

Psychoeducation on Early Marriage to Increase Knowledge Among Adolescents of The Youth Community PPA Ester Bergema Nunbaun Sabu Sub-District Alak Village

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study investigates the impact of psychoeducational interventions on adolescent knowledge regarding early marriage within the PPA Youth Ester Bergema community in Nunbaun Sabu Village. The research aims to identify the causes, consequences, and preventive measures associated with early marriage to enhance awareness and facilitate preventive actions. **Method:** The study involved 54 adolescent members of the PPA Youth Ester Bergema community. A self-marriage scale was utilized to assess participants' understanding of early marriage before and after the psychoeducation sessions. The intervention consisted of structured psychoeducational activities designed to increase awareness and knowledge about early marriage. **Results:** The findings indicate a significant improvement in adolescents' knowledge following the psychoeducational intervention. The enthusiasm of the participants, coupled with the support of the Kelurahan Nunbaun Sabu management, contributed to the successful implementation of the program. The results demonstrate the effectiveness of psychoeducation in enhancing awareness and fostering informed decision-making among adolescents. **Novelty:** This study contributes to the existing literature by highlighting the role of community-based psychoeducation in addressing early marriage within a specific socio-cultural context. It provides empirical evidence on the effectiveness of structured interventions in increasing adolescents' understanding of early marriage and its consequences, thereby supporting preventive strategies at the community level.

INTRODUCTION

In 2018, 1 in 9 girls were married in Indonesia. Women aged 20-24 who were married before 18 in 2018 were estimated to be around 1,220,900, putting Indonesia in the top 10 countries in absolute numbers. Child marriage is the highest in the world. The Indonesian government passed Law No. 16 of 2019, which amends Law No. 1 of 1974 on Marriage. In 2018, 11.21 percent of women aged 20-24 were married before 18. In 20 provinces, the prevalence of child marriage remains above the national average. Province. In 10 years, the prevalence of child marriage in rural areas decreased by 5.76 percentage points, while t [1] the prevalence in urban areas only reduced by less than one percentage point. Child marriage is associated with various structural factors that stem from community, family, and individual capacities. Findings from Susenas and literature studies show that children who are more vulnerable to child marriage are girls, children living in low-income families, in rural areas, and have low education. Employed women

aged 18 and under are more likely to work in the informal sector and, therefore, be more vulnerable when compared to women in the same age group who marry after 18 and work. The report shows that poverty is not the only driver of child marriage. When linked to the percentage of poor people, child marriage occurs in provinces with both high and low poverty. Child marriage is also related to health. The rate of women aged 20-24 who married at 18 years and above who initiated early breastfeeding reached 28.76 percent, much different from those who married before 18, which was only 18.83 percent. In addition, the percentage of women aged 20-24 years who married at the age of 18 years and above and gave birth at a health facility was highest at 34.13 percent, a 12 percentage point difference from those who married before the age of 18 years, which was only 22.13 percent.

Early marriage, according to UNICEF's definition, is a marriage that takes place at the age of less than 18 years old and occurs during adolescence. Marriage under 18 contradicts children's rights to education, pleasure, health, and freedom of expression. According to BKKBN (2010), the age of marriage for men is 25 years old, and for women is 20 years old. Meanwhile, according to the decision of the Constitutional Court Number 22 of 2017, revised in 2019, the age of marriage for men and women is 19. Furthermore, in Kupang City, it was explained by the NTT Central Statistics Agency that in 2020, there was a presentation of women who had been married aged <16 years 13.88% and the district/city that contributed the most significant number was Kupang city 8.91%. Based on data from the BKKBN for the NTT region in 2021, 82,957 couples of childbearing age (PUS) married under 19. Meanwhile, data on early marriage in Kupang City, according to DP3A Kupang City, 2021 had 20 cases and increased in 2023 to 23.

In the government's efforts to prevent early marriage through compulsory 12-year education and socializing, reproductive health education is essential (PP No. 61/2014 on reproductive health). BKKBN also has a Generasi Berencana (GenRe) Programme implemented by approaching families with teenagers. The approach taken to adolescents is through the development of Information Centres and Youth Counselling (PIKR), which have the main functions of sharing information, innovative activities, counseling, and education: information sharing, innovative activities counseling, and referral. The approach to families is through the development of the Bina Keluarga Remaja (BKR) group, whose activities aim to increase parents' knowledge in guiding adolescents; in addition, this activity is also directed to be able to increase participation, guidance, and independence in family planning for PUS BKR members. Furthermore, through BKR groups that have adolescents can exchange information together on matters relating to adolescents, including the policy of the generation planning program, one of which is the maturation of the age of marriage (Center for Data and Information of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015).

