

Qualitative Study on Adolescent Marriage and The Risk of Stunting in South Kalimantan

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ABSTRACT

Objective: An exploratory qualitative investigation to determine the causes of adolescent marriage, analyze the effect of early marriage on stunting, and analyze the food patterns of toddlers in adolescent marriage in South Kalimantan, Indonesia. **Method:** The method used is phenomenology using the FGD system and in-depth interviews. Participants include the FGD informants from the Family Planning Regional Apparatus Organization, the Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection and the Office of Religious Affairs from 13 Regencies/ Cities in South Kalimantan. In-depth interview informants were adolescent marriage offenders and their parents, adolescent pregnant women, midwives, integrated health service post cadres, and community leaders each taken from three Regencies/ Cities. **Results:** There are not many formal adolescent marriages because they have to get a recommendation from the Religious Courts. Adolescent marriages mostly occur through informal marriages. The high rate of early marriage in South Kalimantan Province is caused by culture and weak enforcement of the rules. The incidence of adolescent marriage is caused by promiscuity and information. Meanwhile, adolescent marriage is mostly due to economic motives and limited education facilities in rural areas. Adolescent marriage is not closely related to the incidence of stunting, but low education can be a factor in the inability of parents to provide good parenting, especially feeding practice. **Conclusions:** Adolescent marriages appear to be triggered by economic motives and teenagers' desires, as well as driven by economic conditions, social influences, and a lack of encouragement to complete formal education. It was observed that stunting is more common among toddlers with adolescent mothers than toddlers with adult mothers. There is a poor feeding parenting pattern of toddlers with adolescent parents.

Key words: Adolescent marriage, Stunting, Qualitative investigation, Toddler feeding pattern.

INTRODUCTION

Stunting in Indonesia is still a nutritional problem that needs serious treatment. WHO states that Indonesia is the third country with the highest prevalence in Southeast Asia, with a stunting prevalence of 36.4% from 2005 to 2017. The Indonesia Nutrition Status Survey in 2021 reports that the stunting prevalence in Indonesia is 24.4%, while the stunting prevalence target for 2024 is 14%. South Kalimantan is one of the provinces that has a stunting prevalence higher than the national figure, which is 30%. South Kalimantan is the 6th highest in Indonesia.¹

Stunting can interfere with children's physical and cognitive development.² In addition, stunting also increases the risk of child mortality, developmental and learning disorders, the risk of suffering from infectious and non-infectious diseases, and reduces productivity and economic capacity.³ Therefore, the handling of stunting must be a priority to improve the quality of Indonesia's human resources.

Teenage pregnancy is also associated with stunting. Research Larasati *et al.* (2018) shows that the younger the age at pregnancy, the more stunting the incidence of stunting will be. Early marriage is also related to the culture that exists in society. This early marriage culture is still found in South Kalimantan.⁴ This is evident from BKKBN data, which shows that 51 out of 1000 residents have

early marriages in 2010-2016. This figure is above the national figure of 40/1000 population and ranks the highest in Indonesia. Furthermore, the BKKBN in Kumari and Kurdi (2020) reported that in 2017, the number of early marriages in South Kalimantan remained among the three highest in Indonesia.⁵

Until now, there are still not many studies in South Kalimantan that examine the risk factors for stunting qualitatively associated with the culture of adolescent marriage. Thus, this research needs to be carried out.

METHODS

The data taken include information about adolescent marriage culture, eating history and food consumption patterns for toddlers, access to health services, food consumption patterns for pregnant women, and knowledge about stunting. The method used is phenomenology. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). Informants for in-depth interviews were perpetrators of early marriage (husband and wife), parents of perpetrators of early marriage, teenage pregnant women, midwives, cadres, and community leaders from three regencies, namely Banjar Regency, Balangan Regency, and Tanah Bumbu Regency.

Informants for the FGDs were Family Planning Regional Apparatus Organizations, the Office of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, and the Office of Religious Affairs from 13 districts/

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cities. The FGDs were divided into three areas. Region 1 was held in Banjar Regency, followed by participants from Banjarmasin City, Banjarbaru City, Barito Kuala Regency, and Tanah Laut Regency. Region 2 was held in Hulu Sungai Tengah Regency which was attended by participants from Tapin Regency, Hulu Sungai Selatan Regency, Hulu Sungai Tengah Regency, Hulu Sungai Utara Regency, Balangan Regency, and Tabalong Regency. Region 3 was implemented in Tanah Bumbu Regency, involving participants from Tanah Bumbu Regency and Kotabaru Regency.

The Ethical Eligibility Test was submitted to the Research Ethics Commission at the Faculty of Medicine, Lambung Mangkurat University, Banjarmasin. This study received a certificate of ethical feasibility No. 66/KEP-FK ULM/EC/2022 on March 15, 2022.

