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By Yance Hidayat

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Health promotion and health education: Student's perceptions of early marriage in Bengkulu City, Indonesia

Yance Hidayat, Fery Surahman Saputra, Emy Pebriani, Difera Hermiati, Jipri Suyanto*, Sulastr

Fakultas Ilmu Kesehatan Universitas Dehasen (UNIVED) Bengkulu
Email: jefrisuyanto@gmail.com

Abstract

Background: Students are individuals in a stage of life characterised by a strong desire to explore and understand themselves and the world around them. At this age or stage, their current knowledge enables them to efficiently find what they need. Nevertheless, there is a notable deficiency in the comprehension and implementation of knowledge among teenagers, rendering them highly susceptible to engaging in behaviours that may detrimentally affect their future prospects. Meanwhile, the rapid progress of technology facilitates teenagers' participation in activities without parental supervision. Thus, we necessitate an alternate methodology that provides kids with a thorough comprehension of sexual education, augmenting their information and prompting them to contemplate it prior to indulging in deviant behaviours during adolescence that may result in early marriage.

Purpose: To investigate the effectiveness of health promotion and health education on students' perceptions of early marriage.

Method: A quantitative study using a quasi-experimental technique with a total of 184 participants was selected for this study using a stratified random sampling method from eight high schools in Bengkulu City. The statistical used a univariate test and paired t-test to assess the influence, and an independent t-test to appraise the effectiveness of alterations according to the school type group. This allowed us to ascertain the appropriateness of this approach for each specific school type.

Results: Health education has a significant effect on student opinions of early marriage. The mean value was 11.1, with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 2.1 to 18.2. The p-value was less than 0.000, indicating a highly significant result. Conversely, the group comparison test revealed that health education yielded greater effectiveness in public high schools as opposed to private high schools.

Conclusion: Health education can be utilized to alter students' perceptions, so enabling knowledge to serve as a foundation for evaluating the challenges they encounter.

Keywords: Early Marriage; Health Education; Knowledge; Perception; Student

INTRODUCTION

Child marriage is an escalating global concern. Early marriage is a practice that originates from a cultural conviction that being married before the age of 18 is advantageous and results in various benefits (World Health Organization, 2016). Indeed, certain nations sanction the act of early marriage, resulting

in a prevalent occurrence of polygamy (Vogelstein, 2020). Early marriage is a substantial determinant that can have adverse effects on health status. This is due to the mother's physiological state being in its early stages of development. Consequently, they lack the necessary physical and emotional readiness

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to embark on marriage. There is potential for individuals to experience pregnancy disorders, depression, stress, low birth weight (LBW), stunting, premature birth, preeclampsia, and even death (Rohmayanti & Mareta, 2020; Sofais et al., 2022). In addition, offspring from early marriages are susceptible to non-communicable diseases in adulthood. Complications that may arise such as non-communicable diseases such as obesity, hypertension, stroke, coronary heart disease (Tembo, 2023).

Early marriage has detrimental consequences not only for the individuals involved, but also for the individuals in their immediate vicinity. For instance, they impose a hardship on their parents by accompanying them throughout the stages of pregnancy and breastfeeding. Several individuals even develop a reliance on their parents. Early marriage has an adverse economic impact, leading to a reduction in both family and national income (Karlsson, 2017). This can be attributed to their limited education and expertise, which hinders their ability to compete and enhance their own household economy (Union, 2015).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there are 3900 instances of early marriages that take place every day across the globe (World Health Organization, 2021). UNICEF statistics reveals that 44% of early marriages take place globally, with the Southern Asia region having the highest occurrence at 44%, followed by sub-Saharan Africa at 18%, and the East Asia and Pacific regions at 12% (The United Nations Children's Fund, 2020). According to data from BPS Indonesia, the prevalence of early marriages in Indonesia is significant, with a total of 1,220,900 weddings. As a result, Indonesia is among the top 10 nations globally in terms of early marriage prevalence (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2020). According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (2023), Bengkulu Province ranks third in terms of the prevalence of early marriage cases among the provinces in Sumatra Island.

