

The Psychological Well-Being of Young Women Entering into Child Marriages

Nadya Rizkiani¹, Dian Lestari Anakaka², Juliana Marlin Y Benu³

^{1,2,3}Psychology Departement, Faculty of Public Health, University of Nusa Cendana

e-mail: rizkianinadia01@gmail.com¹, dian.anakk@staf.undana.ac.id²,

juliana.benu@staf.undana.ac.id³

Abstract. Adolescent girls who undergo child marriage are said to achieve psychological well-being if they are successful and able to overcome the problems they face. This research uses qualitative research methods with a phenomenological approach. The data collection process consisted of interviews and documentation of 3 participants. The results showed that young women who undergo child marriage regret their decision to marry, have difficulty being warm and reluctant to have relationships with others, pay attention to the expectations and evaluations of others, have no control over the external environment, and are unable to manipulate the circumstances, want to become a better person and human being, and can see improvements in oneself and behavior over time. The psychological well-being of young women is also influenced by several factors, including age, personality, gender, education, environment, age of the couple, pregnancy status, number of children, place of residence, and age of marriage.

Keywords: *Psychological well-being, Young women, Marriage*

Abstrak. Remaja perempuan yang menjalani perkawinan anak dikatakan mencapai kesejahteraan psikologis apabila ia berhasil dan mampu mengatasi permasalahan yang dihadapi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan fenomenologi. Prosedur pengumpulan data adalah wawancara dan dokumentasi pada 3 partisipan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa remaja putri yang menjalani perkawinan anak memiliki penyesalan atas pilihan mereka untuk menikah, sulit bersikap hangat dan enggan mempunyai ikatan dengan orang lain, memperhatikan harapan dan evaluasi dari orang lain, kurang memiliki kontrol terhadap lingkungan luar dan tidak mampu memanipulasi keadaan, berkeinginan untuk menjadi sosok dan pribadi yang lebih baik, dan mampu melihat peningkatan dalam diri dan tingkah laku dari waktu ke waktu. Kesejahteraan psikologis remaja putri juga dipengaruhi oleh beberapa faktor yang meliputi usia, kepribadian, jenis kelamin, pendidikan, lingkungan, usia pasangan, status kehamilan, jumlah anak, tempat tinggal, dan usia perkawinan.

Kata kunci: *Kesejahteraan Psikologis, Remaja Putri, Perkawinan*

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Introduction

SUSENAS data (2018) found that East Nusa Tenggara occupies the 25th position of 34 provinces in Indonesia, as it has a prevalence of 8.78% in the category of women aged 20-24 who marry before the age of 18 (SUSENAS, 2018). Based on data published by BPS NTT (2020), the city of Kupang has a prevalence of 3.28% with the category of women who married after the age of the first marriage under the age of 16 and 9.59% with the category of women who married after the age of the first marriage at the age of 17-18 years. This shows that in 2020, 28,267 cases of child marriage occurred in Kupang City. The number of cases of child marriage that occurred in Kupang City was 141,625 cases from 2015 to 2020. The highest increase in data occurred in 2019 when 17.56% or 37,328 girls under 19 were married. These data show that cases of child marriage in Kupang City are still high, although the prevalence of cases decreases yearly (BPS NTT, 2020).

The East Indonesia Women's Network (JPIT) team studied the practice of child marriage in Kupang City and Kupang Prefecture and found several factors behind the high level of child marriage among girls in Kupang City, including cultural factors, economic factors, information and technology development factors, and environmental and educational factors. Patriarchal cultural factors, where the mindset in some tribes ranks men's positions higher than women in all aspects of social life, put girls in difficult positions. Girls with low economic backgrounds are forced to mate to reduce the family's economic burden. Science and technology also have a negative effect if the information media are not filtered properly, which can lure children into promiscuity. Sex education, still considered taboo, supports child marriage (Otu et al., 2018).

According to Diener (in Bawono, 2020), psychological well-being becomes important to study because everyone wants happiness in her life, and no individual wants an unhappy life. Mental well-being can also positively affect the individual, including the ability to make individuals have better social relationships, better health, and more productivity in working and daily life. Individuals who feel

negative effects such as stress and prolonged anger have an impact not only on their mental health but also on the individual's physical health. Individuals who experience stress and anger cause the individual's immune system to decline, which affects the individual's health.

Based on the above description, the question later arises as to whether young women in Kupang City who undergo child marriage can achieve psychological well-being. Based on the idea of the problems arising above, the researchers are interested in revealing how the image of psychological well-being in young women entering into a child marriage in Kupang City can be achieved based on the point of view of people experiencing child marriage directly so that it can open up opportunities to obtain authentic information and bring a better understanding. It is expected to be an essential clue so that individuals can minimize problems in their early marriage so as not to lead to divorce.

