

Reproductive Health Impacts of Child Marriage

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Abstract-Around 650 million girls in the world alive today are married before the age of 18, and Indonesia ranks 8th in the world. Child marriage is a violation of human rights and has many detrimental impacts on women, families, society and the country. The research aims to understand the impact of reproductive health on women who enter into child marriage. This research used a qualitative phenomenological method which was carried out on 8 girls aged less than 18 years who had married religiously or according to state law. The research was conducted through in-depth interviews with informants consisting of girls, parents and companions from the Women's Crisis Centre and the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Service. The results of this research illustrate very worrying facts, where these girls experience unwanted pregnancies, poor health during pregnancy, difficult births, difficult to breastfeed, unable care for babies and unable to continue their education. Psychologically they are very devastated, regretful and take a long time to get up. Most of them get married because of free sex which results in pregnancy, religious understanding regarding behaviors that is allowed and not allowed, sexual education, individual maturity and the ability to refuse free sex are prevention efforts that must be carried out by families, schools and society. Support from various parties is needed so that they can get through this difficult time and be able to continue their lives better because they have rights like everyone else.

Keywords: health reproductive, child marriage, women health

1. INTRODUCTION

Around 650 million girls in the world alive today are married before the age of 18, and Indonesia ranks 8th in the world [1], [2]. Child marriage is a violation of human rights and has many detrimental impacts on women, families, society and the country[3] As many as 96.3% of women who

married before the age of 18 did not continue their education[4]. Child marriage are at risk for their children's education, health, psychology and health, increasing the risk of depression, sexually transmitted infections, cervical cancer, maternal and infant mortality, and violence against women[5]. Violence against women has an impact on women's health, causing 1.5 times the risk of infection with sexual diseases, 2 times the risk of miscarriage, 41%

increase in premature birth and Low Birth Weight (LBW) and 2 times the risk of depression. Other consequences are physical injury, brain injury, headaches, insomnia, pelvic pain, depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder[6]. Child marriage disrupts child development, and has adverse impacts on the education, health, economy, security of the girl and the children she gives birth to. [7]

This situation is contrary to the government's efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Goal 3 on Good Health and Welfare and goal five on Gender Equality still require other efforts as a solution to achieving goals three and five[8]. The national regulation is the enactment of the marriage law to provide a minimum age limit of 19 years for both men and women. [9] Women who gave birth at 13-19 years old had more anxiety symptoms later in life, and those who married under the age of 25 showed higher levels of depressive symptoms. [10]. Because the impacts of child marriage is the occurrence of violence by partner [11].

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The prevention of child marriage is an effort to protect children, although the trend of child marriage has decreased in the last ten years, but the decline is very slow and far from the expected target. Although the minimum age of marriage is 19 years old, there is still room for the implementation of underage marriages through marriage dispensations. The most common reason for marriage dispensations is pregnancy outside of marriage. As many as 98% of those who apply for marriage are pre-marital sex, which leads to pregnancy Theory of Social Change The National Strategy for Preventing Child Marriage has the goal that Indonesian children can grow and develop optimally and become superior and competitive human resources, with guaranteed access to basic services and free from the risk of child marriage[12]. Society and culture are important factors in how child marriage can be perceived as a positive thing, despite the current moral shift and the apparent acceptance of premarital sex in some adolescent groups. Acceptance and exposure to premarital sex exposes the vulnerability of this group which is compounded by the absence of formal counselling services and friendly care services. [13] Child marriage has a major impact on reproductive health, victims who get marriage dispensation due to pregnancy are basically not really the solution to the problem, victims will still be faced with the risk of violence even though they are pregnant.[14]. Efforts to prevent child marriage must be obtained by all children through education, every child must have sufficient knowledge about

sexual and reproductive health, know their bodies well and have gender equality.[16]; [18].

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative, phenomenological method. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews with victims who were women aged 13-18 years. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling with the criteria of girls who have undergone child marriage, aged 13-18 years, reported to WCC or the Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection because of violent behaviour, victims get reproductive problems and are willing to be interviewed. The data triangulation process was obtained through data from NGOs and the Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, information obtained from the victim's companion and researchers also conducted interviews with the victim's parents.

