

Hadith of Aisha's Marriage to Prophet Muhammad: An Islamic Discourse on Child Marriage

MOHD AL ADIB SAMURI*, MUHAMMAD AL-GHAZALLI ABDOL MALEK, MUHAMMAD NAZIR ALIAS & PETER HOPKINS¹

ABSTRACT

*Child marriage is a global issue that concerns the violation of children's rights. All signatory countries to the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), including Malaysia, are obliged to raise the marriageable age to 18 years old as a legal measure to curb child marriage. However, the proposed law reform received strong rejection and criticism from religious groups in various Muslim countries. Religious traditionalist groups saw child marriage as permissible in Islamic law following the authority of the hadith of Aisha's marriage to Prophet Muhammad at the age of six. This article aims to analyse the abovementioned hadith by highlighting the discussion between the conflicting groups of Muslim scholars in the context of child marriage. This study employed content analysis to the Islamic legal texts and hadith commentaries in classical and contemporary works. This study found that the controversial hadith in question is a sound authority and cannot be dismissed as a legal basis for several matters in Islamic family law, including the permissibility of a father to marry off his young child. However, the hadith should not be considered as an authority to condone child marriage in today's context. As a way forward, child rights' advocates may pose other arguments within the Islamic law framework such as *maslaha* and *Siyasah Shar'iyah* to curb child marriage in Malaysia.*

Keywords: Child marriage; Child rights; Islamic Family Law; Legal marriageable age; Siyasah al-Syar'iyah

In Malaysia, there are on average over 1,100 cases of child marriage involving Muslim children each year (Mohd Awal & Samuri 2018). The Department of Shariah Judiciary Malaysia recorded 11,424 applications from Muslims concerning child marriage between 2008 and June 2018. A report by the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development showed that the highest number of Muslim child marriages in 2018 were from Sabah (334), Pahang (177), Johor (167), and Selangor (163) (UNICEF 2020). In addition, over the years, Malaysian media has reported incidences of Muslim children being married off by their families, which causes public concern (The Malay Mail Online 2015). In 2018, an 11-year-old-girl was married off by her parents to a 41-year-old-man in Kelantan,

¹ **Mohd Al Adib Samuri***, Ph. D. (Corresponding Author), Assoc. Prof. of the Research Centre for Shariah, Faculty of Islamic Studies and Associate Fellow at the Institute of Islam Hadhari, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, MALAYSIA. Email: al_adib@ukm.edu.my; **Muhammad Al-Ghazalli Abdol Malek**, Master of Research candidate and a graduate research assistant (GRA) at the Research Centre for Shariah, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, MALAYSIA. Email: P107399@siswa.ukm.edu.my;; **Muhammad Nazir Alias**, Ph. D., Lecturer at the Research Centre for Shariah, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, MALAYSIA. Email: nazir@ukm.edu.my; **Peter Hopkins**, Ph. D., Professor of Social Geography, New Castle University, UK & Distinguished International Professor (2020-21) at Institute of Islam Hadhari, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, MALAYSIA. Email: peter.hopkins@ncl.ac.uk

which sparked mixed reactions from the various stakeholders and the public (Berita Harian 2018a; Free Malaysia Today 2018; Harian Metro 2018; Astro AWANI 2018). Nevertheless, this incident is not unique as previous research shows that a significant number of children have been married off to spouses aged 25 and older (Mohd Awal & Samuri 2017).

This issue has been viewed seriously by the Malaysian Government since 2010. In 2013, the 106th Fatwa Committee of the National Council for Islamic Religious Affairs of Malaysia issued a fatwa on child marriage that stated it is a discouraged practice, and that the hadith of Aisha's marriage to Prophet Muhammad should not be used as a valid authority to permit child marriage at this time (Jakim 2014). Despite the fatwa being issued at the national level, the respective states hesitated to adopt the fatwa. As a result, the Sharia courts continued dispensing permission to marriage applications with very few rejections (Mohd Awal & Samuri 2017). The debate on child marriage continued until 2018, when the Federal Government brought a motion of Islamic legal reform to raise the marriageable age across all 14 states and presented it to the Conference of Rulers on 16 October 2018 (Abu Bakar 2018; Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development 2020).

Following a consultation initiative between the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (Jakim) and the state government, Selangor became the first state following the Sultan's decree to raise the legal marriageable age to 18 years for both genders in 2018 (Mohd Zaini 2018). Six states still disagreed because this practice is allowed in Islam. These states were Sarawak, Pahang, Terengganu, Perlis, Negeri Sembilan, and Kelantan; the other states agreed to raise the marriageable age limit (Jiffar 2018). This Islamic law reform has sparked public discourse about the legality and the need for child marriage in contemporary Malaysia. However, strong opposition and criticism of the legal reforms has come from traditionalist religious groups and Islamists who see child marriage as permissible in Islam to preserve society's morality (Hin 2017; Kohno et al. 2019; Amarudin 2018). The debate focused on the hadith of the marriage of Aisha to Prophet Muhammad, an authentic hadith reported by al-Bukhari, which traditionalist Muslims consider as an authority to allow child marriage.

However, contrary to this view, another group of Muslim scholars criticized Aisha's hadith, in terms of narration and transmission, validity, authority, and interpretation of the hadith to prove otherwise. Some Muslim civil society activists in Malaysia such as Ahmad Farouk Musa have pushed for legal reform so that the legal marriageable age can be amended to 18 years as child marriage in the modern context, according to him, is only to justify sexual desire and is not in line with the objective of the Prophet's marriage to Aisha (Koya 2018). Juanda Jaya (2010), a former Mufti of Perlis and a member of the Sarawak State Legislative Assembly, suggested that the government should abolish the Sharia court's power to hear child marriage applications and raise the marriageable age to 18 years old (Haqim 2017). Whilst the Former Mufti of the Federal Territories argued that the hadith of Aishah is a sound hadith, his office put forward the argument that the government has the authority to regulate and determine any possible age limit (Rusli 2018). Next, Musa Awang, the president of the Malaysian Shariah Lawyers Association, contended that the hadith should not be interpreted literally to condone the contemporary practice of child marriage as the Prophet's marriage has its own context (Awang 2018).

Beyond Malaysia, child marriage is often justified by religion in various Islamic countries. The scholars mainly discussed the Qur'anic interpretation of that sanction and more general Islamic concepts such as puberty and marriage, instead of discussing the hadith of Aisha's marriage (Yilmaz 2021; Al-Hakami & McLaughlin 2016; Karam 2015). As discussed by Chowdhury (2004), this belief is not just held by religious authorities but also society in general, which provides religious justifications for allowing child marriages. Having researched child marriage issues in Indonesia, Kasjim (2016) argued that the use of the Prophet's marriage to Aisha, as the fundamental basis for such marriages is unjustified. She does not address the hadith, however, which makes this article important as it fills a void in the conversation about child marriage.

