Central Java.

Intervention and Implementation of the *Gerakan Keluarga Masalah Nahdlatul Ulama (GKMNU)* movement Program in Three Regions

This study explores three regions in Central Java that have implemented the *Gerakan Keluarga Masalah Nahdlatul Ulama (GKMNU)* movement. The program was launched on Tuesday, September 6, 2023 (Alfaruqi, 2023). In practice, GKMNU collaborates with relevant stakeholders to conduct various activities aimed at preventing child marriage and sexual violence. In Batang Regency, for instance, the Nahdlatul Ulama Branch Board (PCNU) of Batang collaborates with the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Batang. Maulana Yusuf, appointed as the Head of the GKMNU Task Force at the regency level, leads and coordinates the program's implementation in Batang. He expressed his hope that GKMNU's concrete actions would bring substantial benefits to the NU community in Batang, particularly in enhancing quality of life and bringing blessings to families (MY, September 8, 2023). On a technical level, H. Akhmad Farkhan, Head of the Batang Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, explained:

This collaboration includes several key components: Marriage Guidance for Engaged Couple, to be implemented in every district/city, with a focus on one sub-district per area; the Family Financial Blessing Class, to be held in three sub-districts per district/city; and Family Counseling/Guidance, which will cover ten sub-districts, with each sub-district involving five villages (AF, 2023).

The GKMNU Task Force in Batang Regency, in collaboration with the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Batang, conducted *Bimbingan Berkah* (Family Blessing Guidance) and Marriage Guidance for Engaged Couples. These activities are part of a proactive effort to build economically resilient families and prepare engaged couples to form *sakīnah, mawaddah, wa rahmah* households (peaceful, loving, and compassionate).

The Family Blessing Guidance program was conducted across 248 villages, while the Marriage Guidance program was carried out in five sub-districts within Batang Regency. Pre-marital counseling serves as a vital platform for engaged couples to prepare for their new roles within marriage. Through this guidance, they learn about their respective responsibilities and are expected to be better equipped to avoid divorce (Fauzia, 2019; Harahap, 2021; Ridho, 2018; S et al., 2020)

Meanwhile, in Pekalongan City, GKMNU activities included a Family Development Socialization Program involving all urban villages in the city. In addition, these activities were also carried out by the Nahdlatul Ulama Family Welfare Institute (*Lembaga Kemaslahatan Keluarga Nahdlatul Ulama* (LKKNU) of Pekalongan City through regular religious gatherings '*pengajian*', talk shows, and seminars. These programs emphasized the role of the family as the primary guide in a child's development and learning process. LKKNU highlighted the crucial role that families play in shaping a child's development (SMM, Desember 24, 2023). The family is the first environment where a child learns. Children observe and imitate their parents' behavior. Emotional and spiritual intelligence also begin to develop within the family setting (Aryani & Wilyanita, 2022; Rosdiana & Laila, 2022).



Figure 1. *Lailatul Ijtima'* Activity: Family Guidance

The *Lailatul Ijtima'* event, which includes the recitation of *istigāṣah* and *tahlil* as well as the delivery of educational material, is attended by both men and women. These gatherings are held at local community centers and mosques in each subdistrict. The active participation of both husbands and wives from the Nahdlatul Ulama community in these forums serves as an invitation for all attendees to work together in building harmonious families grounded in *sakīnah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*. This activity also functions as a platform for sharing best practices in fostering family harmony. Both men and women engage in collective reflection to better understand the importance of building *maṣlahah* 'beneficial' families whose values can be passed down through generations.

In addition to the centrally coordinated programs, these three regions have introduced innovative approaches to implementing the GKMNU program. These innovations include seminars, opinion calls, talk shows, and the use of social media. One example is the Santri Batang Community, which organized a national seminar titled "Understanding Love," held at the Batang Regency Hall on Sunday, February 4, 2024, Ghuftron, head of the Santri Batang Community, stated:

This seminar invited Gus Rifqil and Ning Imaz, a santri couple who are now influencers. The goal of this event is to address sensitive issues such as romantic relationships, radicalism, and early marriage among young people. Both speakers are great role models, especially at a time when cases of sexual violence in Islamic boarding schools are increasingly reported (AG, 2024).

