

Strategies for Preventing Early Marriage in Seneng, Banyurojo Village, Magelang Regency

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Abstract

Early marriage in Indonesia is a pressing social problem that reflects a structural imbalance between cultural tradition, religious norms, and modern economic challenges, with a prevalence of 5.9% among women aged 20–24. The problem deepens the cycle of poverty and gender inequality among vulnerable groups in rural areas. The aim of this outreach activity is to prevent early marriage by increasing awareness of, and compliance with, Law No. 16 of 2019. The strategies used include outreach, education, and collaboration among students of the Faculty of Law of Universitas Muhammadiyah Magelang (UNIMMA), Advocate Hassan Latief, and the community of Seneng, Banyurojo Village. The solution method uses a participatory approach through community empowerment in schools and among vulnerable groups in Seneng, Banyurojo Village. The activity was held on 24 December 2025 with 20 participants, including adolescents and parents. The results show an increase in the community's knowledge of the risks of early marriage, marked by a decrease in the intention to marry early and an increase in legal awareness. In conclusion, the outreach program is effective in reducing early marriage through continuous education.

Keywords

Early Marriage, Legal Education, Legal Awareness, Prevention of Child Marriage

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Abstrak

Fenomena perkawinan dini di Indonesia merupakan persoalan sosial mendesak yang mencerminkan ketidakseimbangan struktural antara tradisi budaya, norma agama, dan tantangan ekonomi modern, dengan prevalensi sebesar 5,9% pada perempuan berusia 20–24 tahun. Masalah ini memperparah siklus kemiskinan dan ketidaksetaraan gender pada kelompok rentan di wilayah pedesaan. Tujuan sosialisasi ini Adalah untuk mencegah perkawinan dini dengan meningkatkan kesadaran dan kepatuhan terhadap UU No. 16 Tahun 2019. Strategi yang digunakan meliputi sosialisasi, edukasi, serta kolaborasi antara mahasiswa Fakultas Hukum Unimma, Advokat Hassan Latief, dan Seneng, Desa Banyurojo. Metode penyelesaian menggunakan pendekatan partisipatif melalui pemberdayaan masyarakat di sekolah dan kelompok rentan di Seneng, Desa Banyurojo. Kegiatan dilaksanakan pada tanggal 24 Desember 2025 dengan melibatkan 20 peserta, termasuk remaja dan orang tua. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan peningkatan pengetahuan masyarakat mengenai risiko perkawinan usia dini, yang ditandai dengan penurunan niat untuk menikah dini dan peningkatan kesadaran hukum. Kesimpulannya, program sosialisasi efektif menekan perkawinan dini melalui edukasi berkelanjutan

Kata Kunci

Pernikahan Dini, Edukasi Hukum, Kesadaran Hukum, Pencegahan Perkawinan Anak

Introduction

Early marriage is a phenomenon that is becoming increasingly common. Early marriage refers to a marital union entered by individuals who have not yet reached adulthood or who are still classified as underage. In Indonesia, the age limit used to define a child in the context of early marriage differs from region to region.¹ This is also reflected in the definitions used by international institutions and organizations. According to UNFPA (the United Nations Population Fund), early marriage is a marriage in which one or both partners are underage. This phenomenon occurs in many parts of the world, especially in developing countries. Various backgrounds and reasons underline early marriage, including cultural traditions embedded in society, parents' mindsets, religious teachings, economic factors, and other aspects.²

¹ Abdul Jamil, "Batas Usia Perkawinan Dan Perwalian: Pendekatan Komparatif Antara Indonesia Dan Negara Asia Tenggara Lainnya," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Jurisprudence, Economic and Legal Theory* 2, no. 4 (October 22, 2024): 2081–95, <https://doi.org/10.62976/ijjel.v2i4.762>.