Method

In this study the goals of the study were young women who underwent child marriage. This research was conducted in the Kupang City region. The type of research used in this study is qualitative research. This study used a design with a phenomenological approach. This study used a purposive sampling technique. The sample in this study used initial identification, starting with someone who was included in the research criteria. The criteria to participate in this study must be met young women under 19, marry, and are willing to participate by signing a consent form. The collection of data sources in this study was studied in detail through semi-structured interview techniques and field notes. The data analysis technique in this study is to use a thematic analysis model. This study used data triangulation or data source triangulation. The technique used is the member check. The purpose of the member verification is to find out to what extent the data obtained corresponds to the information provided by the informant.

Result

a. Self Acceptance

She described the past of the three participants as circumstances that forced them to marry as teenagers. Mawar, who had married on the basis of an arranged marriage, regretted her decision because she had accepted her husband's proposal when she faced problems in her household. In addition, the participants Melati and Tulip, who married because they were pregnant out of wedlock, described that the marriage they entered into was only to atone for the wrong they had committed and for the sake of their child. All three study participants faced internal problems from the beginning of their marriage. This can be seen in the participants, who are expected to be perfect personalities, who seek pleasure by hurting themselves, solve problems by hitting each other with their husbands, have difficulty adapting, often compare their pre- and post-marriage lives, and have difficulty doing the housework. Here's the statement:

"My family told me. They said that if I got married, I would no longer be a burden to my parents. The term is out of responsibility. So I decided to agree to this matchmaking... Sometimes I regret the decisions I make... I was overthrown, so now I'm just resigned."

"The beginning of my marriage was honestly because I got pregnant out of wedlock... I did something wrong, I did it, so I don't know how else... I also feel like I want to have fun."

"Because at that time my boyfriend and I, my current husband, had an accident. In the sense that our advertising has gone in the wrong direction... If it's from my family, my family must be angry, disappointed... So the decision is entirely ours. I did something wrong, so the parents just follow our decision."

b. Positive Relations with Others

Participants of Melati and Tulip, who became pregnant out of wedlock, had a disharmonious relationship with the surroundings of their home. They explained that they had a good relationship with neighbors but received many negative comments about their pregnancy and were often the subject of neighborhood conversations. The study participants showed that they had a

well-established friendship. What can be seen is in having close friends that they rely on to tell problems that encourage them to continue to be enthusiastic in life and limit themselves to the realm of friends who are not good. Here's the Statement:

"My relationship with the family is not good because since the father died, the mother has remarried..." If the relationship with the man's family is good... I think of my neighbor as my mom."

"I used to get a lot of comments from neighbors after giving birth. I followed her words as if I should take a hot bath, not wash my hair. But there was one comment I didn't receive. My milk is a bit, I tried pumping with a tool, and then they say, what clear milk is that, not good, just throw it away."

"In front of the house, there is a gazebo, so usually families and neighbors sit there in the afternoon. I rarely join. Sometimes I am called to join, and then I join. So it's really just lazy to join in and prefer to sleep. When I can't sleep, I visit my parents' house."

c. **Autonomy**

In this study, participants resumed their studies but decided to drop out after marriage due to pressure from their husbands and could not take time off in the first semester. The regret of not receiving new knowledge and insights leads them to focus on being housewives, taking care of their children, and looking for busyness by selling drinks and food around the house. Marriages contracted by participants during adolescence limited their freedom to have fun by their husbands and household duties. This is evidenced by the fact that participants are uncomfortable with the husband's greed for possession, are unable to fight their husband, and the demands of their role as a wife and mother lead to the fact that they do not have time to leave the house with their friends and only spend time in the house. Here's the Statement:

"The age at which I still want to be free to have fun... when you want to resist but be afraid... It's actually uncomfortable, but I have no choice... Regret not continuing to study because you have not been able to gain new knowledge and insights and make contacts."

"The difficulty I experienced was that I should still be able to have fun, meet and play with friends, but because I had to be responsible, I still had to be at home."

"When I found out I was pregnant, I had in my head that I couldn't have fun with my friends anymore. Also, my friend was all in college. And I thought, when I got married later, I had children and only at home, when I took care of the children, took care of the husband, it seemed that I was not ready."

d. Environmental Mastery

Mastery of the research participants' environment is manifested when participants try to make new friends by joining a community, often participate in activities with neighbors near their home, often spend time with their husband's family, continue to give lectures during pregnancy, choose to understand the problems they face, and do not shy away when neighbors talk about them. Here's the statement::

"I travel a lot with my husband's family because our house is close to each other... And I also follow the K-POP community, so if I have time to meet, I join... Sometimes when my neighbors have an event, I go with them to cook... So I was helped a lot by my neighbors."