Accordingly, this article analyses the conflicting views on the hadith of Aisha's marriage to Prophet Muhammad. This study is imperative to look at the position of Aisha's hadith in the context

of child marriage today, and in Malaysia and beyond, especially in advancing children's rights issues within the framework of Islam. As a general overview this article discusses the traditionalists' argument on the hadith, the debate between traditionalists and the critics of the hadith, and the way forward for contemporary Muslims in advocating the child rights agenda. This article contributes to the current discourse concerning child marriage in Muslim societies throughout the world, which discusses the hadith of Aisha's marriage to the Prophet as part of advocacy for children's rights.

Aisha's Age During Marriage: Traditionalists' Arguments

It is reported that Aisha married the Prophet at the age of six, and some reported she was seven (Ibn al-Athir 1989; Ibn Abd al-Bar 1992; al-Bayhaqi 1988) and consummated her marriage with him at the age of nine years old. Scholars have cited several reports on the time the marriage occurred. Some argue it took place in 12 to 13 months before Hijrah (migration to Medina in 622 CE) (al-Zahabi 1963); on the other hand, some scholars report it was two or three years before Hijrah (Ibn al-Athir 1989). This hadith is recorded in various authentic hadith canons such as al-Bukhari (2002) and Muslim (2006), and other Sunan book hadith collections such as Sunan Abi Dawud (Abu Dawud 2009), Sunan al-Nasai'e (al-Nasai'e 1986), Sunan Ibn Majah (Ibn Majah 1987), Sunan al-Darimi (al-Darimi 2000), Sahih Ibn Hibban (Ibn Hibban 1993), Musnad Ahmad (Ahmad 2001), Musnad Ishaq Ibn Rahuya (Ibn Rahuya 1991), Musnad Abi Dawud al-Tayalisi (al-Tayalisi 1999), Musnad al-Humaidi (al-Humaidi 1996), Musannaf Ibn Abi Shayba (Ibn Abi Shayba 1988), Musannaf Abdul Razzaq (al-San'ani 2015), and Muntaqa Ibn al-Jarud (Ibn al-Jarud 1988). Per these diverse sources, traditionalist scholars, both classical and contemporary alike, have recognised that the marriage exists and the report is authentic. In fact, there is no record of a classical scholar disputing the authenticity of this report (Brown 2014). In addition to the hadith report, Muslim historian scholars have also reported the marriage in their writings (Ibn Hisham 1955; Ibn Ishaq 1978; al-Tabari 1968; Ibn Sa'ad 1990; al-Bayhaqi 1988; Ibn Kathir 1990; Ibn Abd al-Bar 1992; Ibn al-Athir 1989, al-Zahabi 1963; Lings 1991; Fauzi 2001). However, Ibn Ishaq (1978), an early Islamic biographer, reported that Aisha's age was seven and 10 years old, which is quite different from the abovementioned narration on when she was married and living together with the Prophet.

Notably, this particular hadith of Aisha has been largely quoted by classical Islamic jurists in discussing issues related to marriage without conjugal relationship (*jima'*) due to certain reasons (*'illah*), the legal age limit for marriage and consummation, the differences between the concept of contract (*al-'aqd*) and consummation (*al-bina'*), and the right of a legal guardian (*waliy mujbir*) to marry off his daughter who is a minor whether with consent or not (al-Jaziri 1999; al-Nawawi 1991; Brown 2014; Baugh 2018). The hadith appears to be authoritative in Islamic family law since Islamic jurists unanimously agreed (*ijma'*) that a father can marry off his daughter who is a minor (Ibn Battal 2003; Ibn Abd al-Bar 1992; al-Shafie 1990).

Various scholars hold different opinions regarding the delayed consummation of the marriage by the Prophet. Ibn Abd al-Bar (1992) stated that is a unanimous opinion of scholars regarding Aisha's age of nine years while living with the Prophet (al-Zahabi 1963; Ibn al-Athir 1989) that it occurred 18 months after Hijrah (Ibn Abd al-Bar 1992) or in year 2 of Hijrah after the Battle of Badr (al-Nawawi 1996; al-'Ayni 2001). As a first point, scholars noted that the Prophet was still collecting dowry for Aisha, which amounted to 400 Dirhams (Ibn Hisham 1955). Secondly, Aisha was still an immature child who had not reached the physical maturity required for conjugal relations (Ibn Battal 2003; Brown 2014). During that period, Aisha's mother, Umm Rumman had prescribed her a special diet (Ibn Ishaq 1978; Abu Dawud 2009; Ibn Majah 1987). Based on these records, there has been considerable debate among fiqh scholars concerning the delay of marriage consummation and, among other things, the option of continuing a marriage after puberty (*khiyar al-bulugh*) and the obligation of the husband to pay maintenance to his wife.

Traditionalist scholars have also analysed and justified the reason for Aisha's marriage to the Prophet. The main argument is that Aisha was the only virgin when she married the Prophet, compared to the other wives who were all widows (Ibn Hisham 1955; al-Zahabi 1963; Ibn Sa'ad 1990). Other scholars suggested that the marriage was divinely inspired as the Prophet saw an image of Aisha on the surface of a green silk cloth in his divine dream (al-Bukhari 2002; Muslim 2006). Primarily, the marriage served her well, where she in turn transmitted prophetic traditions and facilitated the emergence of Islamic sciences. Aisha managed to narrate 2,210 hadith, one of the highest hadith narrators, particularly hadiths on intimacy and marriage (al-'Ayni 2001; al-Nawawi 1996; Ahmad Ayoub @ Ayub 2016). After the death of the Prophet, Aisha played the role of a jurist and hadith expert in the early Muslim community. She was respected as an authority figure on religious matters and was frequently consulted about the Prophets' traditions (*sunna*) and *fatwa* (al-Tirmizi 1975; al-Nawawi 1996; Armstrong 2001). One account reported that approximately 200 of the Prophet's Companions and Tabi'en have narrated hadiths from Aisha (al-'Ayni 2001).

Contextually, the traditionalist scholars defend this hadith by describing this marriage as a part of the wider cultural practices of the Arab society during the Prophet's time. Among their arguments is that some of the daughters of the Prophet were also married at a young age, such as Zainab's marriage to Abu Al-'As Ibn al-Rabi', and Ummu Kalthum to Utayba Ibn Abi Lahab. Some companions were also married to children; for example, Ali Ibn Abi Talib married off his daughter, Umm Kalthum, who was still a child, to Umar al-Khattab, who was then the second Caliph (Ibn Abi Shayba 1988; al-San'ani 2015). al-Zubair Ibn al-'Awwam also married off his newborn daughter to Qudama Ibn Maz'un, whereas Qudama was three or four years older than his father-in-law (al-Juzjani 1982; Ibn Abi Shayba 1988). 'Urwah Ibn al-Zubair also married off his young son to the daughter of Mus'ab Ibn al-Zubair (Ibn Abi Shayba 1988).