Data analysis was carried out using the NVivo 12 application. The data analysis process will be carried out by data coding. The coding was made based on the research objectives and according to Miles, Huberman, and Sadana (2014), namely descriptive coding, process coding, and NVivo coding. This analysis produces a socio-cultural picture of the community regarding adolescent marriage and food consumption patterns. This analysis is intended to get an overview of the social issues studied. Furthermore, it will be examined what elements build the research data domains from the previous general description. The next stage is to know the specific characteristics of all the elements that make up the research data. This particular feature will then provide information about the differences between one data set and another. The final stage is to find relationships between data categories to draw conclusions.

RESULTS

Teen marriage culture

Figure 1 shows the perceptions of the perpetrators and their parents of teen marriage actors on the culture of teen marriage. The results of in-depth interviews found that one of the factors causing teenage marriage was social pressure. Teenage dating is considered not good and the will of the family immediately recommends getting married immediately to avoid pregnancy outside of marriage. In addition, getting married can also ease the burden on the family, because by getting married, the daughter is no longer the responsibility of the parents but the responsibility of the husband.

"When I was asked why, one of them was because rather than being ashamed and embarrassed, going here and there together, it was better to get married. It doesn't matter even if the child is still in school. There are also those who are still in junior high school and have been married". (S, June 14, 2022).

"Yes, because their partner doesn't go to school anymore, he's in a relationship, so he wants to get married right away. From the economic point of view, children are also a burden to their parents, they feel like helping their parents' economy, so they just want to get married. It's mostly because of the economy." (H.A, June 16, 2022).

In addition, the factor that causes early marriage is due to a broken home family, so marriage is an option to get a better life. In areas that are far from continuing education facilities, marriage at a young age also occurs because they cannot continue their education. There are also early marriages because of the will of parents or teachers in Islamic boarding schools who want their children/students to be married off, because they are embarrassed to have a girl or bachelor who is mature but not yet married. This is what our informant said with the initials A:

"There are also those who say they can't wait to have grandchildren". (June 14, 2022).

"What we see is that they just drop out of school, the children are still in school and what is difficult for us to detect this child's marriage is from

the pesantren because the pesantren is the one who marries the Ustadz there, that's the one who is married to the santri, the siri marriage is the difficult thing, maybe there are something that became a lot in the boarding school". (E.H, Jun 16, 2022).

Figure 2 describes the perception of adolescent marriage according to FGD informants. Some teenagers are forced to marry because they are already pregnant out of wedlock. This happens due to promiscuity, and what the informants highlight the most is the easier access to mass media which then affects the mindset of today's teenagers.

"So, yesterday it was 142 in 2020, it decreased slightly, previously it was only 45, so 2 years after the corona it continued to be high, because they were at home what they were holding (mobile phones), online school, did they know what they were after? open the whatsapp chat then when a friend for example someone is getting married they have a desire like that too". (L.H, Juni 14, 2022).

Easy access to information from cell phones, so many early marriages occur because they met through social media and then met. Furthermore, in a short time they decided to get married, as told by our informant E.H:

"Yesterday, we asked: where do you know him? The answer: on facebook, on WA ma'am,". (E.H, June 16, 2022).

Early marriages that are carried out officially, do not happen much. More are those who go through the process of unofficial marriage. There is no criminal sanction that should be given to perpetrators of teenage marriages in a siri way, even though unregistered marriages can be accepted by religion.

"KUA's efforts are also to assert to reject the official marriage application from a siri marriage because it is contrary to the compilation of marriage law. Except for the isbat trial. In the case of minors, usually the marriage isbat is rejected, even though at the time the application is already old enough. By reason of violating Law No. 16 of 2019. For KUA, it is a dilemma related to its fiqh law. Because if we ask, the pillars of their marriage are appropriate. But the religious court rejected it on administrative grounds. However, with the issuance of the SPTJM from the Ministry of Home Affairs in 2016, the rules became out of sync. Castrate the rules that have been implemented by the KUA. Because, the SPTJM allows the making of KK, KTP, and birth certificates for children from unregistered marriages with the names of both parents written on them. In the end, people don't care about the provisions of the KUA." (Y.I, June 20, 2022).

The informants agreed that the definition of early marriage refers to Law No. 16 of 2019 which is the age limit of 19 years. Informants also believe that early marriage may occur because people do not know that the old law has been replaced with a new law. The 1974 law regulates the age limit for prospective brides to marry at the age of 16 years. This means that the socialization of the latest Marriage Law has not been maximized.

Efforts to prevent early marriage with socialization about early marriage and reproductive health at PIK R (Adolescent Information and Counseling Center) and Family Development, socialization to high school children, BIMWIN (Marriage Guidance and Bimcatin (Bride and Groom Guidance), prospective brides and grooms fill out questionnaires applied by Elsimil to obtain a certificate of marriage fit and proper pregnancy. Information was also obtained that an MoA had been made between village heads, religious counselors, and principals of Islamic boarding schools to socialize the prevention of underage marriage (Table 3) Meanwhile, posyandu cadres and midwives conducted counseling *via* posyandu.

