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# **Analysis of Stakeholder's Role in Community in the Effort of Early-Age Marriage Prevention: A Case Study in Junior High School Students in Gunung Kidul District Yogyakarta**

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**Abstract**---This research aims to find out the role of stakeholders in society in the effort of early-age marriage prevention in junior high school students in Gunung Kidul District. This research is qualitative research by using a case study approach which is conducted in Gunung Kidul District Yogyakarta including Ponjong and Playen Sub-District. The research subject consists of 15 headmasters, 15 adolescents that are still active at school as well as 15 guidance and counseling teachers. The kind of data in this research consists of primary data obtaining from the result of the interview and secondary data obtaining from documentary study results. The technique of collecting data is conducted through four stages such as interview, observation, FGD (Focus Group Discussion), and documentation. The technique of data analysis in this research used an interactive model i.e. implementation of data analysis consists of data reduction component, data presentation, making conclusion and verification interactively and related each other during and after data collection. The research result shows that the main cause of early-age marriage occurrence in Gunung Kidul District is the incident of pregnancy before marriage. This case happens due to economic inequality which causes the family role in the effort of early-age marriage prevention cannot be done optimally.

**Keywords**---early-age marriage, junior high school students, prevention

#### **Introduction**

Child-age marriage or early-age marriage is a marriage conducted by civil law, religion, and customary law, with or without the recording or official consent of the state, where one of a couple or both of them is a child under the age of 18 years, Plan International in (Burn & Evenhuis, 2014). Considering that under 18 years old is still classified as a very young age, it is natural that every child should get the widest opportunity to be able to grow and develop optimally. It is also supported by the Law that the State upholds human rights, including children's human rights marked by the guarantee of protection and fulfillment of children's rights (UU RI, 2014).

However, the fact that children protection is still not optimal as the number of cases of early-age marriage both at the National and International levels. This is supported by the result of a survey showing that the estimated number of girls married before the age of 18 is about 142 million girls (14.2 million per year) in 2011-2020, and in 2021-2030, it is estimated that the number of girls that got married in early-age is 151 million girls (15.1 million per year)

(UNFPA, 2012). In India, there is 27 percent of adolescents got married at an early age or less than 18 (Iips, 2017), while in Ethiopia, there is 40 percent of teenage girls are getting married at an early age (CSA, 2016).

Based on the result of the SDGs report in 2017, women in Indonesia more tend to get married at the age of fewer than 18 years old when compared to women in the East Asia Pacific region. Also, in 2015, one of ten Indonesian women aged 20-24 getting married under the age of 18 (The Ministry of National Development Planning and United Nations Children's Fund, 2017). The number of early marriages occurring in Indonesia in 2018 is estimated to reach 1,220,900. The data placed Indonesia in the top ten countries in the world in the category of early marriage. Meanwhile, 20 provinces have a prevalence of early marriage above the national average. The three highest provinces include the provinces of West Sulawesi, Central Sulawesi, and Southeast Sulawesi. Meanwhile, according to the absolute numbers, 3 provinces that have the highest rates for early age marriage are West Java, East Java, and Central Java (United Nations Fund for Population Activities, 2012).

Meanwhile, the province of Yogyakarta Special Region (DIY) ranks fifth of the 10 lowest provinces for early age marriage (UNICEF, 2020). Nationally, the median age of marriage is 19.8 years old. However, it is expected that the minimum age to getting married is 20 years old for girls and 25 years for boys, considering that it is the ideal age in marriage (Judiasih et al., 2018). According to the Community Empowerment and Family Planning Agency (2016), at the regional level of Yogyakarta Special Region Province, the highest early marriage rate consists of five districts such as Gunung Kidul 11.29 percent, Yogyakarta 7.79 percent, KulonProgo 7.28 percent, Bantul 7.3 percent, and Sleman 5.07 percent (Masruroh et al., 2020).