Arguably, marriage in the society at that time, whether Muslim or not, was not based on a certain age group, and tradition was the customary practice (Qadhi 2015; Ahmad Ayoub @ Ayub 2016; Mohiuddin 2016; Dar al-Ifta al-Misriyya n.d.). It is not an indicator of social status or morality as the practice of child marriage was culturally accepted with no objection (Khatir 1984; Muhammad Saleem 2008; Ali & Brown 2018; Knight 2018; Mol 2018), which contradicts contemporary understanding and perceptions (Mohiuddin 2016; Juyandeh 2010) that do not recognise marriages between couples with huge age gaps (Brown 2014). Some scholars have even asserted that the disbelievers and the Prophet's opponents made no attempts to discredit him on marrying such a young girl, thus proving that the practice was widely accepted (Suleiman 2018).

These scholars' interpretations of the hadith have influenced the formation of written Islamic law in all Islamic countries, including Malaysia. They shaped the statutory legal provisions of Islamic family law, such as the marriageable age, maintenance and alimony, and the right of the legal guardian (*waliy mujbir*) to marry off his daughter. As an example, section 8 of the Federal Territory Islamic Family Law Act of Malaysia provides a legal age limit for marriage, which is 18 years old for males and 16 years old for females, provided that the Sharia court has granted permission. Moreover, section 7 of the same Act empowers the guardian (*waliy*) to solemnize the marriage. This hadith has also become a source of reference for Sharia judges in the Sharia court to dispense permission to applications for underage marriage. Some Malaysian Muftis and ulama also highlight this hadith as an authority they refer to when discussing child marriage issues in Malaysia (Mohd Awal & Samuri 2017).

The Debate on the Controversial Hadith

Some contemporary scholars such as Mawlana Muhammad Farooq Khan (Maqsood 1996), Umar Ahmed Usmani, Hakim Niaz Ahmad (IslamQA n.d.) Habib al-Rahman Siddiqui Kandhalvi (Kandhalvi 1997), Jasser Auda (Auda 2018), Salah al-Din al-Idlibi (Mol 2018), and Muslim authors such as Ridhwan Muhammad Saleem (Muhammad Saleem 2008) and Nilofar Ahmed (Ahmed 2012) criticised the above-mentioned hadith of Aisha who was six years old when marrying the Prophet as

debatable since it is contradictory to the other authentic hadith. Their analysis found that Aisha was not six years old during the marriage as stated in the hadith and suggested that she might be 10 years older than previously thought. Their findings have been cited by various parties to denounce the practice of child marriage in Islamic discourse and to apply make this opinion as an alternative when negotiating between the classical scholars' interpretation and the international community's expectations on this issue. Critics of this hadith see it as a weak hadith and dispute Aisha's child status when married to the Prophet, thus rejecting contemporary child marriage practices.

Nevertheless, their contention has received several counterarguments put forward by contemporary scholars such as Fahd Ibn Muhammad Ibn Muhammad al-Ghufayli (al-Ghufayli 2011), Khaleel Ibrahim Mulla Khatir (Khatir 1984), Jonathan AC Brown (Brown 2014; 2018), Yasir Qadhi (Qadhi 2015), Mawlana Abdul Azim Abdur Rahman (IslamQA n.d), Nuriddeen Knight (Knight 2018), Arnold Yasin Mol (Mol 2018), Asadullah Ali (Ali & Brown 2018), Faraz Malik (Malik 2018), and Omar Suleiman (Suleiman 2018), who approved the stance of traditionalist groups. Their discourses swirl into several points such as criticising the hadith narrator, comparing Aisha's age to contemporary individuals, comparing Aisha's age with certain events in early Islamic history, and the possibility of error in hadith reporting and writing.

Criticising the Sole Narrator of the Hadith

Although this hadith is recorded in many books of Hadith including Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, critics make the sole narrator of the hadith, known as Hisham Ibn 'Urwa, who narrated this hadith from his father 'Urwa Ibn al-Zubair, as an issue to be debated. To them, the marriage was a significant historical mark and should have been narrated by more narrators, especially the narrators in Medina where he was before moving to Iraq at the end of his life. However, no Medina-based narrator reported this hadith from Hisham. His chain of narrators began in Iraq where he narrated this hadith (al-Ghufayli 2011). Due to this characteristic, the authenticity of the hadith has been challenged since Hisham Ibn 'Urwa was found to have poor memory at the end of his life while in Iraq (al-Zahabi 1963), thus making him an unreliable narrator (Maqsood 1996). The rejection was also posed by Malik Ibn Anas, his former student, who became a prominent scholar, and who did not accept the hadiths narrated by Hisham Ibn 'Urwa while he was in Iraq (al-Mizzi 1980; Kandhalvi 1997).

The traditionalist group's response to this criticism is to state that the narration of the hadith of Aisha's marriage was also transmitted by Tabi'in other than Hisham. Similarly, al-Zuhriy (Muslim 2006), a renowned Madinah scholar, narrated the same narration, thus refuting the claim that Hisham was the only one to report this hadith from Aisha. This hadith has been narrated by narrators in Madinah who were contemporaries of 'Urwa such as al-Qasim Ibn Muhammad Ibn Abi Bakr, Yahya Ibn Abdul Rahman Ibn Hatib and Amrah bint Abdul Rahman, al-Qasim Ibn Abdul Rahman and al-Aswad Ibn Yazid. This hadith was also found to be narrated from Hisham ibn Urwa by other narrators from various other places, such as narrators from Medina, namely Abu al-Zinad Abdul Rahman Ibn Zakwan, his son Abdul Rahman Ibn Abu al-Zinad (AMJA 2012), and Abdullah Ibn Muhammad Ibn Yahya Ibn 'Urwa (al-Ghufayli 2011; AMJA 2012), and Mecca namely Sufyan Ibn 'Uyayna (al-Ghufayli 2011; AMJA 2012). It is important to note that al-Zahabi (1963) recorded that Hisham's narration was authoritative, despite his poor memory. Since his memory was weak due to his age, it didn't affect Hisham's reliability as a narrator. According to the traditionalist groups' responses and refutations, the critics' arguments are not persuasive.

