



Motives, Messages, and Media in the Process of Child Marriage in Madura

Netty Dyah Kurniasari^{1,2} (✉), Emy Susanti³ and Yuyun Wahyu Izzati Surya⁴

¹Doctoral Student of Social Sciences, Airlangga University, 60285, Surabaya, Indonesia

² Communication Department, Trunojoyo University of Madura, Bangkalan, Indonesia
netty.dk@trunojoyo.ac.id

³Department of Sociology, Airlangga University, Surabaya 60286, Indonesia

⁴Department of Communication Science, Airlangga University, Surabaya 60286, Indonesia

Abstract. Indonesia is the second highest after ASEAN where the child marriage rate is high after Cambodia. Even more illuminated, the number of child marriages in Indonesia ranks second in the Southeast Asian region. About 2 million of Indonesia's 7.3 women under the age of 15 are married and out of school. That number is expected to rise to 3 million people by 2030. It is estimated that one in five girls in Indonesia marry before they reach 18 years old. The formulation of the problem of this study is how the motives, messages and media used by parents and society to persuade adolescents to be willing to marry early. The purpose of this study is to explore what motives, messages and media are used by parents and the community. The research methods used are observation and interviews. The subjects of the study were early marriage practitioners, parents and society. Research location in Madura. The results showed that the motive for early marriage was mostly due to economic and cultural motives. Media used by means of direct communication. The message conveyed includes good intentions (wanting to marry) should not be rejected, to maintain the honor of a woman better when the woman is immediately married, the person who gets married (household) becomes a more independent person. Getting married is a good intention so the good thing has to be moved.

Keywords: Message, Media, Child Marriage.

1 Introduction

According to the Council of Foreign Relations, Indonesia is one of the ten countries in the world with the highest absolute number of child brides [1]. Indonesia is the second highest after ASEAN where the child marriage rate is high after Cambodia. Even more illuminated, the number of child marriages in Indonesia ranks second in the Southeast Asian region [2]. About 2 million of Indonesia's 7.3 women under the age of 15 are married and out of school. That number is expected to rise to 3 million people by 2030 [3]. It is estimated that one in five girls in Indonesia marry before they reach 18 years old. In the world there are at least 142 million girls who will be married before adult-

© The Author(s) 2024

Z. B. Pambuko et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the 4th Borobudur International Symposium on Humanities and Social Science 2022 (BIS-HSS 2022)*, Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research 778,

https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-118-0_164

hood in this decade alone, CPR in [1]. The latest data from the Ministry of PPPA (Women's Empowerment and Child Protection) states that the number of child marriages has increased during the Covid-19 pandemic. It was recorded that the increase reached 24 thousand.

Data from the R&D of Religious Streams and Services of the Ministry of Religion's R&D and Training Agency stated that there are seven provinces in Indonesia that are alleged to have the most child marriages, one of which is East Java. In East Java itself, based on data from the BKKBN representative of East Java, the number of child marriages in East Java is also very concerning, amounting to 3,000 couples in 2015. The data is based on a request for a dispensation for underage marriage to the East Java Religious Court.

The phenomenon and practice of girl marriage is also widely practiced on Madura Island. Based on the researchers' initial observations, the average Madurese resident practiced this marriage of girls. Some even married their children from the age of 12. The practice of child marriage occurs evenly in 4 regencies in Madura. In Madura, according to data from the Adolescent Reproductive Counseling Information Program (PIK-KRR), the number of child marriages (under 16 years old) has increased high on Madura Island.

In fact, child marriage is evenly distributed in four regencies, namely Bangkalan, Sampang, Pamekasan and Sumenep [4]. The highest rank of young marriages was obtained by the people of Sumenep based on a report from the Head of BKKBN of East Java Province, namely that 60% of the total population in Madura who practiced child marriage the highest was Sumenep Regency (Sa'dan in the Women's Journal). Data from Sumenep Regency shows that underage marriage is quite high, around 42.5%. Almost all Arjasa Subdistricts and Sumenep City Districts include Paberasan village. Underage marriage is highest in women aged 10-15 years [2]. Of concern in Madura, the percentage of women married under 17 years old is higher than the average of East Java.

In terms of various aspects, there are many negative impacts of child marriage. Child marriage is a form of neglect of the basic rights of girls who are cut off because marrying before the age of 15-18 will have the potential to increase maternal mortality (359/100,000 births), infant mortality rate (32/1000 births), childbirth of malnourished babies (4.5 million / year) which causes 'lost generations' for the nation in the future. (Candraningrum in Women's Journal, 2016). Child marriage will also impoverish children and degrade them because they have the potential to be prostituted children, used as slaves, or drug dealers in human trafficking [2].