The talk show-style seminar was attended by 210 participants, including *santri* and youth from Batang, Kendal, Pekalongan Regency, and Pekalongan City. The speakers, Gus Rifqil and Ning Imaz, are considered exemplary young Muslim couples and serve as role models for the youth. One of the participants, Dewi, shared her excitement about meeting the speakers, "I had been heartbroken and confused about marriage. I didn't feel ready. That's why I came to this event. Gus Rifqil and Ning Imaz are our mentors, and we always look forward to their presence and advice. Their talk inspired me to better prepare myself for marriage" (DS, 2024).



Figure 2. National Seminar: "Understanding Love"

Gus Rifqil emphasized the importance of self-preparation before entering marriage. One of his key messages was, *"There are two possibilities when it comes to a soulmate. One, they are a reflection of yourself. Two, they complement you. And there's a third possibility from my wife, Ning Imaz: Sometimes, your soulmate is actually a test. You are grateful to have them, while they are patient to be with you"* (GF, 2024). The audience burst into laughter as Gus Rifqil explained the types of soulmates in a humorous yet thoughtful way. Ning Imaz also shared that she continuously learns by reading books about women, parenting, and building *maṣlahah* 'beneficial' families as part of her preparation for family life (NI, 2024).

The Branch Leadership of the Institute for Research and Human Resource Development (*Lakpesdam*) in Batang Regency supports the success of the GKMNU through the initiation of a writing project titled Call for Papers. They successfully gathered 55 writers from across Java Island who contributed a total of 57 essays on current family issues—ranging from stunting and sexual violence to religious moderation. Miqdam, Head of *Lakpesdam*, stated:

This initiative was born out of a shared concern for our closest social problem: family-related issues and the many challenges they currently face. These concerns were then expressed through essays and opinion pieces. The manuscript collection process ran from December 12, 2023, to January 10, 2024. Contributors came from various institutions, organizations, and universities across different cities on the island of Java. The six key topics in the call for opinions were: (1) Family Resilience, (2) Anti-Sexual Violence Movement, (3) Prevention of Early Marriage, (4) Stunting and Its Challenges, (5) *Maslahah* Family Parenting, and (6) Ideas and Actions on Religious Moderation in Families (MYA, 2024).

Miqdam also emphasized that issues such as sexual violence, early marriage, divorce, stunting, and extremism remain major concerns in today's society, particularly because they occur so close to home.

News about sexual violence in Batang Regency seemed to dominate the headlines throughout 2023. One of the root causes of these problems is the family environment itself. Promoting the concept of *maṣlahah* family as a potential solution must be prioritized—especially among the younger generation. This is important because young people are often treated as mere objects of development, rather than as subjects and agents of change (MYA, 2024).

Izmy, one of the contributors, expressed her gratitude for being included in the book-writing initiative. For her, the book served as a meaningful channel to voice ideas, especially on women's issues, such as being victims of violence and early marriage. Similarly, Eta commented, *"This*

platform has given space for everyone's ideas. Even though each piece may only be a few pages long, when compiled into a single book, they become a powerful collective voice" (EA, 2024).

The *Maṣlahah* Family Parenting program was also conducted in collaboration with Pondok Pesantren Roudlotul Atqiya' on February 2, 2024. The event invited 60 parents and teachers from the Roudlotul Atqiya' Qur'anic Education Center '*Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an*' and featured Irfan Haris, a lecturer in Early Childhood Education at the State Islamic University KH Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan. He is also an expert in child education. Irfan emphasized:

Preventing juvenile delinquency requires setting clear rules and consequences, spending quality time with children, and being a positive role model by avoiding negative behaviors such as criticism or judgment. He also discussed how to handle emerging issues by instilling positive values, practicing mindful parenting, and modeling good behavior in everyday life (IH, 2024).

Meanwhile, Najib Najdi, Head of TPQ Roudlotul Atqiya' in Karangasem Utara, Batang, noted that this forum highlighted the crucial role of parents in children's education—especially through strong collaboration between parents, teachers, and the community, "*We, the teaching staff, specifically selected several parents whose children require special attention,*" he explained. Najib also expressed hope that this activity would not only offer solutions to educational challenges in today's modern era but also strengthen cooperation in improving the quality of children's education in the future" (NN, 2024).