Comparison of Aisha's age with Contemporary-aged Individuals

The critics of this hadith propose that Aisha was a teenager, or older than a child when she married the Prophet (Kandhalvi 1997; al-Idlibi in Mol 2018; Juyandeh 2010; Ahmed 2012). They make their

argument by comparing the ages of individuals who are contemporary and close to Aisha, such as her sister, Asma' and the Prophet's daughter, Fatima. It was recorded that Asma' died at the age of 100 in 73 AH (al-'Asqalani 1986; Ibn 'Abd al-Bar 1992; Ibnu Kathir 1990). Her age at the time of Hijrah was around 27 years (Ibn al-Athir 1989; Abu Nu'aym 1998). Moreover, Aisha is said to be 10 years younger than Asma' as reported by Abdul Rahman Ibn Abi Zinad (al-Zahabi 1963), which makes her age about 17 during the marriage (Islamweb 2003); thus, she is estimated to be around 18 years old when living with the Prophet, which is about a year after she migrated to Medina (al-Ghufayli 2011), or 18 months after the Prophet's migration to Medina (Ibn Abd al-Bar 1992).

Traditionalists dismiss this calculation by arguing that the age difference of Asma' and Aisha of 10 years is not a consensus among Islamic historians. It was noted that al-Zahabi (1963) stated that the age difference between the two was between 13 and 19 years, and not 10 years as the critics assume. Thus, Aisha's age in the year of Hijrah was eight or nine years old and not 18 years old (IslamQA n.d.). Asma's age at the time of the migration was 27 years minus the 19 years age gap between the two, which means Aisha's age was seven years old when she married the Prophet, a year before the Hijrah. This aligns with al-'Asqalani's (1994) report, which asserted Aisha was born four or five years after the advent of Islam. In echoing the hadith giants such as Yahya Ibn Mu'in, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, al-Nasaie, Abu Ahmad al-Hakim dan Abu Hatim, the traditionalists also attacked the credibility of Ibn Abi Zinad as a weak narrator to dismiss his narration (Malik 2018; al-Ghufayli 2011).

Additionally, critics also mapped Aisha's age with that of Fatima. Some critics claim that Fatima was born when the Prophet was 35 years old, which is about five years before he became a Prophet (Ibn Sa'ad 1990; al-'Asqalani 1994). This means that Fatima was born 18 years before Hijrah. According to Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani (1994), Fatima was five years older than Aisha. If counted correctly, Aisha was 13 years old when she married the Prophet and 17 years old when she lived with him (al-Ghufayli 2011). In response, traditionalists quoted al-Zahabi (1963) that Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet, was eight years older than Aisha. According to al-'Asqalani (1994), Aisha was born four or five years after the advent of Islam. Thus, her age at the time of her marriage to the Prophet was between six and seven years old (al-Ghufayli 2011).

Comparison of Aisha's Age with Certain Events in Early Islamic History

Critics of the hadith also calculate Aisha's age according to early Islamic historical events, such as the time of Aisha converted to Islam, the birth of Abu Bakar's children before the arrival of Islam, revelations of certain Quranic verses or chapters, Aisha's involvement in a series of war expeditions, and Aisha's life with the Prophet. The critics' first argument is based on Aisha's age when she converted to Islam since she was among the earliest converts to Islam. Ibn Hisham (1955) wrote that Aisha converted to Islam when she was a child, following the 18 other individuals who did so earlier (al-Nawawi 1996). The conversion means that Aisha was capable of understanding and embracing the new faith (Maqsood 1996; Ahmed 2012; Muhammad Saleem 2008; Mol 2018). This shows that Aisha was in her teen years when she married the Prophet during the 13th year of Islam's advent. Traditionalists, however, have not responded to this issue.

Secondly, critics look to the year of birth of Abu Bakr's children. The critics' arguments are based on their understanding of al-Tabari's (1968) records, which state that Abu Bakr's four children were born before he converted to Islam. His children were borne by his wife Qatila whom he married pre-Islam, namely Abdullah and Asma', and Ummu Ruman, who gave birth to Abdul Rahman and Aisha (AMJA 2012). Maqsood (1996) pointed out that if Aisha was born during the pre-Islamic era, this would make Aisha a teen during her marriage. Kandhalvi (1997) argued that Aisha was born five years before the advent of Islam, which is 18 years before Hijrah. Accordingly, Aisha was not a child when she married the Prophet, a year before Hijrah. The critics' arguments were answered by traditionalists by correcting the critics' readings of al-Tabari texts, which should be read as "The four

are his children born to his two wives whom we stated in the *Jahiliyya* (pre-Islamic) period". The interpretation is that just because he married his two wives whom during pre-Islamic times, it does not mean that his four children were also born during the pre-Islamic period. This is because al-Tabari (1968) himself narrated that when the Prophet married Aisha, he was six years old (al-Ghufayli 2011).

Thirdly, critics try to estimate Aisha's age with the revelation of the Quran 54:46, in which Aisha reportedly says she is still a child (al-Bukhari 2002). According to other sources, the said Quran verse 54:46 was revealed four years after the arrival of Islam. If Aisha was six years old when she married the Prophet, then she would not have been born at the time this surah was revealed. Therefore, how could she claim herself to be a child who could play during the verse was revealed? Critics concluded that Aisha's age at the time of the revelation of that verse was eight years, and that she was 18 years old when she married to the Prophet (al-Ghufayli 2011).

The critics' argument was refuted by traditionalist groups because even though Chapter 54 was revealed in Mecca, not all verses in the chapter were revealed consecutively or simultaneously. There are several verses from this chapter that were revealed in Medina as recorded by al-Tabari (2013) and Ibn Kathir (2007). For example, verse 45 was revealed during the Battle of Badr, which occurred after Hijrah. Therefore, it is not surprising that the revelation of Quran 54:46 occurred when Aisha's age was that of a child who could play (al-Ghufayli 2011). Her playful nature continued until after her marriage in Medina (after the Hijrah), thus reinforcing the evidence of Aisha's status as a child when she was married; sometimes, the Prophet would join in her games with other children (al-Bukhari 2002; Ibn Sa'ad 1990; Lings 1991). This is acknowledged by Abu Nu'aym (1996) and al-Nasaie (2001), who recorded the Prophet meeting Aisha at home while she was playing with dolls.

Fourth, critics argue based on the battles of Badr and Uhud, which took place in the second and third years of Hijrah respectively. There are hadith reports that say that Aisha was involved in the battles of Badr and Uhud (al-Bukhari 2002; Muslim 2006). Accordingly, in the view of critics, it is illogical to say that if Aisha was a child, she was also involved in the Battle of Badr and the Battle of Uhud, given that some hadith report that the Prophet forbade children under the age of 15 to join the war (al-Bukhari 2002). Accordingly, critics view Aisha's age as a teen and beyond the age of permission to participate in the war (Islamweb 2003; Muhammad Saleem 2008; Kandhalvi 1997; Ahmed 2012, Mol 2018). Similarly, Kandhalvi (1997) and Al-Idlibi (Mol 2018) claim only adult women were allowed to join the war, as children were not fit to carry out nursing duties, offer drinks, prepare food, or serve in the military.

