



CHILD MARRIAGE PREVENTION EDUCATION AS AN EFFORT TO CREATE A QUALITY GENERATION AT MA ZAINUL HASAN 2, PROBOLINGGO REGENCY

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Abstract:

*Child marriage remains a significant social issue that affects adolescents' education, health, and future opportunities. Early marriage often results in school dropout, limited economic prospects, and increased risks to reproductive health. Therefore, preventive efforts through educational programs are essential to increase adolescents' awareness of the consequences of child marriage and the importance of continuing education. This study aims to examine the implementation of Child Marriage **Prevention Education** as an effort to create a quality generation among students at MA Zainul Hasan 2, Probolinggo Regency. The activity used an educational intervention approach involving lectures, discussions, and interactive question-and-answer sessions with students as participants. Data were collected through observation, participant responses, and documentation of the activities, and were analyzed using a descriptive qualitative method. The results show that the educational program successfully increased students' knowledge and awareness regarding the negative impacts of early marriage, including health risks, educational discontinuity, and social challenges. Students also demonstrated a better understanding of the importance of delaying marriage and prioritizing education for their future development. These findings indicate that educational institutions play a strategic role in preventing child marriage by providing adolescents with knowledge and life skills related to reproductive health, personal responsibility, and future planning. Therefore, continuous educational programs and collaboration between schools, communities, and related institutions are necessary to support the development of a healthy, educated, and responsible generation.*

Keywords: child marriage prevention, education program, adolescent awareness, reproductive health education, quality generation.

INTRODUCTION

Child marriage remains a significant social and human rights issue that continues to affect many countries, particularly in developing regions. Child marriage is defined as a formal or informal union where one or both parties are under the age of 18 years. This practice is widely considered a violation of children's rights because it deprives them of opportunities for education, health, and personal development (UNICEF, 2020). Globally, millions of girls are still forced to marry at a young age, which creates long-term social, economic, and health challenges.

In Indonesia, child marriage is still a serious concern despite various government policies aimed at reducing its prevalence. According to data from UNICEF and the Child Marriage Data Portal, approximately 16% of women aged 20–24 in Indonesia were married before the age of 18 (UNICEF, 2020; Child Marriage Data Portal, 2024). The prevalence of child marriage is even higher in rural areas, reaching around 23.6%, compared to about 10.1% in urban areas, indicating that socioeconomic and cultural factors strongly influence the persistence of early marriage practices (Child Marriage Data Portal, 2024). Furthermore, UNICEF reports that one out of nine

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girls in Indonesia is married before the age of 18, placing Indonesia among the countries with the highest number of child marriages in the world (UNICEF, 2019).

Child marriage has numerous negative impacts on adolescents, particularly on girls. Early marriage often leads to school dropout, limited access to higher education, and reduced employment opportunities. In addition, adolescents who marry at an early age are more vulnerable to reproductive health problems, such as early pregnancy, maternal mortality, and complications during childbirth (UNFPA, 2023). Psychologically, early marriage can also cause stress, anxiety, and emotional instability because adolescents are not yet mentally prepared to face family responsibilities. These impacts not only affect individuals but also hinder the development of a quality generation that is capable of contributing to national development. Education plays a crucial role in preventing child marriage. Research shows that girls who complete secondary education are significantly less likely to marry at an early age compared to those with lower educational attainment (UNICEF, 2019). Education provides adolescents with knowledge about reproductive health, life skills, and future planning, enabling them to make informed decisions regarding marriage and family life. Therefore, educational institutions have a strategic role in providing awareness and preventive education related to the risks and consequences of child marriage.

Madrasah Aliyah, as Islamic-based educational institutions, have an important responsibility in shaping students' knowledge, attitudes, and values regarding social issues, including early marriage. Through educational programs and awareness campaigns, schools can empower students with information and critical understanding about the importance of delaying marriage until they reach physical, psychological, and economic maturity. Preventive education is therefore essential in preparing adolescents to become a healthy, educated, and productive generation. Based on this background, Child Marriage Prevention Education becomes an important effort to increase students' knowledge and awareness about the dangers of early marriage. This program was implemented at MA Zainul Hasan 2, Probolinggo Regency, with the aim of providing educational outreach to students regarding the impacts of child marriage and the importance of prioritizing education and personal development. Through this activity, it is expected that students will develop a better understanding of the risks associated with child marriage and become part of a quality generation that is capable of contributing positively to society

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a community service approach with an educational intervention method aimed at increasing students' awareness and knowledge regarding child marriage prevention. Educational interventions are considered an effective strategy to improve adolescents' understanding of social and health issues because they provide information, discussion opportunities, and critical reflection on the risks and consequences of early marriage (UNICEF, 2019). The activity was conducted at MA Zainul Hasan 2, Probolinggo Regency, East Java, Indonesia. The participants of this program were students of Madrasah Aliyah who are in the adolescent age group, which is considered a vulnerable period for early marriage practices. Adolescence is a transitional stage characterized by physical, emotional, and social development, making educational guidance particularly important to support informed decision-making related to future life planning (WHO, 2022).