Figure 3. *Maṣlahah* Family Parenting

Parenting and family issues raise awareness of the family as one of the key actors in education. At the very least, education must involve three essential elements: the roles of schools, parents, and the community, which must continuously work in synergy (Andriyani, 2020; Fajriati et al., 2022; Jatiningsih et al., 2021; Mar'ati, 2022). Children should not be entrusted solely to schools; instead, parents and the community need to monitor and support how children apply the knowledge they acquire at school. Children should not be entrusted solely to schools; instead, parents and the community need to monitor and support how children apply the knowledge they acquire at school. Dwi, one of the participants in the parenting session, expressed her enthusiasm about joining the activity, "*I gained valuable knowledge on how to deal with children. Through this forum, I was reminded that every child has unique potential and talents. It is the parents' duty to support and pray for their children so they can become pious individuals and achieve their dreams.*" (DK, 2024).

At the regency level, GKMNU in Pekalongan held a youth mentoring program. This initiative was prompted by a suicide case in Sragi Sub-district, reportedly due to a romantic breakup (Humas Polres Pekalongan, 2023). The program featured psychologist Izza Himawanti who provided guidance on mental boundaries for teenagers. The session was attended by 50 members of IPNU and IPPNU from Sragi Sub-district on January 21, 2024. As a psychology lecturer at State Islamic

University KH Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, she encouraged youth to develop self-awareness and learn how to manage their emotions effectively.



Figure 4. Talk Show Activity: Students Care for Others

In addition, GKMNU also organized a youth mental health talk show held in Gebangkerep Village, in collaboration with the local youth organization (*Karang Taruna*), village officials, IPNU-IPPNU of Tegalsuruh Village, Sragi Sub-district, and the Youth Ambassador of Pekalongan Regency. M. Bilal delivered a presentation on stopping child marriage and discussed the importance of addressing premarital sex. As the Youth Ambassador of Pekalongan Regency, he encouraged young people to become valuable members of society and to keep learning in order to avoid early marriage and free sex. The head of *Karang Taruna* in Gebangkerep Village, stated that this event was very impactful, especially in reducing the rate of early marriages. He also emphasized that it provided a clear image of the ideal youth—active and progressive. Caswati, the head of the PKK (Family Welfare Movement) in Gebangkerep Village, also welcomed the event positively. She hoped that the youth of Gebangkerep Village would avoid negative behaviors and grow up well.

The use of dialogue in the event served as a two-way communication strategy (Hidayat, 2018; Kent & Taylor, 2002; Theunissen & Rahman, 2011). Speakers delivered their materials while participants were able to ask questions and receive immediate responses. This form of communication allowed young people to find answers and get help with their problems. With a background in psychology, the speakers were also able to understand the youth's issues, map out their conditions, and provide solutions to their concerns.

This forum also gave space to hear young people's feelings, worries, and hopes, which are often overlooked due to social pressures from peers, families, and communities to become a certain kind of person. The dialogue helped them release emotional burdens and better understand themselves, thus preventing despair that can lead to serious consequences. Dialogues like this offer solutions to the growing threat to young people's mental health.

As part of its development, GKMNU has launched a mobile application that can be installed on smartphones. The app features articles, guidelines, and videos on building beneficial relationships, education, and parenting. It makes it easier for the community to access and consult privately anytime and anywhere. With the help of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the app provides responsive feedback to users seeking consultation. Designed with a user-friendly interface, AI has proven to help solve human problems (Dennehy et al., 2022). The Instagram social media platform @mudamaslahat also shares content carrying messages of benefit and well-being. Social media has proven to be an effective medium for campaigning specific messages (Afad, 2020, 2021; Chan et al., 2023; Joshi et al., 2023; Koay et al., 2023; Wibowo et al., 2021). By delivering targeted

messages, social media can reach a broad audience across countries, social strata, genders, and age groups. With the power of the internet, accessible to anyone, anywhere, social media has become a highly effective strategy for spreading the messages of the GKMNU.

Da'wah messages delivered through social media in engaging formats are more easily received by the public. Through images and videos, people can read, listen to, and share these messages across social platforms such as WhatsApp groups, Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook. In this way, social media has truly become both a platform and a medium for building a beneficial (maslahah) family and youth generation. However, social media has often been used to spread hoaxes and hate speech (Putri Aisyiyah Rachma Dewi et al., 2023; Setiawandari & Munandar, 2021).