In the process of conducting in-depth interviews, researchers used the following interview guidelines:

Guide	Description
Health Problems	What reproductive health problems does the informant have knowledge, awareness or experience of?
Time	When did you start to realize the health problem, and did anyone else tell you about the health problem?
Parents attitude	What is the attitude of parents in dealing with these problems, reactions to social problems and health problems that arise and the efforts made by parents
Attitude of husband and husband's family	What was the attitude of the informant's husband, what was his reaction? And whether this attitude or reaction has an influence on the informant's reproductive health
Outside parties who help	Is there an outside party that helps the victim, what form of assistance does it take and how is it done?
Treatment	How to manage marriage problems, both socially, legally and also the reproductive health problems they cause
Management of health workers	How do health workers respond to reproductive health problems? Is there any special treatment?
Current health impacts	What are the current reproductive health problems, do these problems still continue?

Table 2.1 Guidelines Interview

The data analysis method begins with a credibility test to ensure the accuracy of the information received by the researcher, and data triangulation is carried out with the victim's parents and the victim's companion. Next, a dependability test is carried out in the form of auditing the research

process to determine the suitability of the steps. Researchers analyzed the data following Clarke and Braun's stages through seven stages and analyzed descriptively

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Health problems

Most of the health problems experienced by the victims were unwanted pregnancies, and there was 1 victim with sexual trauma. The victim felt that carrying out the pregnancy was very difficult and attempted to have an abortion

b. Time

The victim realized there was a pregnancy problem when her period was 4-5 months late, so the victim hid her pregnancy

c. Parental attitude

The parents faced disappointment and gave rise to their own psychological problems. The parents admitted that they were very devastated and they also received reinforcement from their companions. However, parents remain the main saviors for the problems their children face. Even though they expressed great disappointment, in the end they provided help and support

d. The attitude of the husband and the husband's family

All of the victims' husbands denied that the pregnancy occurred because they had premarital sex, even though the marriage still had to last to cover the family's disgrace, the husbands did not provide adequate support, did not provide economic support and often resorted to violence. The husband's family also refused, the family did not provide support to the victim either morally or materially. Young couples who do not have knowledge about parenting, emotional and psychological instability so that parenting requires assistance from the victim's parents/family[19]. The victims felt that the lack of support from their husbands was a regret that made them realize that the premarital sex that had occurred was not accompanied by sincerity and fidelity.

d. Outside parties who help

The victims received assistance from the NGO Women Crisis Center and also the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Service. This support strengthens victims and their families and helps to obtain clear legal status

e. Management.

The existence of unwanted pregnancies, attempts to have abortions and cover up their pregnancies as well as sexual problems experienced by the victims, result in suboptimal prenatal care. The effort to resolve the problem made by the victim's family was to marry the victim to the perpetrator. Even though this is not a profitable solution, for the victim there is no other choice but to get married even though various problems have

been imagined beforehand. Child marriage increases the risk of partner violence, contracting sexually transmitted infections, contracting HIV/AIDS and cancer of the reproductive organs. [20]

f. Management of Health Workers

The victims received care from local midwives and the Community Health Center, their very young age made them women at high risk of pregnancy. Interventions are carried out by midwives by providing pregnancy checks even though the pregnancy is only discovered at 4-5 months of gestation. Delivery management is planned from the start and the victim gives birth in the hospital.

Health workers must be sensitive and concerned about pregnancy care for young women, this needs to involve multidisciplinary knowledge to meet needs during pregnancy, childbirth and post natal[21]

g. Current Health Impact

The victims still feel the impact of reproductive health problems, they are unable to breastfeed, they are traumatized by men and they become teenagers who close themselves off. They have to take care of the baby and stop Education. Some of them took more than 1 year to accept their condition and try to continue their education. The negative impact is not only faced by girls as victims of child marriage, but also the impact on the babies they give birth to. They have a risk of low birth weight and suboptimal growth and development. Health workers need to be screened for alcohol use, violence during pregnancy, and they need help from nutritionists to maintain their pregnancy. Postpartum care is also a focus because they are very at risk of post partum blues and the inability to breastfeed, and this requires support from health workers and family. [22];[21].