Early marriage can impact women and their children's health, education, economy, and personal security (Anwar, 2016). According to Jones & Gubhaju (2008), early marriage results in maternal mortality, domestic violence, reproductive health,

subordination, and dropping out. In addition, early marriage also results in unwanted pregnancies (KTD) with risks such as every year, 2 million women die, 50% due to unsafe abortion, deaths due to bleeding and infection, the iceberg mechanism, and the killing of newborn babies. According to WHO (2014), girls aged 10-14 years are at five times the risk of dying during pregnancy or in childbirth, while the 15-19 age group has twice the risk when compared to the 20-14 age group. The problem of early marriage in Nunbaun Sabu Village was recorded from 3792 residents until 2023 6 adolescents entered into early marriage, which increased in 2023 by 6 cases. The most prominent cause of early marriage is promiscuity, resulting in pregnancy outside of marriage, which causes parents to be forced to marry off their children because they do not want their children to fall into negative things; lack of information about the impact of early marriage on parents and children, and the influence of a less harmonious family environment and social environment.

The negative impact of early marriage that occurs in Nunbaun Sabu Village is that adolescents who enter into early marriages are forced to drop out of school and lack readiness to build a household and take care of children, so there are frequent arguments, and children are fostered mainly by the parents of the teenager and based on the results of interviews with the secretary and village staff of Nunbaun Sabu Village, parents, teenagers from members of the PPA Youth Ester Bergema Community stated that the phenomenon of early marriage still often occurs in Nunbaun Sabu due to a lack of information from both parents and teenagers about the impact of early marriage. This is supported by the fact that there has never been socialization of the effects of early marriage. Teenagers and the community sometimes only find information about early marriage in the mass media and social media. In addition, there are still thoughts considered taboo when there is a discussion about early marriage and sex education in children and adolescents. From the results of the interviews, it was revealed that based on the results of interviews conducted in Nunbaun Sabu Village, there are many cases of early marriage, free sex and pregnancy outside of marriage, teenagers living together without marital ties, and other cases related to adolescence. So far, the village government has not taken any action to socialize early marriage or sexual behavior among teenagers. Parents also said they do not want early marriage, but parents tend not to take precautions in this regard, resulting in the omission of free teenage behavior. This opinion is also supported by the PPA Coordinator of NBS village, who said that teenagers have entered into early marriages. The socialization of positive life behavior for teenagers has not been active.

Furthermore, from the results of interviews with adolescents, it was stated that at school, sex education is mainly discussed only during biology lessons on reproduction. Counseling on early marriage, drugs, alcohol, and promiscuity has never been done. From this statement, it can be seen that this is one of the causes of the lack of information and knowledge about early marriage in adolescents. Therefore, practitioners collaborated with the Nunbaun Sabu Village Government and the PPA Youth Ester Bergema

Community for data collection and activities to be carried out with the target of adolescents under 12-19 years. It is hoped that this activity can increase knowledge related to early marriage and efforts to prevent this from happening to adolescents. This also supports the objectives of the PPA Youth Ester Bergema Community, which is a forum and means for the younger generation to develop in the field of social welfare business. To transform adolescents in social care by taking preventive and rehabilitative actions against problems regarding early marriage in Nunbaun Sabu Village

RESEARCH METHOD

The methods used were observation, interviews, and psychological testing tools. Subjects totaled 54 community members. The determination of subjects is adolescents aged 12-19 years who have been members of the PPA community for 3 years and have a high score on the self-marriage scale, who have relatively the same problems. The observation was carried out to know the condition or physical situation, as well as to get information and understand the psychological, behavioral, and problem tendencies experienced by community members. Interviews were conducted with community coordinators, administrators, teenage parents, and community members. This interview aims to explore data regarding external complaints, things that are felt, life history, and other information related to the condition of community members. In addition, FGD (*Focus Group Discussion*) was conducted to analyze the problems faced by adolescents through in-depth discussions with various related parties (such as PPA coordinators, PPA administrators/mentors, parents, and adolescents) to understand their views on issues or problems that occur in the community environment. Data collection will be done using the self-marriage scale test tool to know the level of knowledge of community members before and after the intervention.