Nevertheless, traditionalist scholars reject this argument because Aisha's name does not appear in the list of soldiers who fought in the battle of Badr and Uhud. Women were only involved as nurses for the military or as drink bearers (al-Ghufayli 2011). Women such as Umm Sulaim and al-Rubayyi 'bint Mu'awwidz participated in the war as well (al-Bukhari 2002; Muslim 2006), and nobody had heard of them getting wounded or suffering injuries similar to those suffered by soldiers. AMJA (2012) and al-Ghufayli (2011) argued that Aisha's involvement in these two wars during her childhood showed that she was a mature individual who was capable of handling responsibility. The ban applied to men only because they were a group that actively participated in war (al-Bukhari 2002; al-'Ayni 2001) and because women only provide services when needed.

Traditionalists' arguments revolve around events that took place around the duration of Aisha's marriage to the Prophet, which show that some of the critics' claims are not strong enough to prove that Aisha was a teenage girl when she married the Prophet. In fact, Aisha herself admitted that at the time of the Prophet's death, she was 18 (Muslim 2006; al-Bayhaqi 2003; Ibn Sa'ad 1990; Ibn Kathir 1976; al-Ghufayli 2011; al-'Asqalani 1959). Also, she reported that she lived with the Prophet for nine years. Aisha's account about her age when the Prophet died was recorded in a hadith, indicating that it was impossible for Aisha to marry the Prophet when she was a teen. Therefore, she was six years old when she married and nine years old when she lived with the Prophet (Muslim 2006).

The Possibility of Error in Hadith Reporting and Writing

Critics such as Kandhalvi (1997) and Maqsood (1996) suspected that there is a missing word in the reporting or writing of the abovementioned hadith (*matn*), which are the words '*ashara*' (teen) for the age of Aisha. If the word is missing, then Aisha's age would be 16 years and 19 years, and not six years and nine years. Maulana Usmani (Ahmed 2012) believes that the word was deliberately left out by the narrator when narrating the hadith. Traditionalists argue that such statements are merely claims as no previous hadith scholars mentioned the missing word in the said hadith. Modern critics seem to dispute the credibility of the hadith narrators, as if the narrators made mistakes in reporting important milestones in Islam; these 'mistakes,' however, have only been discovered by modern researchers in modern times.

Discussion: A Way Forward

The review of Aisha's hadith was not originally intended to denounce contemporary child marriage, but to address issues related to the history of Islam or to refute Islamophobic accusations made against the Prophet. The review of the hadith is mainly about identifying Aisha's age when she was married and does not fit within modern discourse. However, this debate was later used by child rights' advocates to argue that child marriage has no place in Islamic law and should be banned. Nonetheless, refuting and criticising this hadith has not changed the opinions of the religious authorities, who, for all intents and purposes, still have a strong say in the policy-making process. It would be considered counterproductive to discuss this hadith in the context of banning child marriages in the Muslim world, as traditionalist Muslims would not be interested or convinced of its relevance. The religious authorities will defend their stance on child marriage by citing the abovementioned arguments.

Furthermore, this controversial hadith should not be read literally to condone contemporary child marriage. It must be read along with other legal provisions. Under Islamic law, the permissibility of marrying off a child is not without condition. A father who wishes to marry off his child should do it based on the best interest of the child (written as *maslaha* in classical texts) and is not for the benefit of the guardian (*waliy*). Unfortunately, in many discussions about child marriage in Muslim countries, this condition is not discussed nor enforced thoroughly by religious stakeholders. Religious authorities focus more on such marriage's permissibility, and the only *maslaha* they would consider is morality, for example, to avoid fornication. The religious authorities tend to overlook the *maslaha* for the child, i.e. protection of the child's rights in dispensing legal permission for them to get married (Mohd Awal & Samuri 2017; 2018). Supposedly, the guardian (*waliy*) must prove to the court that the marriage poses a great *maslaha* to the child.

Muslims who denounce child marriage should not be apologetic by hiding some Islamic historical fact or reinterpreting it according to contemporary context or demand. Notably, admitting this historical fact should not be equated to condoning child marriage, either. The hadith and its interpretation reflect a specific cultural context of a society in the early days of Islam. Historical events must be discussed with the understanding of the context and customs of the society (AMJA 2012). Given the fact that such marriages were widely accepted in pre-modern society, it is imperative to understand how society worked at the time to make sense of this type of marriage. Critics should not judge child marriages in pre-modern times from the perspective of modern society. As Ali & Brown (2018) argued, the definition of previous ancestors towards the concept of children, maturity, and marriage is very different from contemporary Western society today. Child marriage was a practice that was accepted by that community of the time (Mohiuddin 2016; AMJA 2012). Therefore, discrediting this historical record, i.e. the marriage of Aisha and the Prophet at a young age, or reinterpreting it to accommodate the current context is very unfair to the traditions (Knight 2018; Suleiman 2018).

Another important aspect that child rights' advocates need to consider is that legal rulings produced during the pre-modern period do not necessarily change if times change. Malik (2018) and Abdur Rehman (2019) raised the question that when some hadith do not fit the views of modern society, would Muslims continue to question the validity of the hadith or the viewpoint of the society itself? What is more important is that the objectives of Sharia are achieved in every implementation at any time. If they are not achieved, then the implementation of that legal ruling can be deferred. For example, Umar al-Khattab, the second Caliph, did not allocate zakat to Muslim converts who were entitled to zakat as stated in the Quran, since in his opinion, giving zakat to the Muslim converts had not achieved the objectives of Sharia, as Islam was already the ruling government in the Arabian region (al-Bayhaqi 2003). Moreover, today's increasingly complex life calls for more suitable legal rulings to be implemented.

As a way forward, further intellectual engagement with religious authorities and scholars must be encouraged by discussing the adverse and harmful effects of child marriage. Child marriage has been proven in previous studies from various countries to be harmful to children (Kasjim 2016; Kohno et. al 2019; Alsaïdi 2015; Handa et. al 2015; Abdullah et. al 2015; al-Hakami & McLaughlin 2016). The negative implications discussed in previous studies were not isolated cases, and require policymakers, especially Islamic authorities, to take them seriously. Traditionalist groups might underestimate the degree of harmful effects of child marriage to children, which is higher than its benefit (*maslaha*) in today's context.

All parties, religious groups, child rights activists, and legal practitioners should give priority to the rights of children who may be affected by marriage such as the right to education, health, and development. In today's social context, protecting children's rights is seen as a *maslaha* or with the best interest of the child in mind. Socio-economic and living conditions have changed since the time of early Islamic law when the jurists discussed this hadith. The well-being of children should be prioritised in the drafting of legislation that could curb child marriage, such as by raising the marriageable age to 18 years old. The religious authorities and Muslim society should not reject the legal reforms promoted by the Malaysian government simply because there is an authentic hadith that allows a father to marry off his young child. Conversely, child rights advocates may employ other Islamic law instruments to convince the religious authorities to enable legal reform. For example, Islamic law permits governments to regulate or prohibit a permissible act such as underage marriage due to the harmful implications based on the *maslaha* and *Siyasah al-Shar'iyya* concept. This argument is promising in advancing child marriage issues as there are no conflicting views against these instruments.