"My goal on this campus was to study, get a diploma and leave campus. So I don't care. The day before the birth, I took the intermediate exam on campus."

"We still see each other often. If there is an event of mourning or reunion... Their attitude towards me makes me lazy to join them. Maybe once in a while, if there's an event I attend, but it doesn't seem like I meet every week."

e. Purpose in Life

All three participants have set themselves the goal of becoming better mothers, wives, and children in the future and turning their experiences from the past into a lesson. Here's the Statement:

"I have no ideals. I mean, ever since I got married, I thought when I became a housewife, I meant I was willing to let go of everything outside the home."

"My purpose in life is because I have made mistakes in the past, so my goal in the future is to be able to learn from past mistakes in order to become a better person in the future."

"My motivation to get better is just that. A better wife, a better mother and also a better child."

f. Personal Growth

Over time, with advice and input from friends, family, and guidance from their husbands, participants were able to adapt to their roles and show change by learning from their past experiences, not making their marital status an obstacle to learning new things and being able to get through these difficult times well even after four years of marriage. Here's Mawar's Statement:

"Well, Alhamdulillah, it's not what it used to be. It's still a bit, but not like it used to be... I am only improving now so that my life will be peaceful in the household."

"Because I had already done something wrong, I got married and couldn't possibly settle where I am now. I have to move forward. I have to think about my future. So I decided to keep going to college."

"I thought it was hard to settle down. So I can't afford to get married. It turns out that after I got married and lived, Praise be to God, I was able to live until now, it was 4 years of marriage."

Discussion

The dimension of self-acceptance is a key feature of mental health and is also an important factor for self-realization, optimal functioning, and maturity. Good self-acceptance is characterized by the ability to accept oneself as it is. This skill allows a person to be positive about himself and the life lived. Individuals with a good level of self-acceptance are characterized by being positive towards themselves, acknowledging and accepting different aspects present in themselves, both positive and negative, and having a positive view of the past. The feeling of not being ready to lead a family life and the desire of those who still want to have fun and hang out with friends are important factors in the emergence of remorse about marriage. This aligns with a study by Mawardi (2012), which explains that sometimes remorse arises when faced with different situations after marriage.

All three participants realized they had weaknesses in themselves as wives and mothers. They are still stubborn and often argue with their husbands, tired when they have to adjust their time to take care of their children, husbands, education, and work, and often take out their feelings on their children in a violent way. All three participants could not control their emotions and quickly felt stressed in a depressed state. This is in line with a study by Oktagusani (2019), which explains that adaptation becomes increasingly difficult in individuals who marry at a young age since they have to adapt immediately as parents and as husbands or wives.

Despite the many difficulties the participants experienced, they could discern the meaning of their lives by thinking positively and showing an attitude of acceptance of their current life. By using the past as learning, they are grateful to have become a better person and more motivated to be better wives and mothers in the future. Rida (2012) explained that individuals with self-determination already know about their condition or condition and can motivate themselves to live a much better life.

They have a biological family and a husband's family, which are their reinforcement. This aligns with research by Azani (2018), which has shown that the family is the first important source of social support to overcome problems. Family support is needed for every member, both children and adults. This is because the family is where someone receives comfort, love, and emotional support to make the individual feel happy. This is in line with what Handono and Bashori (2013) have explained, which define relationships with others as social support, in which relationships are helpful or helpful when someone has a problem or difficulty, where the help can come in the form of real information or help to make someone feel cared for, appreciated and loved. This support can be provided by friends, family or people close to the individual.

Participants reported difficulty adjusting to husbands who were compulsive, noisy, temperamental, violent, and often spent time outdoors.

Nevertheless, the participants' husbands showed changes in their attitudes toward advice and contributions from their environment and showed cooperation with their husbands in caring for their children. The participants also took care of their children without outside help. Laswell (in Puspitasari, 2015) argues that the concept of marriage adaptation contains two meanings, namely the existence of a mutualism relationship between couples to give and take and the existence of a mutual learning process between two individuals to reconcile their needs, desires, and expectations with the needs, desires, and expectations of the couple.

Problems arising in participants' households are often triggered when their desire to spend time outside the home is unmet. Learned from their experiences dealing with problems in the past, the three participants decided to choose silence and to yield to avoid the possibility of a larger struggle. This is consistent with the research of Murdiyana (2012), in which the emotional form of focused coping with the behavior and mentality of young women who marry at a young age always succumbs to their husbands when there is a problem. Therefore, young women who marry at a young age often feel pressured to give in to their husbands.