Based on the results of observations made by practitioners, the subjects of analysis, namely adolescent community members, parents, administrators, and coordinators of PPA Youth Ester Bergema to village administrators, can accept practitioners well. Due to the general nature of this community case, the observations made were not too detailed. During the assessment activities, they cooperated in delivering or answering questions related to the problem of early marriage in Nunbaun Sabu Village.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the results of observations made by practitioners, the subjects of analysis, namely adolescent community members, parents, administrators, and coordinators of PPA Youth Ester Bergema to village administrators, can accept practitioners well. Due to the general nature of this community case, the observations made were not too detailed. During the assessment activities, they cooperated in delivering or answering questions related to the problem of early marriage in Nunbaun Sabu Village.

They also cooperated well with the practitioners, making it easier for the practitioners to collect data. According to the kelurahan government, in this case, represented by the head of the kelurahan government section, early marriage is still prevalent among urban youth. Adolescents in the kelurahan have a busy life pattern. Many teenagers drop out of school because they are pregnant or have even registered with the kelurahan to get married. To anticipate this, the village government should implement the Constitution's mandate to register for marriage after 19 years of age for both men and women. As a form of government preventing early marriage behavior, many teenagers live together without marriage bonds while waiting until they are old enough to get married. If there are teenagers who are pregnant outside of marriage and want to register their marriage but are not old enough (in this case, not yet 19 years old), the kelurahan will not give permission, and if forced, the couples who want to get married must attend, a hearing at the civil registry. The kelurahan does this to avoid unwanted things, such as there are cases of the male party forcing to get married while the female party is not ready. Still, because she is already pregnant outside of marriage, she is forced to follow suit. Not long afterward, she is separated. There are many increases in the burden on parents' lives, adolescents dropping out of school, and other problems from negative adolescent behavior. According to PPA coordinator Ester Bregema, the case of early marriage is a serious problem for the PPA youth community because one of the PPA members also got married last year. This makes the community concerned because of this phenomenon; teenagers have the possibility of imitating and behaving sexually freely. The community has conducted socialization, but only to the extent of appeals and giving advice. There has been no real action to support the early marriage socialization program to increase teenagers' knowledge. The coordinating committee needs to improve the understanding of early marriage among all members and community members.

Table 1. Analysis Level Community

No.	Before	After
1.	Meso level: Parents and administrators of the PPA community lack knowledge or information related to early marriage and its prevention, so parents do not know how to handle or prevent cases of early marriage.	Parents admitted they were happy and helped increase their knowledge or information through leaflets about early marriage and how to prevent it.

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| 2. | <p style="text-align: center;">Ekso level:</p> <p>There is a lack of material related to early marriage because socialization has never been done in the community, from children to parents in the kelurahan</p> | <p>Youth PPA coordinator Ester Bergema has received posters and materials on early marriage and prevention efforts. This allowed PPA community members to increase their knowledge and help them in the counseling process that will be conducted in future meetings. The sub-district government said they were happy and helped by the psychoeducation activities carried out and were able to get posters and materials about early marriage. The Head of the Government Section said that with these posters and materials, the Nunbaun Sanbu village government could add input to socialization activities related to early marriage and prevention efforts, which will be carried out regularly in the community.</p> |
| 3. | <p style="text-align: center;">Macro level:</p> <p>The lack of socialization activities from Kelurahan administrators related to early marriage and its prevention in the community is due to a lack of information and materials about early marriage and its prevention efforts.</p> | |
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The *Focus Group Discussion* (FGD) revealed that many adolescents in the community do not have a sufficient understanding of the negative impacts of early marriage on their physical, psychological, economic, and future health. Some adolescents admitted to having fallen in due to the influence of their social environment, especially socializing with friends and many of their peers who had experienced early marriage because they were already pregnant, lack of exposure to the correct information, and lack of effort by adolescents to access the correct information. In addition, the media also plays a role in influencing adolescents' views on early marriage behavior, which is often portrayed as usual. Parents consider the issue of early marriage not to be a significant problem and a taboo subject to discuss with their children. They assume that their children will understand themselves. Parents make no effort to control the behavior of teenagers. An invalid source was specified. Parents also rarely control their children's behavior. The PPA coordinator reported that there are community adolescents who experienced early marriage, and even now, they have to drop out of school and live with their parents, which becomes a burden on the family's economy. As a result of early marriage, they experience severe life pressure and are emotionally immature, so these