To conclude, this article discussed the controversial hadith of Aisha's marriage to the Prophet, which has attracted polemic among modern critics and traditionalist religious group, in light of the child marriage issue in Muslim countries, including Malaysia. The said hadith is classified as authentic and its historical account is verified. The hadith has become a legal basis for many legal rulings in Islamic family law, including contemporary written statutes. The attempts made by modern critics to challenge the validity of the hadith through many arguments to prove that Aisha was older when she got married has gained the attention of many parties, including child's rights advocates. It seems, however, that the arguments posed by modern critics are not as solid as the counterarguments, which manage to clear any ambiguity. Meanwhile, traditionalist groups should not refer to this hadith to condone contemporary child marriage as the context of the hadith and the current society is varied.

Therefore, this article concludes that child rights advocates should not criticise this hadith or refute this historical fact while advancing child marriage issues in Muslim countries, including those in Malaysia. Traditionalists who are actively involved in policy-making will not change their mind if this hadith is brought to the discussion table. The more viable argument within the framework of Islam should be forwarded as part of an advocacy agenda such as *maslaha* and *Siyasah Shari'yya*. Child marriages violate children's rights, and its harmful impact exceeds its *maslaha*.

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to express their highest gratitude to Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and Ministry of Higher Education the Research Grant for 'Pembinaan Modul Latihan Berkenaan Perkahwinan Kanak-kanak Bagi Pegawai Agama dan Syariah Menurut Hak Asasi dan *Siyasah al-Syar'iyah*' (Drafting of Training Modules on Child Marriage for Religious and Shariah Officers According to Human Rights and *Siyasah al-Syar'iyah*) (FRGS/1/2019/SSI10/UKM/02/4).

References

- Abdullah, S., Qureshi, H., & Quayes, S. 2015. The adverse effect of child marriage on women's economic well-being in Bangladesh—Can microfinance help? *The Journal of Developing Areas*. 49 (4): 109-125.
- Abdur Rehman, S. 2019. *'A'isha's Corrective of the Companions: A Translation and Critical Hadith Study of al-Zarkashi's al-Ijaba li Iradi ma Istadrakathu 'A'isha 'ala al-Sahaba: Thesis of Doctor of Philosophy*. Leeds: The University of Leeds.
- Abu Bakar, A. 2018. Kerajaan cadang pinda 2 akta ketatkan syarat kahwin bawah umur. *Free Malaysia Today*. <https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/bahasa/2018/11/15/kerajaan-cadang-pinda-2-akta-ketatkan-syarat-kahwin-bawah-umur/> Retrieved: 18 August 2021.
- Abu Dawud, S. A. 2009. *Sunan Abi Daud*. Beirut: Dar al-Ralah al-'Alamiyya.
- Abu Nu'aym, A. A. 1998. *Ma'rifah al-Sahabah*. Riyadh: Dar al-Watan.
- Abu Nu'aym, A. A. 1996. *Al-Musnad al-Mustakhrj 'ala Sahih al-Imam Muslim*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya.
- Ahmad Ayoup @ Ayub, M.M. 2016. *Irsyad al-Hadith, Siri ke-127: Umur Aisyah RA. Pejabat Mufti Wilayah Persekutuan*. <https://muftiwp.gov.my/en/artikel/irsyad-al-hadith/1455-irsyad-al-hadith-siri-ke-127-umur-aisyah-ra> Retrieved: 18 August 2021.
- Ahmad, H. 2001. *Musnad al-Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal*. Beirut: Muassasa al-Risala.
- Ahmed, N. 2012. *Of Aisha's age at Marriage*. <https://www.dawn.com/news/696084/ofaishas-age-at-marriage> Retrieved: 18 August 2021.
- Al-'Asqalani, A. A. 1959. *Fath al-Bari*. Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifa.
- Al-'Asqalani, A. A. 1986. *Taqrib al-Tahzib*. Damascus: Dar al-Rashid.
- Al-'Asqalani, A. A. 1994. *Al-Isabah fi Tamyiz al-Sahaba*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya.
- Al-'Ayni, M. A. 2001. *'Umda al-Qari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya.
- Ali, A & Brown, J.A.C. 2018. *Understanding Aisha's Age an Interdisciplinary Approach*. Texas: Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research. <https://yaqeeninstitute.org/read/paper/understanding-aishas-age-an-interdisciplinary-approach>. Retrieved: 18 August 2021.
- Alsaïdi, A. 2015. What Drives Child Marriage in the Arab World and How the World is Combating the Problem. *Law School Student Scholarship*. https://scholarship.shu.edu/student_scholarship/775 Retrieved: 12 August 2021.
- Amarudin, S.K. 2018d. Harussani tak setuju usia 18 tahun baru boleh kahwin. *Berita Harian Online*. <https://www.bharian.com.my/berita/nasional/2018/09/476458/harussani-tak-setuju-usia-18-tahun-baru-boleh-kahwin> retrieved: 22 August 2021.
- Armstrong, K. 2001. *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet*. London: The Orion Publishing Group Ltd.
- Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America (AMJA). 2012. *The Prophet's Marriage from Aisha When She was Nine*. <https://www.amjaonline.org/fatwa/en/78123/the-prophets-marriage-from-aisha-when-she-was-nine> retrieved: 28 August 2021.
- Auda, J. 2018. *Child Marriage is Not Compliant with the Shariah*. <http://muslimsincalgary.ca/child-marriage-is-not-compliant-with-the-shariah/> Retrieved: 29 July 2021.