"In my opinion, early marriage is not a problem for the Office of Religious Affairs, it is not a problem with the Health Office and the

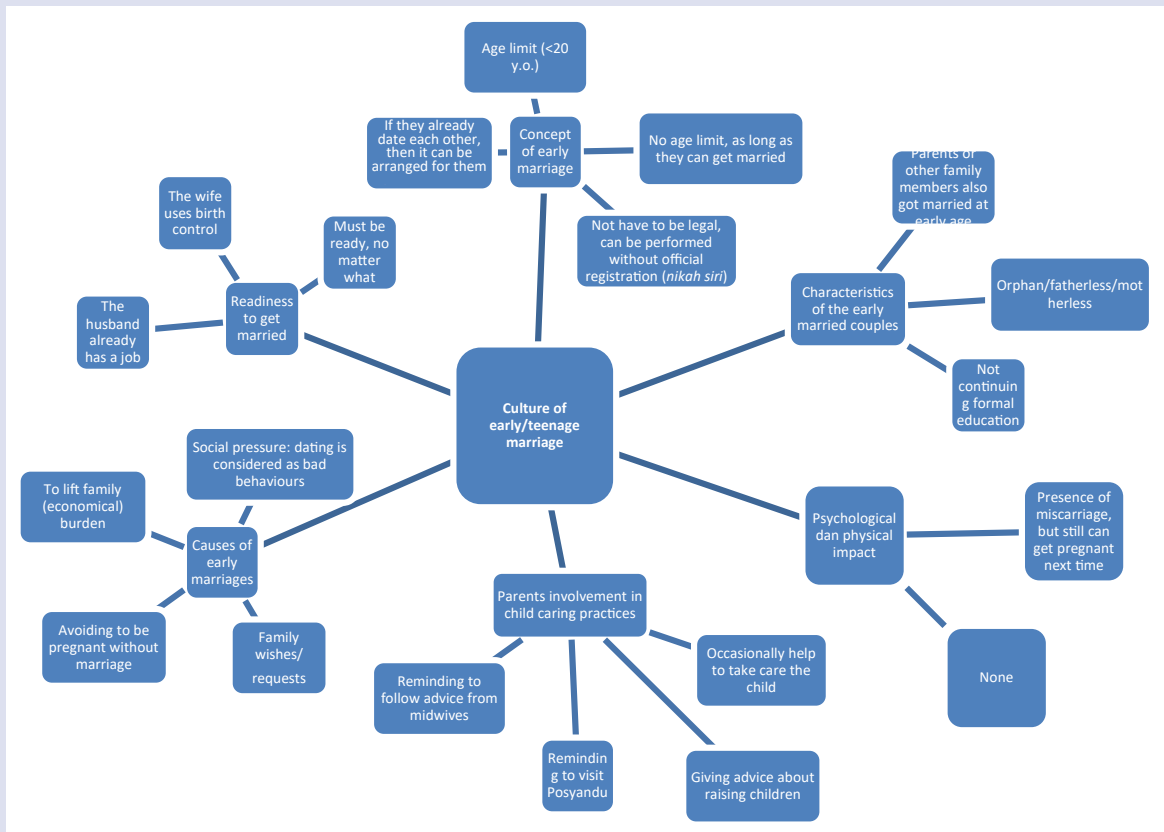


Figure 1: Perceptions of early marriage practitioners and their families towards early marriage culture.