adolescents are often involved in arguments and even domestic violence. According to the kelurahan government, many teenagers are pregnant, and they live in the same house without a legal marriage bond from the government. Customs are also dominant in the marriage culture without religious and governmental ties. A small number of reported cases are recorded in the kelurahan data as legally valid marriages, but many teenagers are pregnant and even live together without marriage. Their relationships are vulnerable to conflict due to psychological, economic, and health conditions. Therefore, the FGDs revealed that there is a need for more systematic and collaborative preventive measures between the PPA, parents, and kelurahan authorities to address the problem of early marriage among adolescents.

Discussion

Based on the psychoeducational intervention on early marriage that has been carried out, the results of pre-test and post-test testing using the SPSS analysis test and paired sample t-test show a change. From the tests, the pre-test mean value is 10.30, and the post-test mean value is 21.65. This means that the post-test value has increased from the pre-test value. The results of a significant value (2-tailed) of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) mean that the results of the pre-test and post-test have significant changes (meaningful). From the above results, it can be concluded that the intervention in the form of psychoeducation about early marriage can increase the knowledge of adolescent community members about early marriage. In addition, in the Paired Sample T-tests table, the sig value (2-tailed) is 0.000; this shows that the test results are highly statistically significant in statistical analysis. If the sig (2-tailed) value or p-value is less than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$), then this indicates a difference between the pre-test and post-test; therefore, the increase in the Early Marriage understanding score from pre-test to post-test is significant. This signals that the intervention successfully increased adolescents' understanding of early marriage.

Practitioners encountered no obstacles during data collection, assessment, and intervention with adolescent community members, parents, the PPA Coordinator, community administrators, and the Nunbaun Sabu Village Government. However, assessments such as observations and interviews were not implemented in detail for all community members.

Community members because many of them did not attend the PPA activities. In addition, not all targeted youth members of the community were able to participate in the intervention. However, despite these obstacles, the Coordinator, management, and members of the Youth ester bergema community were very cooperative and willing to assist practitioners in collecting the information needed. The *follow-up* that can be given in penology is to ask the adolescents who participated in the psychoeducation again about their knowledge of early marriage—in addition, asking adolescents who have participated in psychoeducation about early marriage to be able to continue the information or knowledge gained to friends who did not participate in the last psychoeducation. Keep reminding teenagers to stay away from promiscuity to avoid

things that can have negative consequences on themselves, one of which is early marriage. They can actively carry out positive activities for self-development and focus on education to realize what they aspire to. As well as asking parents to build a good relationship with their children so that good communication can be established between the two parties and they can be more sensitive to what is happening with their children so that if there are problems, parents can be more alert in handling them. Furthermore, for the coordinator and management of PPA Ester Bergema, the practitioner asked about developing early marriage psychoeducation activities and asked for community responses regarding the distributed posters. Practitioners also suggested that activities like this could be carried out regularly, and early marriage and other topics could be discussed by inviting appropriate speakers or resource persons.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding: The psychoeducational intervention on early marriage successfully increased adolescents' knowledge and awareness within the PPA Youth Ester Bergema community in Nunbaun Sabu Village. The program's effectiveness was supported by the active engagement of participants and the assistance of local stakeholders, highlighting the potential of community-based educational initiatives in addressing early marriage. **Implication:** The findings suggest that psychoeducation can serve as a preventive measure against early marriage by equipping adolescents, parents, and community leaders with essential knowledge and strategies. Strengthening collaboration between local authorities, educators, and community organizations could enhance the sustainability and reach of such initiatives. **Limitation:** This study was limited by its focus on a single community, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to broader populations. Additionally, the intervention's long-term impact on behavioral change and decision-making regarding early marriage remains unexplored. **Future Research:** Further studies should investigate the effectiveness of similar interventions across diverse cultural and socio-economic settings, incorporating longitudinal assessments to evaluate sustained changes in attitudes and behaviors. Exploring the integration of digital psychoeducation tools could also enhance accessibility and engagement in preventive efforts.

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