The implementation of this program consisted of several stages. The first stage was preparation, which included coordination with the school authorities, identification of participants, and preparation of educational materials related to child marriage prevention, reproductive health, and the importance of continuing education. The second stage was implementation, which involved delivering educational sessions through lectures, interactive discussions, and question-and-answer sessions. These methods were chosen to encourage active student participation and enhance their understanding of the topic. Interactive learning methods are known to be more effective in improving adolescents' knowledge and attitudes compared to one-way communication (UNFPA, 2023). The third stage was **evaluation**, which aimed to assess students' level of understanding after participating in the educational program. The evaluation was conducted through informal discussions and feedback from participants to determine whether the educational activities improved their awareness of the risks of early marriage and the importance of delaying marriage until reaching maturity.

Data in this activity were collected through observations, participant responses, and documentation of the educational activities. The collected data were then analyzed using descriptive qualitative analysis to describe the process and outcomes of the child marriage prevention education program. Qualitative descriptive analysis is commonly used in community-based educational programs to explain the implementation process and the impact of educational interventions on participants' knowledge and awareness (Creswell, 2018). Through this method, the program aimed to provide students with knowledge, awareness, and motivation to avoid early marriage and to prioritize education and personal development as part of building a quality and well-prepared generation for the future.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of the Child Marriage Prevention Education program at MA Zainul Hasan 2, Probolinggo Regency was carried out through educational sessions, discussions, and interactive question-and-answer activities involving Madrasah Aliyah students. The activity was attended by students who are within the adolescent age group, which is considered a critical stage for providing education regarding reproductive health, life planning, and the risks of early marriage. Based on observations during the activity, students showed a high level of enthusiasm and participation in the educational sessions. Many participants actively asked questions and shared their views regarding the causes and impacts of early marriage in their communities. The interactive discussions indicated that prior to the program, several students had limited knowledge about the long-term consequences of child marriage, particularly in terms of health risks, educational disruption, and socioeconomic challenges.



Figure 1. Socialization documentation

After the educational session, students demonstrated a better understanding of the negative impacts of early marriage. Participants were able to identify several risks associated with child marriage, including early pregnancy, increased maternal health risks, school dropout, and limited opportunities for future career development. In addition, students also showed greater awareness of the importance of continuing education and preparing themselves physically, emotionally, and economically before entering marriage. The documentation and feedback from participants also indicated that the educational materials delivered during the program helped them understand that marriage requires maturity and responsibility. Students acknowledged that delaying marriage and focusing on education can help them achieve better life outcomes and contribute positively to society

The results of this educational activity demonstrate that child marriage prevention education can significantly increase adolescents' awareness and understanding of the risks associated with early marriage. Education is widely recognized as one of the most effective strategies in preventing child marriage because it empowers young people with knowledge, critical thinking skills, and awareness of their rights and future opportunities (UNICEF, 2019). The active participation of students during the educational sessions indicates that adolescents are highly receptive to information related to life planning and reproductive health when it is delivered in an interactive and engaging manner. This finding is consistent with previous studies which state that participatory educational methods such as discussions and question-and-answer sessions are effective in improving adolescents' knowledge and attitudes toward reproductive health and early marriage prevention (UNFPA, 2023).



Figure 2. Socialization documentation

Furthermore, the program highlights the important role of educational institutions, particularly Islamic schools such as Madrasah Aliyah, in shaping students' perspectives on social issues. Schools serve not only as centers of academic learning but also as platforms for character development and social awareness.

Through preventive education programs, schools can help students understand the long-term consequences of early marriage and encourage them to prioritize education and personal development. Another important finding from this activity is the increased awareness among students about the relationship between education and life opportunities. Students realized that continuing their education can help them achieve economic independence and better career prospects. Research shows that adolescents who remain in school are significantly less likely to enter early marriage compared to those who drop out of school (UNICEF, 2019).

In addition, the program also contributed to strengthening students' understanding of reproductive health and the importance of psychological readiness before marriage. Adolescents who marry early often face significant health risks, including complications during pregnancy and childbirth due to incomplete physical development (WHO, 2022). Therefore, providing adolescents with accurate information about reproductive health is an essential component of child marriage prevention. Overall, the implementation of the Child Marriage Prevention Education program at MA Zainul Hasan 2, Probolinggo Regency demonstrated that educational interventions can effectively increase students' knowledge and awareness regarding the dangers of early marriage. Such programs play an important role in preparing adolescents to become a healthy, educated, and responsible generation capable of contributing to sustainable social development.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Child Marriage Prevention Education program at MA Zainul Hasan 2, Probolinggo Regency demonstrated that educational activities can effectively increase students' knowledge and awareness regarding the risks and negative impacts of early marriage. Through lectures, discussions, and interactive question-and-answer sessions, students gained a better understanding of the social, educational, and health consequences associated with child marriage, such as early pregnancy, school dropout, and limited opportunities for future development. These findings indicate that providing adolescents with accurate information and educational guidance can encourage them to consider the importance of delaying marriage and prioritizing education as part of their life planning.

Furthermore, this program highlights the important role of educational institutions, particularly Madrasah Aliyah, in preventing child marriage and promoting the development of a quality generation. Schools can function as strategic platforms for delivering knowledge related to reproductive health, personal responsibility, and future planning. Therefore, continuous educational programs, collaboration between schools and communities, and increased awareness efforts are essential to strengthen adolescents' understanding and commitment to avoiding early marriage, thereby supporting the creation of a healthier, more educated, and socially responsible generation.

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