Furthermore, child marriage is a form of trafficking of women within the family sphere, causing domestic violence, vulnerable to being a victim of divorce, mentally disturbed, access to formal education cut off, vulnerable to being a victim of sexual violence and pedophilia, sexual exploitation through brides and grooms for tourists. In addition, child marriage also results in psychological impacts. One example of the experience taken here is the experience of one of the children who got married when he was 12 years old and now already has children before the age of 20. Eventually, this family divorced because of infidelity.

Furthermore, in addition to the psychological impact, child marriage also results in reproductive health problems. Some reproductive health problems include miscarriage during the first pregnancy, giving birth prematurely, babies dying after birth, maternal and infant mortality rates.

The theory used in this study is the power relation of Foucault. Some of the reasons for using the theory include. In the practice of child marriage, there are power relations between various parties (children, parents, religious leaders, community leaders) who are still carrying out strategies. The strategy of power exercised by the subject on the object in various ways is a power relation. This power is not exercised through oppressive methods, but by hegemonic and investigative means [5].

Some preliminary research related to child marriage was conducted by Mohammad [6]. This study discusses the comparison between positive law and Islamic law regarding the minimum age for marriage. Law No. 1 of 1974 determines the minimum age for marriage, namely 19 years old for men and 16 years old for women. While Islamic law does not specify concretely the minimum age of marriage.

Another study was conducted by Mahfudin, Agus and Khoirotul Wa'qiah [7]. This study discusses the causes and impacts experienced by those who carry out underage marriages in Dapenda Village, Batang-Batang District, Sumenep Regency. The cause of early marriage in Dapenda Village is due to economic factors, parents, education, customs, and self-will. Underage marriage has a negative impact on the perpetrators, such as spousal disputes, economic unpreparedness, family conflicts to lead to divorce.

Further research was conducted by Din et al, [8]. This study discusses how criminal policies in tackling child marriage. Some efforts to overcome child marriage can be carried out using penal (criminal law) and non-penal (non-criminal law) means. The conclusion of this study is that although countermeasures have been made, underage marriage is still rife because there is no specific and firm legal regulation regarding child marriage. A minor according to Law No. 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage is a child aged 19 years for men and 16 years for women. Although it has been affirmed about the minimum age allowed to marry by law, on the other hand an exception is given to perform marriage. The exception is called the granting of marriage dispensation for minors.

Ridwan Mohammad Saleh [9] conducted a research that discussed the definition of early marriage between Islamic Law and Indonesian Criminal Code law. The age limit of a child is said to be an adult, varies. According to Islamic Law, a child is said to have puberty when it has "wet dreams" for boys, and has menstruated for girls. In this case, explicitly religion and the state have disputes in the meaning of early marriage. Marriages performed beyond the minimum limit of the Marriage Law, are legally invalid. The term early marriage by country is limited by age. While in the lens of religion, early marriage is a marriage carried out by people who have not yet reached puberty.

Based on previous research, there has been no research on child marriage, more discussed from the legal side. While this research will discuss about how is the motives, messages and media used by parents and society to persuade adolescents to be willing to marry early. The purpose of this study is to explore what motives, messages and media are used by parents and the community.

2 Method

The method used in this study is qualitative. Data collection techniques in this study are interviews and observations. The object of this study is the motives, media and messages conveyed by parents and the community (opinion leaders) to persuade adolescents to be willing to marry early. The subjects of this study were adolescents who married early, parents of adolescents who married early and society (opinion leaders). The community or opinion leaders here are kyai, village officials or people who are role models. The research location is on Madura Island.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Motives for Early Marriage

The informants in the study were teenagers who married early is W (19-year-old female) She is housewife work. Now W lives in Tambak Pangeranan, Bangkalan. W married when she was 18 years old. W's marriage was performed religiously (siri). The one who married was the village chief's mother because she was underage at that time. W married of her own accord.

Marriage at a young age where W lives is not normal, because children of W's age are still continuing their school education or work (Interview with W). The reason W got married was because she believed getting married was one of worship. W also believes that getting married young is the right choice. Moreover, she is ready to accept any risks that occur due to marrying young (interview with W, Bangkalan)

The next informant was Ar (20 years old, a resident of East Gili). She is a housewife. According to the informant, she married when she was 18 years old. Ar is religiously married (siri) and not officially. The reason Ar got married was to ease the parents' economy. Ar married because of parental coercion. From childhood Ar has been betrothed to her husband.

According to Ar, the wedding in his village can already happen. The contributing factor is due to the economy and matchmaking. Getting married early in the village is considered reasonable. (Interview with Ar).