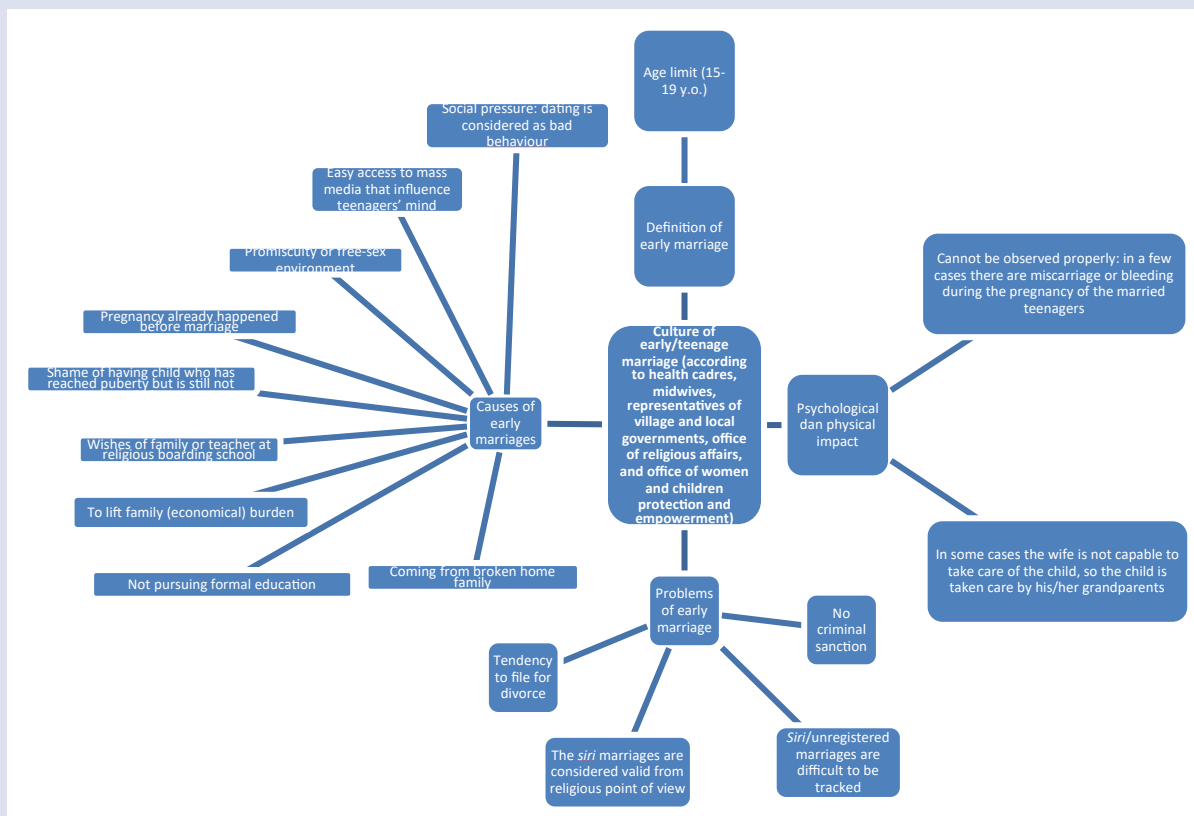


Figure 2: Perceptions of Cadres, Midwives, Village Government Representatives, OPD, KUA, and DPPP towards early marriage culture.

Population and Family Planning Agency, but it is a problem for all of us to raise awareness to tackle this together. Examples that have been carried out for example are the determination of the Village Head, a statement of attitude from the Religious Counselor, there is a MoA with the Principal of Islamic Boarding Schools, to socialize the prevention of underage marriage. I evaluated for one year, it turned out to be able to reduce the number of early marriages significantly.” (Informant initials S).

The psychological and physical impacts of early marriage cannot be properly observed due to the absence of data or marriage registration, so that only a few informants know of several cases of pregnancy from early marriage, miscarriage or bleeding. In addition, it turns out that there are also cases where some wives are unable to take care of their children and finally the children are taken care of by their grandparents, as the information conveyed by our informant is as follows:

“If I say a lot, I can't say much because the data doesn't exist. The point is that the case exists, the case was found because early marriage caused death, premature babies, low birth weight babies, due to early marriage, so that she was pregnant because there was no psychological readiness then her reproductive health became undesirable. Then we heard about the death of the mother due to early marriage due to bleeding. Then there are cases of Domestic Violence, and have been handled by psychologists.” (informant initials E).

Informants' perceptions of adolescent marriage are very diverse. Some view that this is a negative thing and should be avoided, but many also state that teenage marriage is legal rather than dating and eventually falling into adultery. From a health perspective, marriage at an early age can have a negative impact, so teenage marriage must be controlled. Representatives of the village government suggested to prepare forums for gathering and activities for young people, for example being an assembly committee, youth youth activities and other youth empowerment activities. The following is the narrative of the informant with the initial R as a representative of the village government:

“There is already a hangout place for young people in the village environment, increasing the activity of the assembly, holding recitations, the hope is that from the activation of these activities, young people in this peaceful village can be more creative and also better understand religious knowledge about the bad things of adultery”. (R, 20 Juni 2022).

The Office of Religious Affairs prevents early marriage by not processing early marriage if there is no recommendation from the child-friendly district task force and the Religious Courts. The Office of Religious Affairs also utilizes a team of family companions, as stated by our informant, whose initials are M.A. Here's what he said:

“The Office of Religious Affairs will not be able to process early marriages if there is no recommendation from the child-friendly district task force. In Hulu Sungai Tengah District, the Religious Courts cannot immediately grant a marriage dispensation if there is no recommendation from the Child Friendly District task force. The Task Force has doctors and psychiatrists. By regulation, the procedure is that the Ministry of Religion will direct the bride and groom to submit a marriage application to the Office of Religious Affairs. Then the Office of Religious Affairs will issue a rejection letter. Next, the bride and groom apply for a marriage dispensation to the religious court. The religious court will forward this application to the Child Friendly City task force. After the recommendation is issued, it will be processed in the Religious Courts.” (M.A, June 16, 2022).

The importance of utilizing the family companion team was also conveyed by the informant with the initials S in preventing early marriage:

“Now with the family companion team, we can entrust it to the bride and groom to strengthen education. At the very least, there can be a delay in pregnancy. But if it has happened, maybe we will inform you to postpone pregnancy until the age of 20 or 21 years.” (S, June 14, 2022).

Another opinion was expressed by an official from the Office of Religious Affairs with the initials R, there should be criminal sanctions for perpetrators of early marriage:

“In our opinion, if there is a sanction for underage marriage, we can only prevent it. There are also sanctions, which can only be reported by the parties involved. For example, if someone submits an official registration of a marriage that has been carried out in a serial manner, then if there is a family who reports it, it can be processed by law. It could be a crime, escaping a minor or kidnapping a child.” (R, June 14, 2022).