- Awang, M. 2018. Usah kaitkan perkahwinan kanak-kanak dengan Rasulullah. *Malaysia Kini*. <https://www.malaysiakini.com/news/432315> Retrieved: 4 August 2021.
- Baugh, C. 2018. *Muslim Marriage Law That Empowers Girls*. <https://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/responses/muslim-marriage-law-that-empowers-girls> Retrieved: 28 August 2021.
- al-Bayhaqi, A. H. 1988. *Dalail al-Nubuwwa wa Ma'rifa Ahwal Sahib al-Sharia*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya.
- al-Bayhaqi, A. H. 2003. *al-Sunan al-Kubra*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya.
- Brown, J. A. C. 2014. *Misquoting Muhammad: The Challenge and Choices of Interpreting the Prophet's Legacy*. England: Oneworld Publications.
- al-Bukhari, M. I. 2002. *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Damascus: Dar Ibn Kathir.
- Chowdhury, F. D. 2004. The socio-cultural context of child marriage in a Bangladeshi village. *International Journal of Social Welfare*. 13(3): 244-253.
- Dar al-Ifta al-Misriyya. n.d. *Why did Prophet Muhammad marry Lady 'Aisha when she was only 9 years old?* <https://www.dar-alifta.org/Foreign/ViewArticle.aspx?ID=144> Retrieved: 24 August 2021.
- al-Darimi, A. A. 2000. *Sunan al-Darimi*. Riyadh: Dar al-Mughni.
- Fauzi, R. 2001. *Al-Sayyida Aisha wa Tauthiquha li al-Sunnah*. Cairo: Maktaba al-Khanji bi al-Qahira.
- al-Ghufayli, F. M. 2011. *al-Sana al-Wahhaj fi Sinn Aisha 'ind al-Zawaj*. Riyadh: Dar al-Sumay'i.
- al-Hakami, H., & McLaughlin, K. 2016. Debatable marriages: Marriage and child marriage in Saudi Arabia. *Marriage & Family Review*. 52(7): 654-664.
- Handa, S., Peterman, A., Huang, C., Halpern, C., Pettifor, A., Thirumurthy, H. 2015. Impact on the Kenya Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children on Early Pregnancy and Marriage of Adolescent Girls. *Social Science & Medicine*. 141: 36-45.
- Haqim, M. Z. 2017. Dr Juanda Mahu Kebenaran Berkahwin Bawah 18 Tahun Dimansuhkan. *Sarawak Voice*. <https://sarawakvoice.com/2017/05/17/dr-juanda-mahu-kebenaran-berkahwin-bawah-18-tahun-dimansuhkan/> Retrieved: 29 July 2021.
- Hin, O. K. 2017. *Child Marriages in Malaysia: Reality, Resistance and Recourse*. Penang Institute Issues. <https://penanginstitute.org/publications/issues/981-child-marriages-in-malaysia-reality-resistance-and-recourse/> Retrieved: 4 August 2021.
- al-Humaidi, A. A. 1996. *Musnad al-Humaidi*. Damascus: Dar al-Saqa.
- Ibn 'Abd al-Bar, Y. A. 1992. *Al-Isti'ab fi Ma'rifa al-Ashab*. Beirut: Dar al-Jil.
- Ibn Abi Shayba, A. M. 1988. *Al-Kitab al-Musannaf fi al-Ahadith wa al-Athar*. Riyadh: Maktaba al-Rushd.
- Ibn al-Athir, A. M. 1989. *Usd al-Ghaba fi Ma'rifa al-Sahaba*. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr.
- Ibn al-Jarud, A. A. 1988. *Al-Muntaqa min al-Sunan al-Musnada*. Beirut: Muassasa al-Kitab al-Thaqafiyya.
- Ibn Battal, A. K. 2003. *Syarh Sahih al-Bukhari li Ibn al-Battal*. Riyadh: Maktaba al-Rusyd.
- Ibn Hibban, M. 1993. *Sahih Ibn Hibban*. Beirut: Muassasa al-Risala.
- Ibn Hisham, A. M. 1955. *Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah li Ibn Hisham*. Cairo: Maktaba Mustafa al-Halabi.
- Ibn Ishaq, M. I. 1978. *Sirah Ibn Ishaq*. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr.
- Ibn Kathir, I. U. 1976. *al-Sira al-Nabawiyya*. Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifa.
- Ibn Kathir, I. U. 1990. *al-Bidaya wa al-Nihaya*. Beirut: Maktaba al-Ma'arif.
- Ibn Kathir, I. U. 2007. *Tafsir al-Quran al-'Azim*. Cairo: Dar al-Ghadd al-Jadid.
- Ibn Majah, M. Y. 1987. *Sunan Ibn Majah*. Saudi Arabia: Maktab al-Tarbiyah al-Arabiyy li Duwal al-Khalij.
- Ibn Rahuyah, I. I. 1991. *Musnad Ishaq Ibn Rahuyah*. Medina: Maktaba al-Iman.
- Ibn Sa'ad, M. S. 1990. *Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya.
- IslamQA. n.d. Clarification on the Age of Aishah Radhiyallahu Anha at the Time of Marriage. *Islam Question and Answer*. <https://islamqa.org/hanafi/askimam/6245/clarification-on-the-age-of-aishah-radhiyallahu-anha-at-the-time-of-marriage/> Retrieved: 12 August 2021.

- Islamweb. 2003. About Ayesha's age at the time of her marriage. *IslamWeb*.
<https://www.islamweb.net/ehajj/printarticle.php?id=38813&lang=E&id=38813&lang=E>
Retrieved: 12 August 2021.
- Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (Jakim). 2014. *Isu Perkahwinan Kanak-kanak: Kajian dari Aspek Agama, Kesihatan dan Psikologi*. E-Sumber Maklumat Fatwa.
- Jaya, J. 2010. Mufti Perlis ulas isu kahwin kanak-kanak. *MalaysiaKini*.
<https://www.malaysiakini.com/letters/126821> Retrieved: 4 August 2021.
- al-Jaziri, A.R. 1999. *Al-Fiqh 'ala al-Mazahib al-Arba'a*. Cairo: Dar al-Manar.
- Jiffar, S. et. al. 2018c. Had umur perkahwinan: Kedah setuju pinda, Kelantan kekal, Sabah cari jalan atasi. *Berita Harian Online*.
<https://www.bharian.com.my/berita/nasional/2019/11/631143/had-umur-perkahwinan-kedah-setuju-pinda-kelantan-kekal-sabah-cari> Retrieved: 18 August 2021.
- Juyandeh, D. 2010. Understanding the 'Problematic' Age of Aisha.
<https://muslimmatters.org/2010/10/13/understanding-the-problematic-age-of-aisha/>
Retrieved: 4 August 2021.
- al-Juzjani, S. M. 1982. *Sunan Said Ibn Mansur*. India: al-Dar al-Salafiyya.
- Kandhalvi, S. 1997. *A Research Work: Age of Aishah (The Truthful Woman)*. Karachi: Al-Rahman Publishing Trust (Regd.).
- Karam, A. 2015. Faith-inspired initiatives to tackle the social determinants of child marriage. *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*. 13(3): 59-68.
- Kasjim. 2016. Abuse of Islamic Law and Child Marriage in South-Sulawesi Indonesia. *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 54(1): 95-121.
- Khatir, K. I. M. 1984. *Zawaj al-Sayyida Aisha wa Mashru'iyya al-Zawaj al-Mubakkir wa al-Radd a'la munkiri zalik*. Madina: Dar al-Qibla li al-Thaqafa al-Islamiyya.
- Knight, N. 2018. *The Woman Behind the Number: The Irrelevance of the Age of Aisha (ra)*. Texas: Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research. <https://yaqeeninstitute.org/read/paper/the-woman-behind-the-number-the-irrelevance-of-the-age-of-aisha-ra>. Retrieved: 18 August 2021.
- Kohno, A., Dahlui, M., Farid, N. D. N., Ali, S. H., & Nakayama, T. 2019. In-depth examination of issues surrounding the reasons for child marriage in Kelantan, Malaysia: a qualitative study. *BMJ open*. 9(9): e027377.
- Koya, A. R. 2018. Amid uproar, child marriage debate moves historical 'error' of Aisha's age. *Free Malaysia Today*. <https://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2018/07/01/amid-uproar-child-marriage-debate-moves-to-historical-error-over-aishas-age/> Retrieved: 8 August 2021.
- Lings, M. 1991. *Muhammad: His life based on the earliest sources*. Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society.
- Malik, F. 2018. *The Age of Aisha RA: Rejecting Historical Revisionism & Modernist Presumptions*. Texas: Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research. <https://yaqeeninstitute.org/read/paper/the-age-of-aisha-ra-rejecting-historical-revisionism-and-modernist-presumptions>. Retrieved: 18 August 2021.
- Maqsood, R. W. 1996. *Hazrat A'ishah Sadiqah (R.A.A): A Study of Her Age at the Time of Her Marriage (based on the research of Maulana Muhammad Farooq Khan)*. United Kingdom: Islamic Presentation Centre International.
- Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development. 2020. *National Strategy Plan in Handling the Causes of Child Marriage*. Putrajaya: Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development of Malaysia.
- al-Mizzi, Y. A. 1980. *Tahzib al-Kamal fi Asma' al-Rijal*. Beirut: Muassasa al-Risala.
- Mohamed, R. 2018. Kertas siasatan kes nikah budak 11 tahun dibuka. *Harian Metro*.
<https://www.hmetro.com.my/mutakhir/2018/07/354631/kertas-siasatan-kes-nikah-budak-11-tahun-dibuka> Retrieved: 28 August 2021.

