

EARLY MARRIAGE AS A SOLUTION OR A PROBLEM? ADOLESCENT PERSPECTIVE IN THE MODERN ERA

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ABSTRAK

Pernikahan dini masih menjadi fenomena yang mengkhawatirkan di Indonesia, meskipun akses informasi di era modern semakin luas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji pemahaman dan perspektif remaja terhadap pernikahan dini, serta dampak dari kegiatan edukatif yang diberikan. Kegiatan ini dilaksanakan sebagai bagian dari proyek pengabdian masyarakat di SMAN 2 Muara Bungo oleh tim dari Program Studi Informatika Medis, Universitas Muhammadiyah Muara Bungo. Metode yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kuantitatif deskriptif melalui penyuluhan dan diskusi interaktif, yang disertai dengan kuesioner sebelum dan sesudah kegiatan. Hasil menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan dalam pemahaman siswa mengenai risiko pernikahan dini—dari 30% sebelum kegiatan menjadi 95% setelahnya. Inisiatif edukatif ini berhasil mengubah pandangan remaja, menunjukkan bahwa pernikahan dini bukanlah solusi, melainkan masalah kompleks yang berdampak pada pendidikan, kesehatan, dan masa depan mereka. Oleh karena itu, kegiatan serupa perlu dilakukan secara berkelanjutan dengan melibatkan orang tua dan guru.

Kata Kunci: Pernikahan dini, edukasi remaja, risiko kesehatan, pengambilan keputusan hidup

ABSTRACT

Early marriage remains a concerning phenomenon in Indonesia, despite the increasing access to information in the modern era. This study aims to examine adolescents' understanding and perspectives on early marriage, as well as the impact of educational activities provided. The activity was carried out as a community service project at SMAN 2 Muara Bungo by a team from the Medical Informatics Study Program, Universitas Muhammadiyah Muara Bungo. The method used was a descriptive quantitative approach through counseling and interactive discussions, accompanied by pre- and post-activity questionnaires. The results showed a significant increase in students' understanding of the risks of early marriage—from 30% before the session to 95% afterward. This educational initiative successfully shifted adolescents' views, showing that early marriage is not a solution, but a complex issue affecting education, health, and their future. Therefore, similar activities need to be conducted continuously with the involvement of parents and teachers.

Keywords: Early marriage, youth education, health risks, life decisions

BACKGROUND

Early marriage is one of the social problems that still often occurs in Indonesia. Early marriage can be interpreted as a marriage carried out by a couple who are still young, usually under the age of 18 (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, 2020). According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), in 2020, 23.3% of women aged 20-24 years had married before the age of 18 (BPS, 2020). Early marriage can be defined as a marriage practice involving one or both partners who are still under the minimum age limit set by applicable law or social norms. In the Indonesian context, early marriage often occurs in individuals who have not reached the legal age to marry, which can have various negative impacts, especially related to health, education, and social welfare (Rosamali & Arisjulyanto, 2020). Early marriage can also be understood as a practice that involves marital responsibilities and the role of a life partner, but is carried out at an age that is not yet physically, mentally, and emotionally mature (Mayasari & Ardhana, 2018).

Early marriage can have negative impacts on the health, education, and economy of the married couple. Early marriage can also increase the risk of maternal and child mortality, as well as disrupt the education and employment opportunities of the couple (World Health Organization, 2019). Therefore, efforts need to be made to reduce the number of early marriages in Indonesia. Many problems or a number of risks that arise, for example, psychological age that is still immature and unstable can affect the pattern of parents in caring for their babies or children. Mental maturity and emotional age also affect the nutritional patterns and health of children so that they are also related to stunting. This early marriage can position adolescent girls and boys at health risks regarding early pregnancy which has a long impact on pregnancy and childbirth complications that are at risk of maternal and child mortality (SDGs goals 3) and the risk of cervical cancer or cervical cancer in adolescents under the age of 20 when having sexual intercourse. Efforts to reduce early marriage can be done through education, socialization, and advocacy about the importance of reducing early marriage and improving the rights of women and children. In addition, efforts need to be made to increase access to health and education services, as well as to raise public awareness of the negative impacts of early marriage (UNICEF, 2020). The purpose of this community service is to provide education to adolescents regarding the meaning of early marriage. This service is also expected to explain the impacts of early marriage so that adolescents are more motivated by education and focus on achieving their goals and avoiding negative things that make them fall into early marriage, especially because they are forced to get pregnant outside of marriage. This research is expected to be useful in helping adolescents in raising awareness of the dangers of early marriage, as well as education about the importance of adolescent mindsets to prioritize education.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive quantitative approach conducted through a case study approach. The location of the activity is SMAN 2 Muara Bungo with a total of 57 participants in grades XI and XII. The data collection method was carried out through a

questionnaire survey before and after the counseling, as well as participatory observation during the discussion and delivery of the material. The activity was carried out in the form

of a seminar and interactive discussion on the definition, causes, and impacts of early marriage. The material was delivered by the community service team in the form of presentations and videos, which were then followed by a question and answer session and group discussion. Active student participation was recorded as an indicator of involvement and understanding. The results of the questionnaire were used to measure changes in student understanding before and after education.

RESULTS

Table 1. Students' knowledge about early marriage

Knowledge	Percent (%)
1. Knowing the health and social risks of early marriage	25
2. Early marriage	75

From the questionnaire results, it was found that before being given education, most students had limited knowledge about early marriage. Only about 25% knew the health and social risks of early marriage. After the educational activities were carried out, there was a significant increase in student understanding. As many as 75% of students stated that they understood that early marriage was a serious problem that could disrupt their education, health, and future.