In addition to the statement, there are other inputs that are no less important to prevent early marriage, namely by conducting counseling. Counseling is not only in the form of counseling as usual at village offices or at integrated service posts, but includes making communication products such as posters, incorporating reproductive health materials in school subjects/school curriculum, and also holding a youth family development posyandu. This was conveyed by the informant R.K:

“From this activity, what we have done is that for reproduction, it is the Health Office or obstetrician then from the Education Office about how child marriage is included in the curriculum. Then the child should not be dismissed from his education whatever the problem. (R.K, June 14, 2022).

Eating history and toddler eating patterns from adolescent mothers

The eating history and eating patterns of toddlers are very influential on their growth and development. Figure 3 describes the findings of information on the eating history and eating patterns of toddlers from mothers who married in their teens.

Breast milk is the main source of nutrition for babies who cannot consume solid food, breastfeeding for babies is recommended until the baby is 6 months old without being given complementary foods other than breast milk (exclusive breastfeeding). The results of the interviews showed that the informants agreed that breastfeeding was very important for their babies. This is evidenced by the researcher's interview with the informant with the initials F.J on June 20, 2022. He said:

“Immediately after giving birth breast milk”.

The nurse only brought the baby into the room but did not teach the baby to breastfeed. So mothers are taught to breastfeed by their parents. Babies are also not fed formula. This statement was also agreed by the husband whose initials S.M. The husband supports exclusive breastfeeding until the age of 6 months, not giving complementary foods to breast milk prematurely. Unlike the informant with the initial M on June 16, 2022, he breastfeeds his child only for 3 months, then the baby is given formula milk.

The challenge in giving breast milk was experienced by the informant with the initials M because his child did not really like breastfeeding. Here's what he said:

“When I gave birth to my child, I didn't want to breastfeed, so sometimes I was given a pacifier and sometimes breast milk, so I switched to a pacifier.” (M, June 16, 2022).

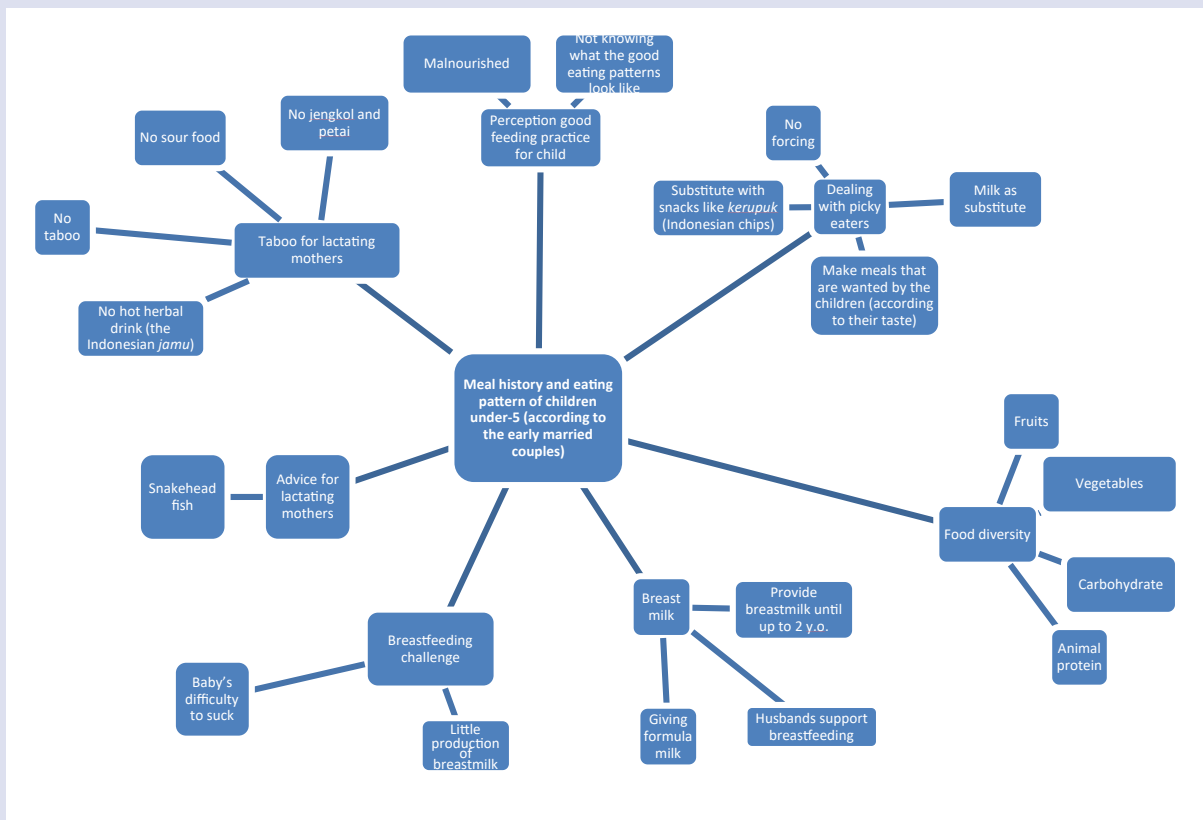


Figure 3: Eating history and diet of toddlers.