Of the five districts, the Gunung Kidul district ranks first in terms of early age marriage. And the factor causing the early age marriage occurring in Gunung Kidul include the lack of knowledge about reproductive health and still strong religious beliefs related to marriage law, as well as the existence of gender bias that women's reason to be getting married is to help their family's economy (Tsany, 2017). Cultural factor is also the cause of early age marriage, for instance, the perception from parents that education is not important for a woman, and if she already has a boyfriend or candidate, they should be married immediately to avoid bad perceptions of society (avoiding slander and sin) (Rahman et al., 2018).

Besides it is potential in rising the problem, early age marriage also harms the children themselves, including looting the children's rights to obtain an education, play, and fulfill their potential, the right to live free from violence and abuse, the right to health, the right to be protected from exploitation, the right not to be separated from their parents with their wishes (Law of the Republic of Indonesia on Child Protection 2002). The medical risk that occurs in early age marriage, including the presence of high-risk pregnancies and childbirth complications that could increase morbidity mortality in mothers and babies. If we make a comparison, girls that married at the age of 10-14 years old have five times greater risk of dying in the case of pregnancy and childbirth when compared to girls that married at the age of 20-24 years old, similarly with the statement, globally, the main cause of death of girls aged 15-19 years old is caused by problems of pregnancy at an early age (WHO, 2014).

Similarly, early age marriage in Gunung Kidul Yogyakarta regency causes some problems, such as; prone to a health problem, especially postpartum. Less knowledge for the care of infants and postpartum mothers owned by young couples is still lacking. This is one of the causes of infant/toddler death. There were 92 cases of infant deaths in Gunung Kidul in 2015. The health of the reproductive system at the age of children less than 20 years old is still immature so that it allows complications during pregnancy and childbirth, as well as marriage at an early age in also has an impact on the increase in divorce cases (Masruroh et al., 2020).

The high number of early age marriage cases should be more concerned than the stakeholders concerned and related to the early age marriage. Stakeholders intended are not only from the government but also all parties that are related to children's problems, such as families, community leaders, religious leaders, and peers (Shaleh, 2020; Wihardjo, 2020). Regarding the role of stakeholders in addressing the issue of early age, marriage is important since dealing with the issue of early age marriage is a complex thing. In addition, the formation of behavior in adolescents requires good cooperation, among school, parents, the community, and stakeholders.

The number of early age marriage cases in Gunung Kidul District is a concern for the local government. Several policies have been taken relating to early age marriage prevention efforts. The policies are by the issuance of regent regulations on child-friendly districts and regent regulations on the prevention of early age marriage. But the fact in the field, there is still a lot of early age marriage, because basically, prevention effort should be not only done by the local government but all parties related to the children that perform early age marriage (Schlecht et al., 2013; Brown et al., 2015). Therefore, this research focuses on analyzing "How is the role of stakeholders in the community including family, religious leader, community leader, and friend, in the prevention of early age marriage?"

## Research Method

This research is qualitative research with a case study approach. This research was conducted in Gunung Kidul Yogyakarta, I.e., in Ponjong and Playen subdistrict. The focus of this research is on adolescent behavior, especially in adolescents in junior high school in Gunung Kidul Yogyakarta District. The research informant consists of 15 principals, 15 adolescents who are still active in school as well as 15 teachers of Guidance and Counselling. The main informant is 10 adolescents who had an early age marriage and 9 parents. Supporting informants are 5 friends, 4 religious leaders, 4 community leaders, and one stakeholder each in the Education Office, Health Office, and Ministry of Religion related to early marriage. The kind of data in this research consists of primary data and secondary data, primary data is obtained from interview results, while secondary data is obtained from document study results. The data collection technique is conducted in four ways consisting of interviews, observations, FGD (Focus Group Discussion), and documentation. The data analysis technique in this research uses an interactive model that is the implementation of data analysis consisting of data reduction component, presentation of data, and drawing conclusions and verification in an interactive and interconnected manner during and after data collection (Allsworth et al., 2005; Strøm et al., 2013).

