

Repositioning Masculinity to Realize Gender Equality in Child Marriage Families

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Abstract: This research is motivated by the fact that although there has been a change in Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage to Law Number 16 of 2019, Article 7 paragraph (1) was carried out to minimize child marriage as a form of gender equality. However, in fact the phenomenon of marriage dispensation is actually increasing. This research aims to describe men's efforts to realize the repositioning of masculinity and strategies for realizing gender equality in child marriage families so that gender inequality does not occur. This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach to obtain primary and secondary data. The results of the research show that there are still many people in Sucopangepok Village who practice child marriage. Factors that influence the practice of child marriage include customs, economics, parents and education. The fair distribution of roles in the household between men and women influences society's perception of gender roles, thereby positioning women to always be in the domestic sector. Society is also still influenced by patriarchal norms where men are more dominant in decision making, but some men are starting to support gender equality by providing space for women to be involved in a fair division of household work without discrimination or violence.


1 INTRODUCTION


The Sustainable Development Goals are a global development program that has a vision of increasing economic prosperity in a sustainable manner, maintaining the sustainability of social life, protecting the quality of the environment, meeting people's living needs, as well as improving and ensuring the implementation of governance based on improving the quality of the next generation (Larashati, 2022). The SDGs contain 17 goals and 169 indicators, balancing 4 pillars, namely the economic pillar, social pillar, environmental pillar and governance pillar. In the social pillar, one of the goals is to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment in accordance with goal point 5. Gender equality is a goal and prerequisite for sustainable and peaceful


development. Gender equality is achieved when women, men, girls and boys have the same rights, conditions and opportunities, as well as the power to shape their lives and contribute to the development of society (Munasaroh, 2022). Gender-based discrimination and inequality are still clearly visible in Indonesia with the practice of child marriage. The stigma that men have greater opportunities in all areas of development and social life than women, who are only considered important in the domestic environment [3]. Gender inequality places men in more power and dominance than women, thus causing women to be oppressed and exploited.


Gender differences occur due to social boundaries and patriarchal norms and traditions. Gender inequality disproportionately affects men and women in various fields, both in the private and public

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spheres (Miswoni, 2016). In sub-3, goal 5 of the SDGs is about “eliminating all harmful practices, such as child marriage, early and forced marriage and female circumcision” (Lima & Guedes, 2024). Changes to Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage to Number 16 of 2019, Article 7 paragraph (1) states that “Marriage is only if the man and woman have reached the age of 19 years” (Yudianingsih et al., 2022). The implementation of Law Number 16 of 2019 which regulates the change in the marriage age limit to 19 years for men and women still needs improvement, especially in the law enforcement mechanism. The recommendations that the government needs to pay attention to include allocating special funds for programs that support girls' education, family empowerment and community awareness campaigns; designing derivative policies at the regional level to support the implementation of the law, such as regional regulations regarding the prohibition of child marriage; establishing a monitoring mechanism for marriage dispensations is only carried out in very urgent conditions; as well as ensuring reporting channels for the public who find violations of the marriage age limit and taking firm action against perpetrators of violations. This research is strengthened by the study of Yoshida, et al [7], which examines the effectiveness of implementing SDGs goal 5 as a form of Indonesia's efforts to reduce cases of child marriage.

This change aims to minimize child marriage as a form of gender equality, but in fact the number of applications for marriage dispensation has actually increased. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) reveals that the rate of child marriage in Indonesia fell from 10.82% to 10.18% in 2019-2020, but is still relatively high. The percentage of child marriages in rural areas reaches 15.24% and 6.82% compared to urban areas. According to data from the 2020 National Socio-Economic Survey (SUSENAS), East Java has the third highest rate of child marriage in Indonesia with 10.85% of the total 64,211 cases. (Rahmalia et al., 2023). Factors that cause child marriage include economics, arranged marriages, society's mindset, perpetuating relationships, and pregnancy out of wedlock. (Lima & Guedes, 2024). Child marriage has a bigger and more dangerous impact because it puts babies at risk of stunting. The tendency is that the younger the mother's age at marriage, the higher the percentage of children experiencing stunting. Child marriage has negative impacts such as exploding birth rates and increasing miscarriage rates (Fauziah et al., 2023). Pregnant women who marry at the age of 15-19 years have a

high risk of miscarriage and death during childbirth, the risk to mother and child is two times higher. Apart from that, there is also a risk of birth complications, such as obstetric fistula, infection, anemia, bleeding and eclampsia. Mothers who give birth before they are old enough have an impact on babies who are born prematurely and are malnourished.