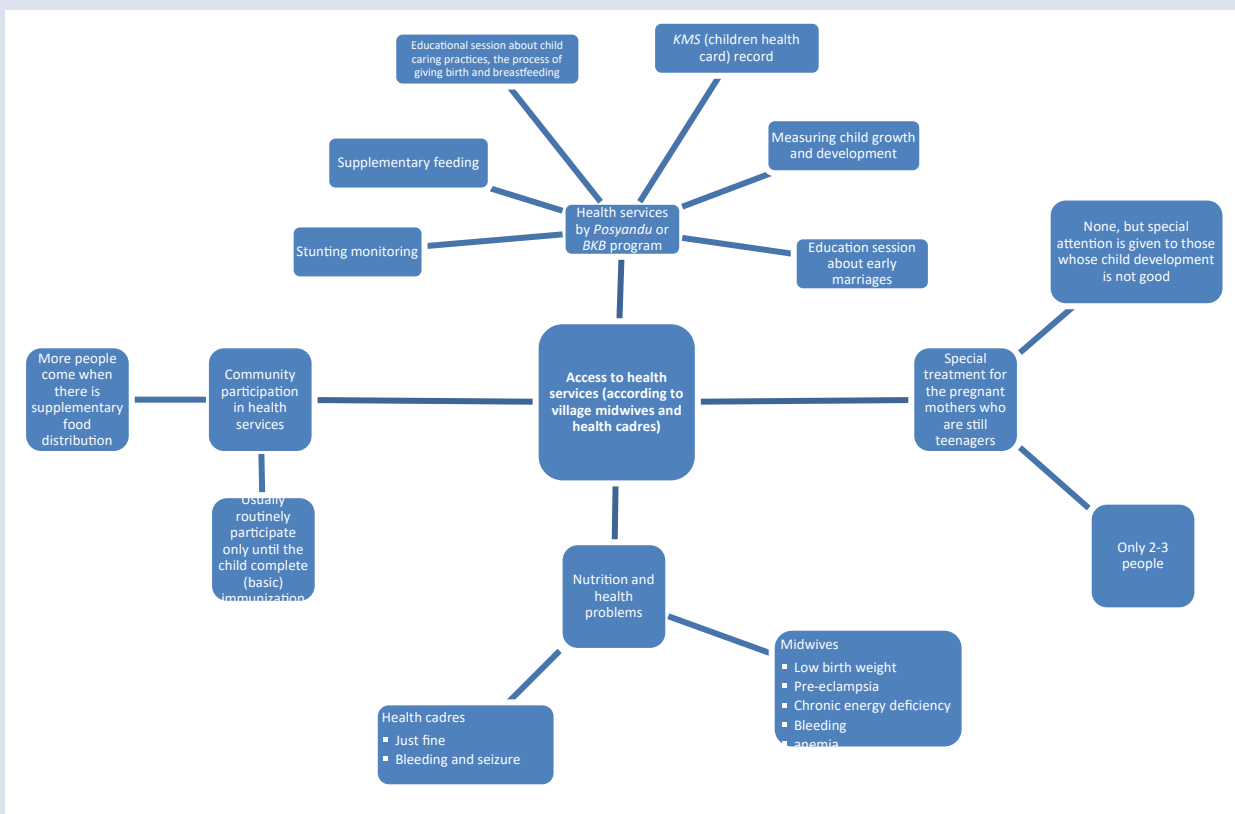


Figure 4: Access to health services.

Eating fish is recommended for the Banjarese because people live surrounded by water, both rivers and the sea. The area of South Kalimantan is very abundant in river and sea products. People every day consume fish as their side dish. Fish is also recommended for nursing mothers. This is not like what happened to the Madurese ethnicity (Oktarina, 2019) which prohibits breastfeeding mothers from eating sea fish because sea fish is considered to make milk fishy and babies do not want to drink their mother's milk.

“When giving birth, they were told not to eat sour so that the breast milk did not shrivel. After surgery, parents are advised to eat haruan fish (cork). (F.J, 20 June 22).

Some informants said that there are dietary restrictions for breastfeeding mothers but there are also those who allow breastfeeding mothers to eat whatever they want to eat (no restrictions).

Adolescent mother's access to health services

Figure 4 describes the access of adolescent mothers to health services. Generally, adolescent mothers have been touched by integrated postal services, even since pregnancy. The informant with the initial E said that he has a relative who has a toddler but the toddler doesn't want to eat and doesn't want to drink milk, only wants snacks. This shows that there is a wrong parenting pattern so that the baby becomes thin and shows signs of stunting. The child who looks skinny makes the mother always refuse to be invited to the integrated service post because she is ashamed and afraid of being the object of ridicule from neighbours because her child is not like other children who are fat. Finally, the mother no longer wants to take her child to the integrated service post, especially after feeling enough because the immunizations have been fulfilled.

“actually want to bring to an integrated service post, for the sake of health. Control child development. For the sake of health, said his father. Yes, for developmental health”. (M, 16 Juni 2022).