Ryff (1989) explains that individuals with good psychological well-being can deal with events outside of themselves, where the individual can manipulate circumstances to match the needs and personal values they adhere to and can develop creatively through physical and mental activity.

The three participants aimed to become better mothers, wives and children for the future and turn their past experiences into a learning experience. This is consistent with Adler's theory (in Feist and Feist, 2014), which reveals that when thoughts, feelings, and actions lead to a single goal, an individual consistently moves toward what her goal is. A person in the dimension of personal growth has the feeling of constantly evolving, seeing himself as something that is growing, recognizing the potential within oneself, and seeing improvements in oneself and behavior over time (Ryff, 1989).

Getting married at a young age presents many challenges that participants face. Their responsibilities hamper their desire to have fun in the house. Teens, who generally still spend their time having fun, hanging out with friends, and enjoying their time, must instead be responsible for fulfilling their role as a wife who takes care of the housework. Based on research by Ajhuri (2019), it seems that adolescents, even in the fifth stage, are identity-seeking versus identity confusion. At that time, young people were confronted with the search for knowledge about themselves, what and where, and how about themselves. Many teenagers are faced with new roles and adult statuses, such as work and romantic life.

Controlling emotions is difficult for teens when faced with responsibilities that exceed their developmental responsibilities. Stubbornness, temperament, and violent venting of emotions are examples of participants' lack of emotional maturity. The difficulty of controlling their emotional changes is a major factor that triggers frequent struggles in their household. This is consistent with the research of Riady (2012), which explains that marriage at a young age has a great influence on family psychology, which is characterized by the frequent occurrence of domestic disputes as a result of mental, emotional, social, economic, and cultural immaturity in dealing with problems.

The burdens and responsibilities imposed on each participant made her feel the demands of being a good wife and mother. The feeling of injustice about roles and duties is also felt when they do not have the power to resist and obey only the will of the husband, who often helps to take care of the housework. This is consistent with research by Astuti (2018), in which the personal orientation of adolescents who want to feel freedom contradicts their role as mothers obliged to care for children.

The continuation or termination of their education was a decision that all three participants had to make when they were married. Some who choose not to continue their education have a sense of regret that they have not gained more knowledge and insight and have reduced the number of vacancies they can fill due

to their limited high school education. On the contrary, participants who continue their education have clearer life goals because they have plans for a better future. This is consistent with research by Djamillah and Kartikawati (2014), which explains that young people tend not to have a good career or decent work due to low levels of education.

The environment is one of the three participants' most important factors in the dimension of mental well-being. Mawar, who has neighbors who appreciate her and help when she and her husband have problems, feels greatly helped by the presence of her neighbors. In contrast, Melati and Tulip have an environment that tends to make many comments, criticism, and unpleasant conversations. As a result, they do not have a harmonious relationship with the neighbors around their homes. This is consistent with the research of Handono and Bashori (2013), which defines relationships with others as social support, where relationships are helpful and helpful when someone has a problem or difficulty, where the help can be in the form of real information or help, making the person feel cared for, valuable and loved.

Conclusion

The analysis in connection with the picture of mental well-being yielded the following results: Participants regretted their decision to marry, were able to recognize their emotions but were less able to cope with pressure, had difficulty dealing with their roles as wives and mothers, and hoped they would not be what they are today. It is hard to be warm and reluctant to connect with others. However, one of the participants had a positive relationship with another person, manifested by being able to open up to those around her and share affection and trust with others. Inability to educate oneself, pay attention to expectations and evaluations of others, such as the presence of a sense of inferiority, making decisions based on the judgments of others, not being able to resist social pressures, and tending to be conformist. Lack of control over the external environment and inability to

manipulate the surrounding situation. Nevertheless, one participant could cope with the accompanying circumstances and actively participate in her environment. The desire to be a better person, mother, and wife in the future; Feeling like you are constantly evolving, seeing yourself as something growing, and seeing improvements in yourself and behavior over time. The psychological well-being of young women who undergo child marriage is influenced by several factors, including age, personality, gender, education, and environment.

Suggestion

Young women undergoing child marriage are advised to improve their quality of life so that their psychological well-being can be fulfilled by looking positively at their condition and being able to accept past circumstances wisely, to be more open to the environment by sharing affection and trust with others, having more confidence in their abilities, deal with pressure, increase sensitivity to the environment. Have a passion for life and recognize the potential you have and can expand and expand knowledge. In addition, adolescents are recommended to seek psychological help in dealing with problems in home life and, with the help of a psychologist, to expand their knowledge of their current self-state.

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