Child marriage is a serious problem that not only occurs in Sucopangepok Village, but also in other areas. In Kalimantan, for example, child marriage is actually influenced by local customary factors which consider child marriage to be a mechanism for maintaining family honor. Customary factors also greatly influence child marriage practices in NTT and NTB, especially regarding dowries which are regulated by local customs. Child marriage causes a higher risk of divorce because they are less than 19 years old and have maturity of thinking, are not yet emotionally stable, and are still not used to dealing with household problems. This condition can lead to domestic violence and more divorces (Fadilah, 2021). This creates problems for psychological well-being and personality development (Angkasa, 2021). In addition, research shows that poverty can be like a vicious circle for young couples, especially those who marry at an early age. Children from poor families often marry young due to lack of education, and they become a burden on the family. As a result, this poverty continues from one generation to the next (Imron et al., 2022). Several previous research results, for example the study of Rahmalia, et al (Rahmalia et al., 2023) which analyzes the impact of an increase in the number of child marriages which is very detrimental. Meanwhile, the study by Yudianingsih, et al (Lima & Guedes, 2024) which focuses on the problems that exist in early marriage to achieve the SDGs goals of gender equality and empowering all women and girls. Therefore, this research aims to describe men's efforts to realize the repositioning of masculinity and the strategies used to achieve gender equality in child marriage families so that gender inequality does not occur.

2 METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. This research took place in Sucopangepok Village, Jember Regency, East Java. The research implementation began with a field survey using interview techniques with sources from BKKBN, RT Heads, Village Heads, and the surrounding community. Research subjects were selected purposively based on criteria, including

understanding the phenomenon of child marriage in Sucopangepok Village. The selection of research subjects also considered gender proportions to avoid gender bias. Apart from that, there are also observations to see directly how people in areas that have high levels of child marriage feel the impact and families who experience child marriage can overcome the problems and impacts that arise due to child marriage and gender inequality. The data findings were then analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis technique.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Jember Regency borders Probolinggo Regency and Bondowoso Regency. Sucopangepok Village is located at the foot of the slopes of Mount Argopuro, which is quite far from the city center. Sucopangepok Village is located in a hilly area at an altitude of 700 meters above sea level with temperatures between 23-33°C and fertile soil conditions so it is very suitable for productive agricultural land. The people of Sucopangepok village have a homogenous livelihood as tobacco farmers. The geographical condition of Sucopangepok Village, which is located in the hills, encourages the community to make the agricultural sector their main livelihood. The level of economic prosperity of not all Sucopangepok Village residents is classified as upper middle class. There are several communities in certain neighborhoods that have a low economic level, the majority of the workforce is filled by men with physical work. Based on these circumstances, we want to see the repositioning of masculinity and family gender relations in Sucopangepok Village.

Child marriage can have a negative impact on psychological life, such as frequent arguments and violence in the household, difficulty in adapting to change, unstable emotions when facing family conflicts, difficulty in carrying double burdens, and depression in mothers. Research in East Java found that young women aged 15-24 years at first marriage tend to choose to marry older men. As many as 18.1% of middle-aged couples are in the age range of 45-49 years. As many as 16% of middle-aged couples are in the age range of 45-49 years. 40-44 years old. Meanwhile, at the age of 35-39 years, 16.9% of couples are in that range. One of them is the cultural belief that is deeply rooted in society that women should marry men who are older and have financial stability. However, society tends to give negative assessments. in women who marry younger men (Imron et al., 2020).

On the other hand, the problem faced by the community in Sucopangepok Village is very prominent, namely child marriage where many girls marry at an immature and mature age. Child marriage has been practiced for generations since ancient times. The lack of public understanding of marriage causes child marriage to occur and is very difficult to prevent (Mufid & Nail, 2021). In Sucopangepok Village, many girls marry at an immature and mature age, with the average being married at the age of 19 years.

The factors that encourage child marriage in Sucopangepok Village are customary factors. Child marriage has been carried out for generations, especially among girls who have entered puberty. The people of Sucopangepok Village think that if they don't get married immediately, they could become spinsters even though they are still underage (Musfianawati, 2022). Second, economic factors, where families who are economically disadvantaged marry off their children at a young age so that they can reduce the family's economic burden. Sucopangepok Village is located in the mountains, the majority of people work as farmers, and most earn their income from agricultural products, as said by Irawati (23).

".... Sebenarnya dulu saya pengen sekali melanjutkan sekolah ke SMA namun karena perekonomian yang sulit, saya disuruh orangtua untuk menikah. Umur saya 19 tahun udah umurnya untuk menikah. Di Desa Sucopangepok perempuan yang belum menikah, dikhawatirkan baru kawin ketika tua. Ketika umur 19 tahun sudah waktunya untuk menikah dari dulu" (Primary Data, 2024).

Third, the educational factor, where the majority of people in Sucopangepok Village are only junior high school graduates. Lack of knowledge makes them narrow-minded and think less about the future. When parents see that their daughters have finished school, they are asked to work to help their parents and when they no longer have work and are busy they choose to marry at the child's age. (Mufid & Nail, 2021). Child marriages in East Java have a low level of education where 82.36% have secondary education, 4.44% have low education, 0.14% have no education and the remaining 13.07% have high education. Meanwhile, their parents' education is relatively low, namely 64.9%. So parents in Java underestimate education as a result of the large

number of children being married off because the role of parents is very crucial in planning for teenagers and their families (Putri & Lestari, 2015). Fourth, parental factors, where child marriage often occurs due to arranged marriages by both parents. Parents who have daughters will always be anxious to see their children grow up without thinking about their age.