In child marriage there are various kinds of interests that are intertwined. The power at work in the practice of child marriage is not in an oppressive way, but through normalization and through rules. Rules, societal norms and religion are used as normalization tools to perpetuate the practice of child marriage. This is in harmony with the power described by Foucault. According to Foucault, power is a way. That power does not mean ownership. Power is the application of tactics in a special area. There are many interests that are intertwined. The power strategy continues everywhere. It works not by means of repression and violence, but by regulation and normalization.

Furthermore, the focus in the process of child marriage is the female body. According to Foucault, the body is one of the arenas of regulation and normalization. Through the rules of special rules, the body undergoes discipline, normalization as well as regulation. The hallmark of power is productive and producing, and not destructive that can

destroy. The power relations that give meaning to the subject give birth to knowledge. So that there is power, there must be knowledge. Likewise, if there is knowledge, there must be power. There is a close relationship between power and knowledge. As a strategy, power generates reality and creates legitimized norms of behavior.

3.2 Media Used to Persuade Teenagers to Marry Early

All informants said that parents persuaded their children to get married early by direct communication (face to face), whatsapp and tel. Parents can give a direct picture of how domestic life is, bring together both parties and advise (Interview with W).

3.3 Message Conveyed to Persuade Teens to Marry Early

At first doubts and fears were not allowed to tell her that she was going to get married early, but my husband and I's belief in getting married was very strong. Telling him is not straightforward as time goes by parents agree on the grounds that they don't want anything untoward to happen (Interview with W).

Ar was forced to marry her husband now because of parental coercion. Parents say that the wife must obey the husband, the woman can be a role model for her child in the future (interview with Ar).

3.4 Post-Married Life

After marriage, W and her husband lived in the parents' house. Daily necessities, W is still helped by parents, because her husband works odd jobs. (Interview with W)

Same with W, the informant Ar is also temporarily still living with in-laws, but is saving money to buy his own house (Interview with Ar)

The next informant was Sarkiyem (Ar's parents). Mrs. Sarkiyem lives in West Gili Village, Kamal District. Every day he sells fried foods. Now 58 years old. According to Mrs. Sarkiyem (58 years old), the background of marrying her children is due to arranged marriages, avoiding adultery, economic problems and so that children can be independent. She married her child in series (unofficially disabled by the state) because her child was not old enough.

4 Conclusion

The results showed that the motive for early marriage was mostly due to economic and cultural motives. Media used by means of direct communication. The message conveyed includes good intentions (wanting to marry) should not be rejected, to maintain the honor of a woman better when the woman is immediately married, the person who gets married (household) becomes a more independent person. Getting married is a good intention so the good thing has to be moved. In child marriage there are various kinds of interests that are intertwined. The power at work in the practice of child marriage is not in an oppressive way, but through normalization and through rules. Rules,

societal norms and religion are used as normalization tools to perpetuate the practice of child marriage. This is in harmony with the power described by Foucault. According to Foucault, power is a means that power does not mean possession. In child marriage there are various kinds of interests that are intended. The power at work in the practice of child marriage is not in an oppressive way, but through normalization and through rules. Rules, societal norms and religion are used as normalization tools to perpetuate the practice of child marriage. This is in harmony with the power described by Foucault. According to Foucault, power is a means that power does not mean possess.

References

1. D. Candraningrum, A. Dhewy, and A. M. Pratiwi, "Takut akan zina, pendidikan rendah, dan kemiskinan: Status anak perempuan dalam pernikahan anak di Sukabumi Jawa Barat," *J. Peremp.*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 149–186, 2016.
2. A. Sundari, "Realitas Gadis Pantai Selatan Hari Ini : Kajian Kebijakan Pernikahan Anak di Gunung Kidul," *J. Peremp.*, vol. 21, no. 1, 2016.
3. B. P. Statistik, "Badan pusat statistik," *Badan Pus. Stat.*, 2017.
4. M. Sa'dan, "Ketika Anak Perempuan Melahirkan Bayi," *J. Peremp.*, vol. 21, no. 1, 2016.
5. M. Foucault, *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. Vintage, 2012.
6. M. Mohammad, "PERKAWINAN ANAK DI BAWAH UMUR (Sebuah Kajian Perspektif Hukum Islâm Vis-a-Vis Hukum Positif di Indonesia)," *AL-IHKAM J. Huk. Pranata Sos.*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 274–309, 2011.
7. S. M. M. Massinai and F. A. Abidin, "The Meaning of Marriage: A Phenomenological Study of Women Married at Early Age."
8. M. Din, M. Mujibussalim, and E. D. Isma, "Kebijakan Kriminal Dalam Penanggulangan Perkawinan Di Bawah Umur," *Dusturiyah J. Huk. Islam. Perundang-undangan dan Pranata Sos.*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2018.
9. M. S. Ridwan, "Perkawinan Di Bawah Umur (Dini)," *J. Al-Qadau Peradil. dan Huk. Kel. Islam*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 15–30, 2015.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