- Mohd Awal, N. A & Samuri, M. A. A. 2017. *Final Report: A Study of Child Marriage in Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: UNICEF Malaysia.
- Mohd Awal, N. A & Samuri, M. A. A. 2018. *Child Marriage in Malaysia (Working Paper for UNICEF Malaysia)*. Kuala Lumpur. <https://www.unicef.org/malaysia/reports/child-marriage-malaysia> Retrieved: 29 July 2021.
- Mohd Zaini, S. 2018b. Selangor negeri pertama pinda had umur perkahwinan. *Berita Harian Online*. <https://www.bharian.com.my/berita/kes/2018/12/508025/selangor-negeri-pertama-pinda-had-umur-perkahwinan> Retrieved: 10 August 2021.
- Mohiuddin, M. 2016. *Revelation: Story of Muhammad*. Scottsdale: Whiteboard Press.
- Mol, A. R. 2018. *Aisha (ra): The Case for an Older Age in Sunni Hadith Scholarship*. Texas: Yaqeen Institute for Islamic Research. <https://yaqeeninstitute.org/read/paper/aisha-ra-the-case-for-an-older-age-in-sunni-hadith-scholarship>. Retrieved: 22 August 2021.
- Muhammad Saleem, R. 2008. *Proof That Aisha was Over 15 Years Old When She Married the Prophet*. <https://hameem.org/2019/02/11/proof-that-aisha-was-over-15-years-old-when-she-married-the-prophet-peace-be-upon-him/> Retrieved: 22 August 2021.
- Muslim, H. N. 2006. *Sahih Muslim*. Riyadh: Dar al-Tayyibah.
- al-Nasai'e, A. S. 1986. *Al-Mujtaba Min al-Sunan*. Halab: Maktab al-Matbu'at al-Islamiyya.
- al-Nasai'e, A. S. 2001. *Al-Sunan al-Kubra*. Beirut: Muassasa al-Risala.
- al-Nawawi, Y. S. 1991. *Raudha al-Talibin wa Umda al-Muftin*. Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islami.
- al-Nawawi, Y. S. 1996. *Tahzib al-Asma' wa al-Lughat*. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr.
- Qadhi, Y. 2015. Why did Prophet Muhammad marry Aishah at a young age? *Yasir Qadhi Channel*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GMwR1gmZ6M> Retrieved: 27 August 2021.
- Razali, S.N.H. 2018a. Nikah kanak-kanak 11 tahun boleh didakwa. *Berita Harian Online*. <https://www.bharian.com.my/berita/kes/2018/07/444095/nikah-kanak-kanak-11-tahun-boleh-didakwa> Retrieved: 29 July 2021.
- Rusli, M. F. 2018. Perkahwinan Kanak-kanak Mengikut Perspektif Syariah. *Pejabat Rasmi Mufti Wilayah Persekutuan*. <https://muftiwp.gov.my/en/artikel/bayan-linnas/2512-bayan-linnas-siri-ke-141-perkahwinan-kanak-kanak-mengikut-perspektif-syariah> Retrieved: 29 July 2021.
- al-San'ani, A. R. H. 2015. *Al-Musannaf*. Cairo: Dar al-Ta'sil.
- al-Shafie, M. I. 1990. *Al-Umm*. Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifa.
- Suleiman, O. 2018. Ending the Debate on Aisha (ra)'s Age. *Yaqeen Institute Channel*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gDTh-6X9vo> Retrieved: 29 July 2021.
- al-Tabari, M. J. 1968. *Tarikh al-Tabari*. Beirut: Dar al-Turath.
- al-Tabari, M. J. 2013. *Jami' al-Bayan 'an Takwil Ayi al-Quran*. Beirut: Dar al-Nawadir.
- al-Tayalisi, S. D. 1999. *Musnad Abi Daud al-Tayalisi*. Cairo: Dar Hajar.
- The Malay Mail Online. 2015. Child Marriages not rare in Malaysia with 15,000 underage brides, activist says. *The Malay Mail Online*. <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2015/10/02/child-marriages-not-rare-in-malaysia-with-15000-underage-brides-activists-s/980543> Retrieved: 19 August 2021.
- al-Tirmizi, M. I. 1975. *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*. Cairo: Syarika wa Matba'a Mustafa al-Bab al-Halabi.
- UNICEF. 2020. *Towards ending child marriage in Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: UNICEF Malaysia. <https://www.unicef.org/malaysia/reports/towards-ending-child-marriage-malaysia> Retrieved: 29 July 2021.
- Yilmaz, I. 2021. The Emergence of Islamist Official and Unofficial Laws in the Erdoganist Turkey: The Case of Child Marriages. *Religions*, 12(7), 513. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12070513>
- al-Zahabi, M. A. 1963. *Mizan al-I'tidal fi Naqd al-Rijal*. Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifa.
- Zainuddin, D. 2018. Perkahwinan budak 11 tahun tidak sah - Dr Wan Azizah. *Astro Awani*. <https://www.astroawani.com/berita-malaysia/perkahwinan-budak-11-tahun-tidak-sah-dr-wan-azizah-179342> Retrieved: 19 August 2021.