Gerakan Keluarga Masalah Nahdlatul Ulama (GKMNU): A Social Movement as a Social Innovation for Preventing Child Marriage and Sexual Violence Against Youth

Gerakan Keluarga Masalah Nahdlatul Ulama (GKMNU) movement, is an intentional initiative aimed at addressing grassroots issues. This means that GKMNU operates as a social movement in the form of collective community action—organized efforts by groups of people directed either toward change or toward preserving existing social patterns and institutions. Experts emphasize that such social movements involve intentionality, organization, and continuity (Situmorang, 2007).

Social movements are inherently fluid and evolving. As articulated by Sydney Tarrow, a collective movement is marked by a shared goal and social solidarity, reflected in ongoing interactions with elites, opponents, and authorities. The sustained effectiveness of a movement can be gauged through three essential indicators: the presence of common goals, the fostering of social solidarity, and the continuous commitment to a politics of resistance (Suharko, 2006). GKMNU is unified by a common objective, guided by the central leadership of Nahdlatul Ulama. This involves collaboration among both administrators and members, all of whom share a sense of solidarity as students (*santri*) of K.H. Hasyim Asy'ari. Together, they work to advance the initiatives of GKMNU. In this context, the term "elites" refers to the esteemed ulema and the leadership of regional boards. Importantly, there is no indication of opposing factions within this movement; all individuals express shared concerns regarding issues such as early marriage and sexual violence. This reflects the notion that political resistance and opposition do not play a role within GKMNU. Such an understanding aligns with the view that social movements can be defined in a fluid manner. Manulu (2016) endeavors to synthesize various perspectives on social movements, encompassing collective behavior, resource mobilization, political processes, and new social movements, each associated with distinct theorists. This paper will further examine the perspectives of collective behavior and resource mobilization within the context of GKMNU.

Collective behavior that signifies a social movement arises as a spontaneous reaction to dissatisfaction stemming from the rapid pace of modernization (Manulu, 2016). GKMNU is a movement that arose in response to the challenges presented by modernity, which has led to issues such as early marriage and sexual violence. These problems are intertwined with the influences of modernity, marked by technological advancements and the swift exchange of information. Unfortunately, many individuals who are ill-equipped to navigate these changes often react with confusion and uncertainty, and some even choose to leave their local communities behind. This movement emerged as part of Nahdlatul Ulama's concern over the increasingly problematic state of Indonesian society as a consequence of modernity. Society is drifting away from religious values and misusing technology for harmful purposes '*muḍārāt*' (Arifin et al., 2022; Pratama & Erianjoni, 2022). Islamic teachings and local wisdom are frequently marginalized in the context of modernity, resulting in a shift away from traditional values such as communal unity, etiquette, and *maṣlahah*. These values are increasingly being supplanted by newer, more liberal principles that often diverge from established religious guidelines.

Nevertheless, collective behavior has its limitations, as it frequently characterizes social movements as merely emotional and irrational responses. This viewpoint tends to downplay the importance of organizational structure and the interpersonal relationships among participants, which are essential for the growth and success of the movement (Manulu, 2016). The criticism aimed at GKMNU is unwarranted, as the movement arose from Nahdlatul Ulama's concerns about various issues facing Indonesia that necessitate a family-oriented approach. GKMNU is an active and evolving movement that recognizes the NU organization as a broad base with a presence not only throughout Indonesia but also around the globe.

The resource mobilization perspective conceptualizes social movements as outcomes resulting from the intentional and strategic deployment of all available resources in pursuit of success (Manulu, 2016). This perspective suggests that social movements are inherently rational, taking into account both profit and loss. According to field findings, GKMNU exemplifies such a rational movement, assessing benefits not only in terms of material or financial gain but also regarding broader societal impacts. This movement plays a significant role in the community by providing solutions through knowledge and literacy, which contribute to the development of a *maṣlahah* family. This includes fostering *Maṣlahah* Relations, *Ma'rūf* Relations, Good Parenting, Healthy Families, and Prosperous Families.