## Result

### *The role of stakeholders in the community*

Parents are part of stakeholders in the community at the family level and have physical and psychological closeness in adolescents. Parents have a very strategic place in the formation of the character of the children besides the influence of the environment. But in reality, the whole family does not guarantee to be able to perform their role optimally. Although as parents, they feel that they have given their best, for instance by giving advice, supervising, and accompanying their children they still feel disoriented by the case of getting pregnant before marriage. However, one of the lacks of parental supervision is that due to economic demands, parents have to work out of the area and go home only at certain times (Benson & Torpy, 1995; Karjono et al., 2017). This matter sometimes makes adolescents less supervised and feel inattention so that they become private and tend to seek their pleasures outdoors. So, they feel that they got a sense of comfort and attention from their mate. Since their parents are not at home, they do not know if their children getting pregnant before marriage, and of course, it shocks them. Like an interview with one of the parents of an early age marriage offender in Ponjong Subdistrict

*“When I was working again then at the same time my son named mbk danik, he said pregnant. Trus he rushed to go home because his son was afraid to be married and married. His father was also shocked. (“M” parents of early marriage perpetrators, Ponjong, January 29, 2020)*

Almost all parents do not know if their children have an extramarital pregnancy. They found out after the pregnancy was on average over 20 weeks or five months. With the condition of getting extramarital pregnant and has entered the second trimester, the family immediately took the initiative to the married process through the head of Neighbourhood Association then continued to citizens Association, Hamlet, Village, District and filed a trial at the Gunung Kidul District Religious Court. Underage marriages by adolescents do not run smoothly, some of them go through divorces and even have domestic violence, causing them to feel traumatic.

Besides parents, the influence of the environment especially the role of friends becomes one of the causes of how in their daily interactions. On average, early age married actors, if they are at home, they rarely play with their friends, they meet with their friends only at school. Besides the distance of their house is quite far from each other, the person of early age marriage tends to be enclosed with their friends and just hanging out without wanting to share about their problems or matters (Balyer & Gunduz, 2012; Bhanji & Punjani, 2014). The role of friends in their daily lives is less meaningful and more like an introvert. In everyday life, they only meet if the person of early age marriage already has a mate, some of them tell if they have a mate, but do not talk until the details. Like the interview passage of one of the friends of the person of early age marriage.

*“ she only said that she had boyfriend and how is he. That’s all” (“D” one of friends of early age marriage actor, Ponjong, February 6, 2020).*

Their friendship is nothing special. They find out if the early age marriage actor is forced to marry since the condition is already had pregnant. Nevertheless, they still try to be good friends, but with the condition of the early

age marriage actor who already has family that tends to withdraw herself from the association and rarely leave the house by the reason of taking care of their children. The prevention of early age marriage in the community cannot be separated from the role of Religious figures. The existence of religious figures as one of the stakeholders in the community is very helpful in efforts to prevent early age marriage as religious leaders tend to be role models and as a place to ask for opinions in decision making (Dairo & Adeomi, 2011; Paul, 2018). Indirectly religious leaders also do not agree with the existence of early age marriage since the risks arising are massive, both physically and socially. But due to the condition of adolescents that is extramarital pregnancy makes them inevitably provide facilities to the youth to immediately be able to hold a wedding. Like the following interview excerpt.

*"Yes early marriage should not be good at all, but it depends on the culprit, I as a religious figure I have told and warned but ignored." If the underage marriage has been arranged by the government through the age hearing, but still has no effect" ("D", Ka.dukuh, Ponjong, February 6, 2020)*

Some of the activities that have been carried out by religious leaders to prevent early age marriage in their environment include giving socialization or briefing on the negative impact on early age marriage and coaching for those who will do marriage but are still underage. This guidance aims to delay the marriage until the minimum age which is appropriate with the marriage law if indeed the condition does not require them to marry immediately. Religious leaders and community leaders in carrying out their roles work hard together in providing education to the citizens to prevent early age marriage (Wihardjo et al., 2020; Paul, 2019; Gillies, 2004). In some hamlets, the religious leader also has a role as a community leader. A religious leader or community leader in carrying out their role, not only direct targeting on adolescents, but they also encourage parents who have adolescents and youth organizations to be involved in the prevention of early age marriage. Like the following interview excerpt