Students are the future catalysts for change in the nation. Altering societal perception, beginning with the youth, is one possible approach to transforming a community's perspective. Students are individuals in a stage of life characterised by a strong desire to explore and understand themselves

and the world around them. At this particular age or stage, their current knowledge empowers them with the capacity to find what they need. Nevertheless, there is a noticeable deficiency in both comprehension and implementation, rendering youngsters very susceptible to engaging in behaviours that can detrimentally affect their future. Meanwhile, the rapid progress of technology facilitates teenagers' participation in activities without parental supervision. Thus, we necessitate an alternative methodology that provides pupils with a thorough comprehension of sexual education, augments their information, and motivates them to contemplate it prior to participating in aberrant adolescent behaviours that result in premature matrimony. In addition, our goal is to change the impression that early marriage does not result in favourable outcomes, but instead, it might result in a multitude of adverse repercussions.

Choirunissa et al. conducted a study that shows how health education affects students' views on early marriage, highlighting its influence on teenagers' perspectives (Choirunissa et al., 2023). A separate study conducted by Dwipayana et al. in 2023 also yielded similar findings about the impact of health education on students' views towards early marriage. The research conducted by Maharani and Wulandari further corroborates these findings, demonstrating the similar impact of health education on students' perspectives towards early marriage (Maharani & Wulandari, 2021).

Bengkulu City serves as the focal point for cultural, governmental, and educational endeavours. Annually, there is a rise in the number of students originating from diverse places. Bengkulu City serves as the educational hub for the residents of Bengkulu Province. The rise in prevalence, while maintaining cultural attributes that endorse early marriage as a beneficial and lawful practice, facilitates the occurrence of early marriage. Hence, we need a method that can reduce the probability of early marriage.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

A quasi-experimental, quantitative study applied a health education intervention to assess students' perspectives on early marriage. The intervention was implemented in one day, using video media and

Yance Hidayat, Fery Surahman Saputra, Emy Pebriani, Diferma Hermiati, Jipri Suyanto*, Sulastri

Fakultas Ilmu Kesehatan Universitas Dehasen (UNIVED) Bengkulu
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brochures. On the same day, participants were measured before and after the delivery of the health education program. This study was conducted in eight secondary schools in Bengkulu City for one month.

Sample Size

The population was high school students living in Bengkulu City, divided into two groups of high schools: four public high schools and four private high schools. This study involved a total of 184 participants, using a stratified random sampling method. This study used inclusion criteria such as being in the third year of high school and having no physical or mental disorders.

Instrument and Data Analysis

The questionnaire to assess students' perceptions of early marriage consists of 21 items, each using a Likert scale with answer options of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree (Azinar et al., 2023). Each participant will

complete the questionnaire on two separate occasions. Before receiving health education, they successfully completed the initial questionnaire and then completed the second questionnaire after the intervention. After the study was completed, all questionnaires were collected, evaluating each participant's responses, and then recording them in a comprehensive database. The data in the table were analyzed in stages, starting with a test to see if the data followed a normal distribution. Furthermore, statistical data were tested univariate to determine the frequency distribution of participant characteristics. Furthermore, the bivariate analysis test was tested to assess the effect of health education. All stages will be carried out using the SPSS 25 application.

Ethical Consideration

The Ethics team of the Faculty of Health Sciences at Dehasen University has granted approval for this research, with an ethical number of 0001/D-KEPK/FD/III/2023.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Table 1. Characteristics of Participants

Variables	School Groups	
	Private School (n=92)	Public School (n=92)
Age (Mean±SD)(Range)(Year)	(13.1 ± 1.11)(15-19)	(13.2 ± 1.01)(15-19)
Age (Year)(n%)		
≥18	42/45.65	15/16.67
<18	50/54.35	77/83.33
Gender (n%)		
Female	40/43.48	83/90.22
Male	52/56.52	9/9.78
Parental Income (Regional Minimum Wage) (n%)		
≥ RMW	23/25.0	41/44.57
< RMW	69/75.0	51/55.43

Table 1 shows that in the private school category, more than 50% of participants were under 18, more than 50% were male, and the majority of parents earned below the minimum wage. In the public school group, the majority of participants were under 18, the majority were female, and more than half of parents earned below the minimum wage.