Criticism of resource mobilization often focuses on rational aspects, overlooking the significance of consciousness, ideals, culture, and ideology, as highlighted by Manulu (2016). However, GKMNU demonstrates an awareness of both the processes involved and the long-term effects of its movement. This initiative is rooted in the ideology of Nahdlatul Ulama, an organization founded by the ulema. Every idea and action associated with GKMNU is deeply connected to the thoughts and prayers of these religious leaders. The *Mabādi' al-Khamsah* serves as the core framework for GKMNU.

Resource mobilization within Nahdlatul Ulama is achieved through leveraging existing resources, including its vast membership and networks. Moreover, the movement enjoys the support of Joko Widodo, the President of Indonesia, which signifies governmental endorsement of the initiative. The implementation of GKMNU's programs utilizes both cultural and structural approaches in building the movement. Structurally, GKMNU is driven by the Executive Board of Nahdlatul Ulama (PBNU). President Joko Widodo, the *Rais 'Aam* of Nahdlatul Ulama, the Chairperson of PBNU, the Central Leader of the Ansor Youth Movement, as well as regional, branch, sub-branch, and grassroots leadership levels are directly involved in GKMNU through a dedicated task force. In practice, the programs are executed through a cultural approach by integrating GKMNU into regular Nahdlatul Ulama meetings (*jam'iyah*) at all levels. Thus, GKMNU is not merely a temporary project that ends once the program concludes; instead, it maintains continuity. Activities such as call for papers, talk shows, and seminars have been added across three regions to enliven and further publicize GKMNU to wider communities. GKMNU has proven to have a significant impact on society. According to data from the Pekalongan City Religious Court, early marriages saw a significant reduction of 37% in 2024. The number of cases decreased from 27 in 2023 to 17 in 2024 (Public Communication Team, 2024).

A similar trend was observed in Batang Regency, where early marriages also experienced a marked decline. The Batang Regency Religious Court reported that in 2024, dispensations were issued for 99 couples who had not yet reached the legal age for marriage. This follows the approximately 200 early marriages recorded in 2023 and more than 400 in 2022 (Kutnadi, 2024). Pekalongan Regency showed a parallel decline in early marriages. Data from the Case Tracking Information System of the Kajen Religious Court reveal that there were 330 cases of early marriage dissolutions in 2022, which decreased to 222 cases in 2023 and further declined to 173 cases in 2024 (Kajen Religious Court, 2024). In practice, GKMNU works in partnership with the Ministry of Religious Affairs at the regency level. The Task Force and the ministry collaborate to conduct outreach and socialization of GKMNU down to the village level. Culturally, GKMNU is implemented alongside regular Nahdlatul Ulama cultural activities such as *lailatul ijtima'*, routine

majelis ta'lim meetings, and other religious gatherings. Cultural movements are defined as movements that utilize traditions as instruments for action (Cherry, 2006). In its implementation, GKMNU also remains flexible in expanding its reach—not only involving Nahdlatul Ulama organizations but also including communities, institutions, and individuals who share the same concerns and vision in addressing current societal problems.

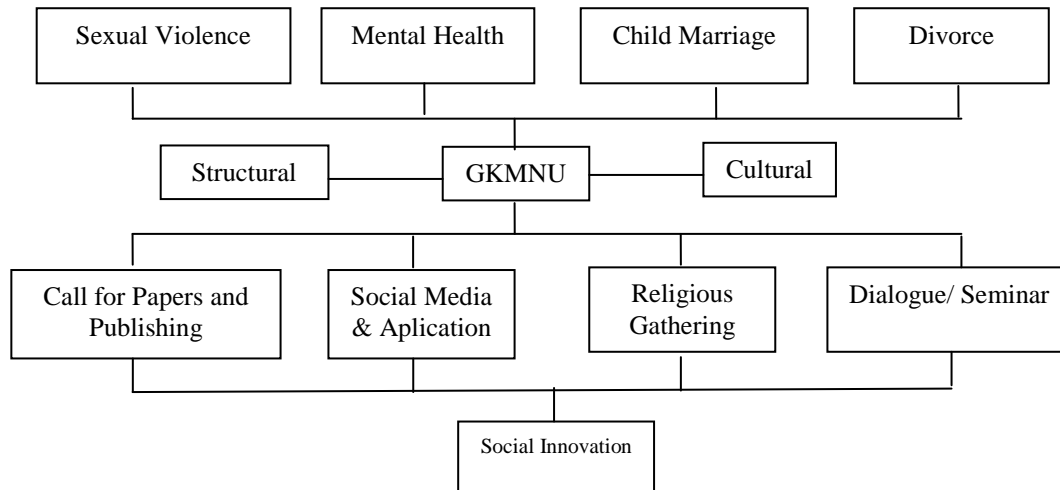


Figure 5. The Role of Nahdlatul Ulama in Preventing Early Adultery and Sexual Violence Among Indonesian Youth with Social Innovation