The place of birth of each informant varied. There are those who give birth to a community health center if there are no complications, but there are also those who choose to give birth in a hospital because there are obstacles, namely because their membranes have ruptured. There is also information that they choose to give birth at a midwife only because at the community health center there is no delivery service and the proximity factor is that the pregnant woman is familiar with the midwife in question and does not feel ashamed anymore. The reasons for choosing a place to give birth also consider distance, access to the Social Security Service Agency because it is related to the family economy, of course it is related to costs, and there are also our informants who follow their parents' considerations because they are not independent so the cost of giving birth is still the responsibility of the parents.

“In a special maternity hospital in Batu Licin city”. Because yesterday the amniotic fluid has ruptured, while the second opening is still. So, had to have surgery. The cost of giving birth uses the Social Security Service Agency”. (F.J, 20 June 2022).

“No, there is no delivery service at the Puskesmas, delivery services at the village midwife's house, there must be at least two village midwives. Later, if my friend also has a patient, I will be called alternately.” (R.A, June 16, 2022).

“Right, if the midwife is at her place, she is used to checking, so when she is embarrassed again, she already knows the condition, if the others don't know, it's not normal.... In Halimatus (practicing midwives) it's been twice that the midwife is here almost every month”. (U.S., June 20, 2022).

Informants have knowledge that in order to maintain the health of their toddlers, they must take their toddlers to the posyandu for

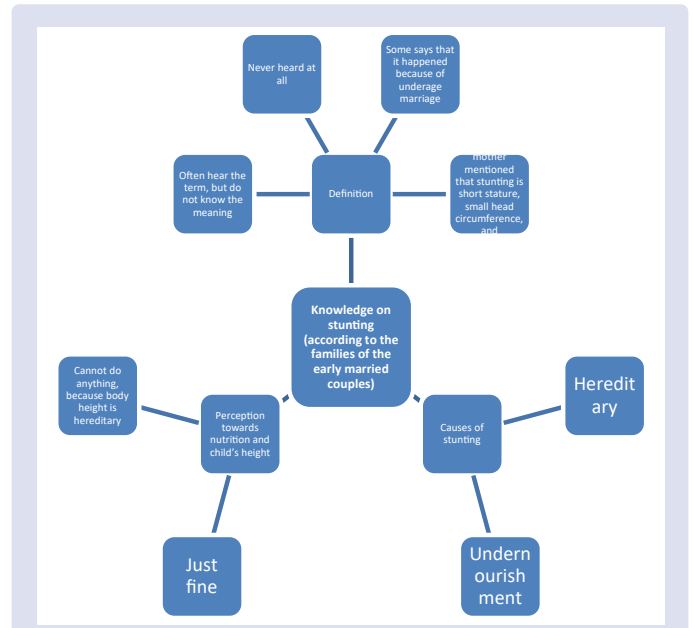


Figure 5: Early marriage offender's family knowledge about stunting.

immunization and weigh the toddler's body and height. Even though they regularly go to the posyandu, they do not know about the family development program for toddlers made by the National Population and Family Planning Agency.

Knowledge of stunting

Many of the informants said they often heard the term stunting but they did not know what it meant. There are informants who explain that stunting occurs because of underage marriages. However, there are also young pregnant women who say that stunting is the same as lack of height, less head circumference, and malnutrition. Many of the informants thought that the cause of short children was heredity (hereditary factors) and some said it could be due to malnutrition (Figure 5).

DISCUSSION

This study found various reasons for teenage marriage. Some of the reasons were also found in other studies. Factors that cause early marriage can be due to parental factors.⁶ Teenage marriages can occur due to pressure from families and parents who hasten to marry off their children when they reach adulthood.⁷ This is in line with the results of research which states that one of the cultures that developed in Indonesia is that if a girl marries over the age of 20, she will become a spinster and will be a disgrace to her family.⁸ Early marriage is also caused by pregnancy outside marriage due to promiscuity. The easier access to internet media has influenced the mindset of teenagers. This finding is in line with the results of research by Yanti *et al.*⁶

The psychological impact of teenage marriage is feelings of regret after marriage so that quarrels and fights often occur in the household. Domestic violence at an early age can lead to divorce.⁸ This is also stated by the informant that the Office of Religious Affairs is often met by wives from teenage marriages who consult about difficulties in their household, although it does not always end in divorce. Early marriage and adolescent pregnancy can have severe risks for women's somatic, mental, and reproductive health.⁹ Negative consequences of early marriage include physical and psychological problems such as high-risk pregnancy and childbirth, physical illnesses, anxiety, depression, and unstable emotions.¹⁰⁻¹³ Victims of sexual abuse in early marriage are more likely to experience extreme mental, social, and physical

outcomes.¹¹ The factors that contribute to early marriage include economic factors, parents, habits, and customs.¹²

Furthermore, Gordon explained that there are many negative impacts of early marriage, including the opportunity to live a poor life.¹⁴ The physiological effects of early marriage are miscarriage, premature delivery, low birth weight, congenital abnormalities, easy infection, anemia and even maternal death.¹⁵ However, this is not considered a problem by the informants in this study because according to them, if a miscarriage occurs, the adolescent mothers can still get pregnant for the second time, and so far there have been no complaints from early marriage actors regarding this.