*"Education is given to teenagers and parents. Parents should know, we invite together, besides that also the youth "Karang Taruna" we also involve to conduct supervision." ("R" Ka.dukuh, Playen, February 14, 2020)*

Youth organization in the community is one of the effective mediums to be able to deliver education and coaching about adolescent reproductive health. Youth organizations were established independently by the community, such as a place for youth activity and mosque teenager league. They can quote optimally, as a forum for empowerment on a self-help basis. A variety of positive activities can also be done to increase their interest and talents. These activities can be carried out independently, in groups, and with supervision and coaching from community leaders and related agencies. For instance, the relevant agency is the extension officer of the family planning sub-district to coach PIK R and Integrated Service Post of the youth program from Community Health centers and other youth organizations (Kaneita et al., 2009; Chandra-Mouli et al., 2013). Here is the matrix table of stakeholder roles in the community:

Table 1

Matrix of stakeholder role in the community in the effort of early age marriage prevention in Gunung Kidul District

Research Dimension	Result	
The role of stakeholders in the community	Family's Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educating, accompanying, and as a model for their children</li> <li>• Due to economic demand makes parents cannot look after their children every day because they are busywork</li> </ul>
	Friend's Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less optimal since the early age marriage actor is an introverted person</li> <li>• The distance of their house makes them rarely communicate or meet each other</li> <li>• They only meet at school</li> </ul>
	Religious Figure's Role	Giving direction, education, coaching, and appealing to the community not to perform early marriage even though religiously allow
	Public figure's Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the condition of the woman's side is not pregnant, the religious figure attempt to postpone the marriage</li> <li>• providing guidance and warning to the community</li> </ul>

Source: Processed from interview result

## Discussion

The role of stakeholders in the community begins with the role of the family, especially both parents. The way parents educate, supervise and accompany and communicate smoothly is part of the character-building of their children. Due to the busyness of parents, making them less optimal in communicating, supervising, and accompanying their children. The condition provides an opportunity for adolescents to seek attention from others, and in this case, adolescents tend to look for a mate who is considered has more attentive and more time. Adolescents that experience early age marriage are less close to their peers and tend to be closed. They rarely play or chat, so their friends can't give them any input or advice (Rajapaksa-Hewageegana et al., 2015; Shaleh et al., 2020). After the marriage, her friends only found out if the married teenager had an extramarital pregnancy. While the role of religious leaders and community leaders is to provide advice, education, and coaching to adolescents who have not experienced early age marriage. This form of coaching is done in adolescents who apply for marriage with the age of fewer than 18 years. This thing is done as part of an effort to prevent marriage at an early age.

The results of this study prove the results of previous findings from Arulsubila & Subasree (2017), which states that stakeholders and the community play an important role in the formation of student character. The number of cases of early marriage, as part of the behavior of adolescents who are less able to control the development period in their sexuality (Sebayang, 2020). Therefore, the formation of behavior in adolescents requires good cooperation, from various aspects and elements of society, including stakeholders. The results are also in line with research from Murayama et al. (2012), which said that synergy of all social capital can be done by increasing social participation that can promise very effective health promotion.

## Conclusion

The result found that adolescents who experienced the incidence of early age marriage were mostly caused by extramarital pregnancy. From this condition, it can be observed that the main factor that causes early age marriage is the lack of parents' role in controlling and educating so that children are reckless to perform an action that causes them to have an extramarital pregnancy. In addition, parents are unable to carry out their obligations as they should is due to the economic factor. Most of them come from families with low economic status, so one of the parents has to find additional income by working outside the Gunung Kidul area. Based on this case, we can observe that the role of the family is very influential in the efforts to prevent early age marriage. Parents as the first education who educates and controls the children's behavior should have a big role in determining their children's future. Therefore, if it is successful, then the urge to perform an early age marriage can be minimized or may be eliminated.

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