² Sitinur Febby Pattimahu et al., "Analisis Pidana Mati Terhadap Korupsi Dana Dalam Keadaan Darurat," *JURNAL ANTI KORUPSI* 4, no. 1 (May 6, 2024): 36–49, <https://doi.org/10.19184/jak.v4i1.38796>.

In Indonesia itself, marriage takes place in various forms and at various ages. Underage marriage also occurs in Indonesia because many people still do not understand the importance of age maturity for marriage, which gives rise to various impacts.³ These impacts include high divorce rates and maternal and child deaths, because the mother is too young and her physical and mental condition is not yet strong enough, which can also affect the child in the womb. Marriage involving underage children is a common phenomenon in social life, in both urban and rural areas. Because some people do not yet understand the impact that underage marriage can have, the practice is still regarded as normal.⁴

From the perspective of Indonesian civil law, as regulated in the Civil Code (*KUHPerdata*) and Marriage Law No. 1 of 1974 in conjunction with Law No. 16 of 2019, a marriage may be declared void if it is conducted before the minimum age of 19 without a court dispensation that meets the requirement of an urgent reason, such as pregnancy or the threat of rape. The main legal consequence is annulment of the marriage by the Religious Court or the District Court. The status of a legitimate child remains recognized, but inheritance and custody rights may become complicated. In addition, the parents involved may be held criminally liable under Child Protection Law No. 35 of 2014 in conjunction with the Sexual Violence Crimes Law (*UU TPKS*) No. 12 of 2022, including fines and imprisonment for forced child marriage. These provisions aim to protect children's right to education and optimal development.⁵

The implementation of child protection policy in Indonesia focuses on preventing early marriage through broad outreach on Law No. 16 of 2019 and the Child Protection Law at the village/urban-ward level by the Child Marriage Prevention Team (TPKA), which involves village heads, religious leaders, and PKK cadres.⁶ These efforts also require cross-sector synergy, such as the Ministry of Religious

³ Herti Puspasari, "Kajian Literatur Faktor Penyebab Perkawinan Anak Di Indonesia," *Proceedings National Conference Sinesia* 1, no. 2 (October 22, 2025): 604–22, <https://doi.org/10.69836/ncrcs-sinesia.v1i2.88>.

⁴ S Kistiana, D N Fajarningtiyas, and Y E Riany, "Assessing Child Marriage in Indonesia: A Call for Educational Empowerment," *Jurnal Kesehatan Masyarakat* 20, no. 3 (2025): 512–22, <https://doi.org/10.15294/kemas.v20i3.14145>.

⁵ C P B Laapen, S Lie, and V Kasslim, "Tinjauan Hukum Perdata Terhadap Pernikahan Dini: Implikasi Dan Perlindungan Hak-Hak Pihak Korban," *Jurnal Kewarganegaraan* 8, no. 1 (2024): 867–72, <https://doi.org/10.31316/jk.v8i1.6419>.

⁶ Umi Sumbulah Faridatul Jannah, "PERNIKAHAN DINI DAN IMPLIKASINYA TERHADAP KEHIDUPAN KELUARGA PADA MASYARAKAT MADURA (PERSPEKTIF HUKUM DAN GENDER)," *Egalita. Jurnal. Kesetaraan. Dan. Keadilan. Gender* 0, no. 0 (October 22, 2012), <https://doi.org/10.18860/egalita.v0i0.2113>.

Affairs through its mosque youth programs, the Ministry of Education and Culture through an anti-child-marriage curriculum in schools, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection through scholarships to prevent school dropout, and local governments through monitoring of marriage dispensations by the district/religious courts. These efforts include comprehensive education programs in schools so that adolescents understand reproductive health risks, such as recurrent miscarriage, preeclampsia, a risk of maternal/infant death up to five times higher, intergenerational stunting, and cervical cancer at an early age. The economic impacts include mass school dropout among girls, structural unemployment, and a persistent cycle of poverty. Children also have the right to 12 years of compulsory education and to optimal physical and mental development under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.⁷

On this basis, students of the Faculty of Law of Universitas Muhammadiyah Magelang carried out an outreach activity on early marriage in cooperation with Advocate M. Hassan Latief, S.H., M.H., in order to build community awareness in Seneng, Banyurojo Village, Mertoyudan Sub-district, so as to prevent early marriage and to increase community awareness of and compliance with Marriage Law No. 1 of 1974 in conjunction with Law No. 16 of 2019 on marriage.