"After I became pregnant, my parents married me with my boyfriend, at first he refused but was forced to agree because my pregnancy was getting bigger.. I lived with him in a rented house, but he was almost never at home, I worked from 8 am to 9 pm to get money, it's so difficult for me...because I'm pregnant" (1st informant, 15 years old, weight : 34 kg).

I got the story from the second informant: *"One day I didn't have money to buy instant milk (for baby) my husband was never care, so I was busking on the main road. I got money and I used it to buy milk, diapers and I gave to my mother to buy some food, because that day there was no food at home"*. I asked to her about love to her baby and she said, *"Yes, I really love it and I don't care even if his father is irresponsible, I will do anything for my baby"* 2nd informant: 16 years old, widow. She really love her baby, she didn't give breastmilk, because she don't understand how to do it, she felt difficult and didn't understand.

Although taking care of the baby was very hard, but the hardest thing was when I was pregnant, he repeatedly forced me to abortion..I refused... and he really didn't care about me and my baby. 3rd informant, she is a widow, dropped school, 16 years old. She explained how difficult it was to go through pregnancy without support from her husband. having to be separated from parents and working full time in a high-risk pregnancy.

I asked the parents of the 3rd informant, an old man who looked very sad when he talked about his daughter. He is a father 62 years old with daughter who get unwanted pregnancy and married at 16 years old "one day I saw him pointing a knife to my daughter. I was angry and almost lost control. I was devastated, married her at the day she gave birth in the hospital, and after having a baby, her husband almost killed her".

I saw a 15 year old girl with a very thin body, a school dropout, living in the village with her mother when I asked why you looked sad and so thin, she said she was really sad...don't feel hungry and feel difficult to eat...I think she was sad because of the sexual harassment that adult man (29 years old) did to her... but I was surprised when she answered... "I really missed him and he promised to marry me after he got out of prison in 6 years, he said, he had broken up with his girlfriend and would definitely choose me, I believe he will marry me..." and I asked, why do you love him so much? He has hurt and abused you, rape to you.. So why?? Is he very handsome? Romantic guy? Or what? And she said if her boyfriend doesn't handsome.. he is a good man, very smart and religious man, she really love him. The girl didn't even realize that she was being deceived, the adult man repeatedly asked her to have sex and promised to marry her. They have sexual relations in the girl's house, in a quiet village and far from the hustle and bustle of a family who feels obedient to worship. This emphasizes that sexual and reproductive education must be instilled from the start.

5. CONCLUSION

Some of them met from social media and they are dating the saddest fact is that they do not have the ability to refuse to free sex... They had low knowledge about sexual and reproductive rights. Those at risk of sexual violence are children / adolescents with low education, low knowledge and poverty.

The reason of child marriage because of get pregnancy before marriage. The purpose of marriage is to cover ignominy (free sex is ignominy, dishonor). The girls get pregnancy with poor physical and psychological condition. The high risk of sexual infections and violence by partner. High

risk of pregnancy and labor because of they are young age, and chronic lack of energy, very thin body. Try to hiding the pregnancy, and never visit to antenatal care. Unable to care baby and unable to breastfeeding.

Girls victims of sexual violence have to face reproductive health problem, psychological problem, education problem, economic problems and social problem in the community. these problems are not only faced by the victim but also her family, so.. this requires commitment from various sectors to prevent child marriage, sexual violence and also help survivor to be able to achieve a better life. It is very important to prevent various forms of violence against girls, preventing child marriage is an important factor that must be carried out in a multidisciplinary manner. Strategies to prevent child marriage must continue to be updated based on the latest situation and data, and sexual and reproductive health services must be available for adolescents.[12];[23].

Everyone deserves a better future no matter the mistakes they've made or the tough problems they've faced in the past. Everyone has the right to correct their mistakes and have a beautiful future. Sexual education is needed for children and teenagers. Understand sexual and reproductive right. Understand the consequences of free sex / premarital sexual relations. Must be empower girl and Don't be afraid to speak up!

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