The sociological aspect of marriage at the age of children or young can also have an impact on children's growth both physically and mentally because of the young age of both parents. In addition, marriage at a young age also makes it difficult for children's rights to be realized for them, such as children's civil rights.¹⁶ This research reveals the contradiction between Law no. 16 of 2019 concerning Amendments to Law Number 1 of 1974 (containing the minimum age limit for prospective brides) with Permendagri No. 9 of 2016, which contains a statement of absolute responsibility. The statement of absolute responsibility degrades the authority of the Ministry of Religion because indirectly the Ministry of Home Affairs can certify marriages carried out in a serial manner so that the perpetrators of unregistered marriages (including teenage marriages) obtain residence documents. The statement of absolute responsibility makes it possible for perpetrators of teenage marriages to obtain a family card and a child's birth certificate containing the names of both parents, just like a formal marriage.

Islamic law does not regulate the age of marriage. However, referring to the purpose of marriage, the individual who is married must be physically and non-physically competent.¹⁷ The impact of early marriage in this study is less observable because there is no data on the perpetrators of early marriage. The perpetrators of teenage marriage are mostly done informally (*siri*) because the regulation prohibits the Office of Religious Affairs from marrying underage brides. In addition, the existence of conflicting regulations makes the Office of Religious Affairs unable to freely prevent juvenile marriages.

One of the impacts of teenage marriage is the lack of knowledge of parenting patterns. Teenagers who decide to get married, mostly do not have time to complete their further education. Besides Das and Gulshan, Wicaksono & Hartanti (2020) also show the same thing. The education of fathers and mothers has a very real relationship with the incidence of stunting.^{3,18}

The eating history and eating patterns of toddlers are very influential on the growth and development of toddlers, this is related to the golden period of 1000 days of life to improve child development optimally, from early pregnancy to children aged 2 years.^{19,20} Research has found that there are still many teenage parents who do not understand good parenting, especially in feeding. Riskesdas data proves that the incidence of stunting is more at the age above 24 months.²¹ This means that stunting is more common after children are weaned and given family food. It can be seen from the results of in-depth interviews that most of the informants understand exclusive breastfeeding and try to give it to their babies. But after the child is over 24 months old and starts eating family food, eating problems begin to occur and parents are not able to handle it properly.

A supportive environment makes mothers-to-be or mothers in their teens still have good access to health services. Seen from the choice of place of delivery, namely the midwife, health center, or hospital. Thus, the safety of mothers and children during childbirth can be improved. This is inseparable from parental support, including financial assistance. Awareness of attendance at *posyandu* is also quite good. This is evidenced by the answers of informants who stated that

they attended the integrated service post since their pregnancy, and had their child checked after birth. However, there are still adolescent mothers who stop checking their children because they feel that their immunizations are complete. There are also adolescent mothers who stop taking their children to the integrated service post because they feel ashamed that their children are thin and their physical growth is not like other children of their age. This proves that it is necessary to educate adolescents to increase awareness of health. Pangaribuan et al. recommends that health services be held for adolescents and integrated monitoring of toddlers to reduce the risk of early marriage and stunting.²¹

Strategies to mitigate the impact of early marriage on teenagers include counseling, education, and empowerment programs.^{10,13} Empowerment in counseling involves becoming aware of power dynamics and working to shift power imbalances.²² Multicultural counseling involves understanding and addressing the unique needs and experiences of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.²³ Peer education and counseling can be effective strategies for promoting health and well-being.²⁴ Technology integration in counseling can enhance the effectiveness of counseling interventions.²⁵ Advocacy and social action are important components of counseling practice that can promote social change and empowerment.²⁶ Counseling psychology should continue to evolve to promote social justice and address systemic issues that impact individuals' well-being.²⁷

Riskesdas 2018 data reports that the percentage of stunting in adolescent mothers is higher than in adult mothers.¹⁴ Specifically in South Kalimantan, Noor *et al.* have also proven that the percentage of stunting occurs higher in children of adolescent mothers, compared to children of adult mothers. In addition, the study found that the education of fathers and mothers influences the incidence of stunting. This is very related to the age of fathers and mothers because the parents of toddlers who graduated from high school must be adults.¹⁵ This is evidenced by the research of Pangaribuan *et al.* who found a relationship between early marriage and teenage pregnancy with the incidence of stunting in toddlers. The results showed that toddlers in the case of parents with early marriage are more susceptible to growth and development disorders.¹⁶ Therefore, teenage marriage must be avoided so that the quality of the younger generation can be improved.

CONCLUSION

Adolescent marriages appear to be triggered by economic motives and teenagers' desires, as well as driven by economic conditions, social influences, and a lack of encouragement to complete formal education. It was observed that stunting is more common among toddlers with adolescent mothers than toddlers with adult mothers. There is a poor feeding parenting pattern of toddlers with adolescent parents.

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