DISCUSSION

Students who initially thought that early marriage could be a solution to unwanted pregnancies or family pressures, but after understanding the risks, they realized that the solution was superficial and actually opened up new, more complex risks. This activity also encouraged students to talk openly about the social problems they face and seek solutions through education and communication with parents. Some students even suggested that similar activities be carried out periodically and suggested the involvement of parents and teachers in discussions to create an environment that supports healthier and more rational adolescent decisions. Before carrying out educational activities for students of SMAN 2 Muara Bungo, there were several activities carried out such as Conducting a survey to SMAN 2 Muara Bungo Before carrying out the service, a survey was first carried out, an initial survey was carried out to SMAN 2 Muara Bungo, to see what problems occurred there and knowledge about early marriage.

In the next stage, the team had received a service permit letter and continued to the target party for a service permit at SMA 2 MUARA BUNGO. In this process, the team took time to meet the school, after the next day the team could deliver the permit letter to the school and arrange a detailed service schedule. After the permit letter has been received and

the service schedule has been determined, the team prepares material in the form of a power point to be displayed or explained to the audience as well as guidance on the material to the accompanying lecturer regarding the power point so that the delivery of the material is

clearer and more specific with the title taken. Education The material that will be delivered about early marriage is: Early marriage, Early marriage is a marriage carried out by someone before reaching an age considered mature enough to marry, which is under 18 years old. Early marriage often occurs due to various factors, such as social, economic, cultural pressures, and lack of education. impacts and dangers of early marriage. maternal and child mortality rates Early marriage contributes to the high maternal and child mortality rates. According to data from various health organizations, pregnant teenagers are at higher risk of experiencing complications during pregnancy and childbirth, which can lead to death. Babies born to young mothers are also at higher risk of malnutrition and growth retardation. data on the highest rate of early marriage in Indonesia and prevention of early marriage, to prevent early marriage, various steps are needed, such as educating the community about the dangers of early marriage, increasing access to education for girls, economic empowerment, and law enforcement related to the minimum age limit for marriage in accordance with the Marriage Law. In addition, support from family and the surrounding environment is very important to ensure that children can grow and develop well before entering married life (Sari, M.A, 2022).

Educational activities on early marriage held at SMAN by the community service report team have had a significant impact on students. After attending a series of counseling, seminars, and group discussions, many students began to understand the consequences of early marriage from various aspects, including health, psychological, social, and economic. One of the main results of this activity is the increasing awareness of students about the risks that can arise from marriage at a young age. Students realize that early marriage can hinder their education, reduce career opportunities, and cause various health problems for mothers and children. The information provided in this activity opens their insights regarding the importance of careful future planning before entering marriage.

Increasing awareness, this educational activity also encourages changes in mindset and attitudes among adolescents. Previously, some students may still have the view that early marriage is a solution to various problems, such as family pressure or economic factors (Rahmawati, 2023). However, after gaining a deeper understanding through this activity, they become more critical in assessing the long-term impact of the decision. An important aspect of this activity is the active involvement of students in various educational sessions. In the Q&A session, many students asked questions about the impact of early marriage, how to avoid it, and how to communicate with families about the importance of continuing education. This active participation shows that they have a high interest and concern for this issue. In addition, the group discussion activity allows students to share thoughts and experiences with each other, creating a more dynamic and in-depth learning environment. They not only receive information passively, but also learn to think critically and find solutions to problems related to early marriage.

Another positive impact of this activity is the increasing understanding of students regarding their rights as individuals, especially in terms of education and personal life. Many students previously did not know that they had the right to choose their own life path without pressure from other parties, including in terms of marriage. This activity helps them

understand that education is a valuable asset that can improve their quality of life in the future (Yuliana & Hamdan, 2019). Thus, many students are increasingly motivated to continue their education to a higher level and pursue their dreams. This educational activity also has a positive influence on teachers and parents. Teachers become more sensitive to the issue of early marriage and its impact on students' academic and psychological development. They can provide better guidance to students who are facing pressure or confusion regarding this issue. Meanwhile, parental involvement in this activity also helps create a more supportive environment for students. By gaining a better understanding, parents can be wiser in providing direction and support to their children to stay focused on education and self-development before entering married life. Overall, the results of the early marriage education activity at SMAN 2 Muara Bungo were very positive and had a wide impact. This activity not only increased students' awareness of the risks and consequences of early marriage, but also helped them in building a more mature and responsible mindset. With this education, it is hoped that students can make wiser decisions about their future, and become agents of change in their surroundings by disseminating the information they have obtained to their friends and family. The success of this activity also shows the importance of holding similar education on an ongoing basis so that more teenagers can gain a good understanding of early marriage and its impact on their lives.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Milawati was responsible for formulating the background and objectives of the activity. Dodi Putra and Wahyu Riddizon contributed to the preparation of educational materials and implementation of counseling. Marjohan and Amelia Pebriani were involved in the analysis of questionnaire data and documentation of the activity. Apri Yulda and Yessy Fitriani were responsible for the design of the research instrument as well as the preparation of the final report and writing of the article. All authors actively contributed to the process of implementing the activity, discussions, and revising the manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that this research was conducted without any commercial or financial conflict of interest that could influence the results of the study.

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