Education sector intervention as an effort to prevent child marriage can be carried out through various strategies, including providing scholarships to children, especially women from disadvantaged families, to continue their education up to high school, integrating material on reproductive health, sexuality and children's rights in the curriculum. schools, providing alternative education programs such as PKBM or equality classes (Packages A, B, and C) for children who have dropped out of school, especially girls, involving teachers to provide guidance and assistance to students who experience pressure to marry early, holding educational campaigns to make students aware of the importance of postponing marriage until old age mature, hold regular meetings between schools and parents to provide education about the importance of girls' education and the risks of child marriage, strengthen counseling in schools so that children can talk about their problems, including pressure to marry early, and increase access to schools in the area remote to reduce geographical barriers for girls continuing their education.

Child marriage is considered normal in the Sucopangepok community, they consider it normal to marry off girls at an early age. Child marriage has various impacts. Women are often more vulnerable to domestic violence or gender-based violence. Where girls who marry at a young age do not have the strength to fight strong patriarchal norms. Apart from that, immature psychological conditions can lead to divorce. A mother who marries when she is a child is at risk of giving birth to a child who is stunted. Based on the results of the Ministry of Health's Nutritional Status Survey (SSGI) in 2022, the region with the highest stunting rate is East Java, reaching 34.9%. Sucopangepok Village is one of the villages with the highest stunting rate category (Zham-Zham et al., 2022).

The theory of gender equality in the Nurture Theory equalizes the roles and duties of men and women in quantity equality and fights for it. Differences between men and women caused by socio-cultural construction can make women left behind and neglected in the family and society. Nurture theory can be used to understand that the role of masculinity is not natural, but the result of social

and cultural construction. Revising masculinity can be done through changing behavior and social values that apply in society. A balanced life can occur if men and women divide their roles and tasks fairly according to their respective abilities, starting with sharing childcare, decision making, earning a living, financial management and so on (Afifah et al., 2023).

Efforts for men to reposition masculinity are carried out in terms of a fair division of roles in household work between men and women and continue to influence society's perception of gender roles, thereby positioning women to always be in the household (Afifah et al., 2023). In Sucopangepok Village, the division of roles in family decision making is decided by the husband as head of the family by discussing with the wife to resolve problems which are negotiated together. When deliberating, give each other the opportunity to express opinions and accept each other's suggestions. However, the final decision is made by the husband. This means that the husband positions his wife as a partner in family decision making to discuss together. As stated by Irawati (23) as follows.

“.....Sejak menikah, saya tidak diperbolehkan suami dan mertua saya untuk bekerja karena anak saya yang masih kecil berumur 2 tahun dan di rumah saja mengurus anak. Suami saya bekerja sebagai petani tembakau. Kalau suami saya bekerja sebagai petani tembakau, kalau dalam pengambilan keputusan sih biasanya didiskusikan dulu, sampai nemukan solusinya“. (Primary Data, 2024).

The role of division of labor in the household is that the husband works to earn a living as the head of the household while the wife is a housewife. However, there are also some communities that allow their wives to work. In Sucopangepok Village, the majority of husbands work as tobacco farmers. In terms of household work, husbands sometimes help their wives clean the house, such as sweeping and washing clothes. Meanwhile, the division of roles in managing the husband's finances does not give his income to the wife completely, most of it is held by the wife and a small part is held by the wife. Remembering that the wife makes the plans and divides the income according to the needs that must be met.

Meanwhile, in terms of sharing childcare, the husband and wife work together to care for and educate the children well. However, in terms of

parenting, the wife's role is very dominant because wives spend more time with their children than husbands who work in the public sector. Husbands also play a role in supervising, providing advice and looking after children when they come home from work or when they are not busy. Therefore, it is very important to realize gender equality for women and men to prevent gender inequality by distributing roles fairly so as to create a harmonious family. In addition, synergy between local governments and NGOs is very important to create a wider and more sustainable impact on preventing child marriage. This collaboration can be carried out through aligning child marriage prevention programs, sharing data, research and field experience to improve implemented strategies, implementing joint campaigns to emphasize the importance of children's rights and gender equality.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the discussion that has been presented, it can be concluded that the repositioning of masculinity and gender relations in Sucopangepok Village, Jember Regency has quite a crucial problem, namely the high rate of child marriage, where there are still many women who marry under the age of 19 and do not even have an ID card. Child marriage is influenced by traditional, parental, economic and educational factors. The people of Sucopangepok Village have a homogeneous livelihood pattern as tobacco farmers with economic conditions as farm laborers who do not own fields. The practice of child marriage in Sucopangepok Village is considered normal so it can increase the risk of domestic violence and stunting in children due to the lack of education of young couples.

This research also shows that even though there is a division of roles in family decision making, husbands still dominate the final decisions, while wives are more involved in raising children, financial management is not entirely up to the wife after interviews, husbands are also still involved in household finances so as to achieve For better gender equality, education is needed for changes in society's perception of masculinity and a fair distribution of roles between men and women.

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