Method

Students of the Faculty of Law of Universitas Muhammadiyah Magelang carried out an early marriage outreach activity in cooperation with Advocate M. Hassan Latief, S.H., M.H., held on 24 December 2025 in Seneng, Banyurojo Village. The activity was conducted as active participatory outreach involving partners and the Seneng, Banyurojo Village community in identifying legal problems in order to prevent early marriage. It began with problem identification through discussions with partners, focusing on in-depth interviews with partners, including parents of pre-adolescent children as participants. At this stage, the students and partners jointly mapped the phenomenon, its driving factors, and the social, legal, and economic consequences of early marriage. Next, the discussion explored participants' understanding of the minimum marriage age under the Marriage Law in conjunction with Law No. 16 of 2019, the mechanism for applying for a marriage dispensation in court, and the protection of children's rights as regulated in related

⁷ Kistiana, Fajarningtiyas, and Riany, "Assessing Child Marriage in Indonesia: A Call for Educational Empowerment."

legislation. The main aim of this approach was to produce in-depth legal insight, not only explaining the problem but also offering concrete suggestions, such as tightening court approval of child marriages and making improvements.

Results and Discussion

The outreach activity on early marriage for the community of Seneng, Banyurojo Village, held on Wednesday, 24 December 2025, went well and according to plan. The activity was attended by adolescents and parents from Seneng, Banyurojo Village. The community took part in the outreach very enthusiastically and responded positively. This was evident from the community's active participation, especially the mothers, who asked questions about the negative impacts of early marriage and measures to prevent it.

The initial stage began with a visit to the home of the Head of Banyurojo Village, Mr. Ikhsan Maksum, as partner, to convey that the number of local residents who marry early remains relatively high, while their knowledge of the legal consequences under Law No. 16 of 2019 on Marriage remains very limited. The implementation team, consisting of three female students, explained that the objectives of the outreach were: 1) to promote intensive outreach to participants together with the village head as partner as an effort to prevent the practice of early marriage; 2) to improve participants' understanding of the legal consequences of early marriage as regulated in Law No. 16 of 2019 on Marriage; and 3) to provide recommendations for preventing cases of early marriage through education on its legal and social impacts.

In the next stage, students of the Faculty of Law of Universitas Muhammadiyah Magelang carried out the early marriage outreach in cooperation with the partner, Advocate M. Hassan Latief, S.H., M.H., who served as the speaker providing legal education to participants so that they would better understand the importance of the minimum marriage age under Law No. 16 of 2019 on Marriage. The activity was conducted by explaining the definition of early marriage, as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Outreach on early marriage prevention for the community

Early marriage, also known as young-age marriage, can be defined as a marriage between a man and a woman who have not reached the age set by law or who are still adolescents. The minimum marriage age for men and women considered legally eligible is 19 years. A marriage is considered valid when it is officially recognized by both religion and the state. This is reflected in state regulation, particularly Law No. 1 of 1974 on Marriage. This law regulates various aspects of marriage, including its basis, requirements, prevention, annulment, agreements, the rights and obligations of husband and wife, and other elements related to marriage.⁸

In addition, the activity discussed the legal consequences that may arise when a marriage is conducted without court dispensation, such as the marriage being declared invalid, not being recorded in the family card, and a lack of protection of children's rights. A person who marries but has not yet reached the age of 21 is considered an adult and legally competent.⁹ Under Law No. 1 of 1974, the minimum marriage age for both women and men is 19 years. However, that age still falls within adolescence and is part of the transition from childhood to adulthood.¹⁰ Given these conditions, it is feared that marriages based on a very young age will result in:

A marriage is invalid if it is not recorded at the Office of Religious Affairs or the Civil Registry. The marriage guardian must file a dispensation application with the

⁸ Y Indawati et al., "Faktor Dan Dampak Pernikahan Dini Dalam Perspektif Undang-Undang Perkawinan," *Indonesian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 4, no. 1 (2024): 80–91.