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Table 2: Pre and Post Perception of Early Marriage

Variable	School Groups							
	Private School				Public School			
	Correlation	Mean	95% CI	p-value	Correlation	Mean	95% CI	p-value
Perception of Early Marriage (Pre-Post)	0.720	8.3	2.6 to 15.4	<0.000	0.590	14.3	2.1 to 19.3	<0.000

Table ³ presents the findings of a bivariate study utilizing the t-test model, specifically the paired t-test, to examine the impact of health education on students' viewpoints toward early marriage in private schools. The data demonstrate the impact of health education on students' viewpoints.

⁴ displays the outcomes of a bivariate analysis utilising the t-test model, specifically the paired t-test, to investigate the influence of health education on students' perspectives towards early marriage in Public School. The findings illustrate the influence of health education on students' perspectives.

Table 3: Pre and Post Perception of Early Marriage of both groups

Variable	Correlation	Mean	95% CI	p-value
Perception of Early Marriage (Pre-Post)	0.990	11.1	2.1 to 18.2	<0.000

Table 3 presents the findings of a bivariate analysis using the t-test model, especially the paired t-test, to examine the impact of health education on students' attitudes towards early marriage in both groups. The data demonstrate the impact of health education on students' viewpoints.

Table 4: Group Comparison by School Type

Groups	Mean diff.	95% CI	p-value
Private School			
Public School	5.87	1.3 to 9.44	<0.035

Table 4 illustrates that there are variations in perceptual alterations based on the type of school. kids attending public schools underwent more substantial alterations in comparison to kids enrolled in private institutions.

DISCUSSIONS

Having a strong sense of health perception is crucial, particularly for students. This perception enables them to assess events and mitigate any negative consequences. Individuals possess the ability to modify the perception inside their own family, and a small family can influence a bigger family, which in turn can have an impact on a broader community. Thus, the actions taken by young individuals can contribute to altering the

perception of early marriage among a community. Incremental progress has the potential to lead to significant advancements over time (Marcus & Harper, 2015). Students are a cohort that possesses the ability to assimilate information rapidly and offer valuable insights.

Knowledge is a crucial measure that necessitates meticulous deliberation. Acquiring knowledge enhances the ability to perceive things from a

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favourable standpoint. Hence, the probability of preventing a premature marriage will be enhanced (Dwipayana et al., 2023). Engaging in educational activities necessitates the attainment of suitable knowledge. Education can impart students with the knowledge that early marriage can result in precarious circumstances in the future (Marshan et al., 2018). Education not only enhances students' knowledge, but it also has the potential to alter their views towards early marriage (Bugis, & Mahmud, 2021).

Support, especially from friends, healthcare professionals, organizations, educational institutions, and family, is essential for changing one's perception, as it can quickly change with the use of such aid. Nevertheless, the viewpoint of the individual offering assistance plays a vital role in avoiding confusion, specifically the perspective of healthcare professionals concerning early marriage (Darmawati et al., 2023).

The main determinant behind families and society endorsing early marriage is economics. Marriage diminishes the quantity of obligations that parents need to fulfil. This is because wives bear whole responsibility for their husbands. According to Nabila et al. (2022), it is believed that early marriage is a viable method for addressing financial difficulties within a family. Typically, the majority of adolescents at that stage of development are not psychologically prepared to fulfil the obligations and responsibilities associated with marriage (Dewi et al., 2020). Conversely, refraining from engaging into early marriage has some advantages, such as avoiding the hindrance of economic competitiveness, thereby creating a possibility to enhance the family's financial standing (Sojais et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

Individuals can utilise health education to change their attitudes, using information as a basis to assess the issues they face. This response emphasises the significance of health education within a community, as it has the potential to alter perspectives, enhance comprehension, and influence health-related decision-making. There is a direct correlation between the level of knowledge possessed by an individual or group and their likelihood of enhancing their health status.

Declaration of Conflicting Interest

This study is devoid of any conflict of interest.

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Authors' Contribution

All authors made contributions to the preparation, implementation, analysis, and writing of this research.

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