Issues such as sexual violence, mental health, child marriage, and divorce have recently become growing concerns in society. The *Gerakan Keluarga Masalah Nahdlatul Ulama* (GKMNU) movement, addresses these issues through both structural and cultural approaches. Structurally, GKMNU involves the organizational hierarchy of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), from the national to the grassroots (*ranting*) level. Culturally, GKMNU utilizes existing traditional religious practices that are already part of the NU community's regular *jam'iyah* activities. The implementation strategies of GKMNU programs include calls for papers articles and book publications, use of social media, religious gatherings (*pengajian*), and dialogues/seminars. These activities are part of GKMNU's efforts to function as a form of social innovation aimed at resolving community issues.

Innovation in addressing child marriage, sexual violence, mental health issues, and divorce must continuously be developed. This is in accordance with the view of Nicholls & Dees (2015) about innovation as both the process and the result of new approaches developed by GKMNU to address social problems and needs, then with the aim of creating a better or more productive outcome. The innovations initiated by GKMNU are expected to help resolve these issues through the family well-being (*maṣlahah*) approach. This movement affirms Nahdlatul Ulama's role as an active civil society organization contributing to grassroots development (Dennehy et al., 2022). As a civil society movement, GKMNU is grounded in shared goals, practices, and values (Dennehy et al., 2022). Nahdlatul Ulama's collaboration with both government and non-government institutions represents a form of cooperation that is essential to achieving these goals, while preserving the traditional values that have been upheld since the organization's founding. These values are rooted in *ijtihad* and reflect NU's commitment to addressing humanitarian issues (Asmawi, 2023). The involvement of all institutions in the success of GKMNU reflects empathy and solidarity, expressed through concrete action.

GKMNU is a movement that strategically leverages religious identity. This research demonstrates that the concept of social movements is continually evolving and remains dynamic, characterized by its unique features, processes, and goals. This underscores the notion that religion serves as a powerful rationale and a critical tool for both fostering and advancing the movement

(Kuswana et al., 2024; Qibtiyah, 2009; Setiawandari & Munandar, 2021). Religion offers valuable insights into the advantages of establishing a solid foundation for a household. This research contends that the government is not the primary entity responsible for addressing the issue of early marriage prevention.

This research highlights the evolving concept of civil society as one that continues to pursue innovation in its activities. The three concepts—structure, culture, and innovation—which were previously seen as separate, have now come together in a productive and unified approach through the GKMNU. As the largest mass organization in the world, Nahdlatul Ulama continues to innovate in its humanitarian work, showing that even complex problems like child marriage can be addressed through a synergized civil society movement.

CONCLUSION

Issues of sexual violence, mental health, child marriage, and divorce have recently become increasingly alarming for society. The *Gerakan Keluarga Masalah Nahdlatul Ulama* (GKMNU) movement, addresses these issues through both structural and cultural approaches. The structural approach involves the organizational framework of Nahdlatul Ulama, from the central board to the grassroots (*ranting*) level. Meanwhile, the cultural approach draws on traditions that are already embedded in the regular activities (*jam'iyah*) of Nahdlatul Ulama. GKMNU's implementation strategies include calls for papers and book publications, the use of social media, religious gatherings (*pengajian*), and dialogues or seminars. These agendas are part of a broader effort to introduce social innovation as a means of addressing problems within the community. This article captures the on-the-ground processes through which this movement operates. However, the study has a limitation—namely, the researcher is also a part of GKMNU. A constructive approach is employed in this writing, which still allows for future researchers to apply critical or alternative approaches. The ongoing growth and expansion of GKMNU also provide opportunities for further studies to explore this movement in regions beyond the current research scope and using different analytical frameworks.

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