⁹ Muhammad Mabur Haslan et al., "Penyuluhan Tentang Dampak Perkawinan Dini Bagi Remaja Di SMA Negeri 2 Gerung Kabupaten Lombok Barat," *Jurnal Pengabdian Magister Pendidikan IPA* 4, no. 2 (October 22, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.29303/jpmipi.v4i2.815>.

¹⁰ Indawati et al., "Faktor Dan Dampak Pernikahan Dini Dalam Perspektif Undang-Undang Perkawinan."

Religious Court or the District Court. Otherwise, marriage is considered null and void by law and causes civil-law problems later.¹¹

A high risk of divorce and vulnerability to domestic violence. Underage couples often do not realize their responsibilities as husband and wife, which can lead to separation, domestic violence, and prolonged family conflict. In addition, the unstable psychological condition of young couples also weakens the legal and social resilience of the household.¹²

Early marriage hinders the emotional maturity of adolescents, who psychologically have not yet reached the stage of effective self-control and conflict management. According to a 2023 study by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, 65% of couples in early marriages experience emotional instability due to the pressure of taking on adult roles prematurely, such as financial responsibility and childcare without mental preparation.¹³ This instability appears as impulsive behavior, chronic anxiety, and low empathy, which are underlying factors in domestic violence. Legally, early marriage opens the possibility of annulment (Article 27 of the Marriage Law), but victims of domestic violence are often trapped by social stigma that prevents them from reporting. The impact extends to family breakdown, a rising divorce rate (up 55% according to Statistics Indonesia in 2024), and a generation of children exposed to intergenerational trauma. Prevention requires synergy in enforcing the Child Protection Law, mandatory premarital counseling, and emotional recovery programs through community health centers and legal aid institutions.¹⁴

Early marriage remains common in Indonesia, especially in rural areas, so prevention efforts are needed through education, child empowerment, and law enforcement. Formal and non-formal education through programs such as the Center for Adolescent Information and Counseling has been shown to increase

¹¹ Hary Abdul Hakim et al., "Pertimbangan Hakim Dalam Penetapan Dispensasi Perkawinan Perkara Perdata (Studi Kasus Putusan No.352/Pdt.P/2022/PA.Tmg)," *Blastal* 1, no. 5 (October 22, 2022): 1–7, <https://doi.org/10.31603/8302>.

¹² J Jenuri and A Najib, "Pernikahan Dini Dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam Dan Hukum Di Indonesia," *Al-Mashlahah: Jurnal Hukum Islam Dan Pranata Sosial Islam* 11, no. 2 (2023): 127–42, <https://doi.org/10.30868/am.v11i02.4519>.

¹³ Mizna Sabilla and Aby Maulana, "Edukasi Pendewasaan Usia Perkawinan Dari Aspek Hukum Dan Kesehatan Melalui Pusat Informasi Konseling Remaja (PIK-R) Kecamatan Sawangan Kota Depok," *Bjls* 3, no. 2 (October 22, 2022): 96–105, <https://doi.org/10.31603/bjls.v3i2.8251>.

¹⁴ A P Sari and F N Aulia, "Dampak Dan Faktor Penyebab Pernikahan Dini Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Pendidikan: SEROJA* 3, no. 3 (2022): 387–97, <https://jurnal.anfa.co.id/index.php/seroja/article/download/2711/2446/8384>.

adolescents' knowledge of children's rights, reproductive health, and the negative impacts of early marriage, thereby changing their attitudes toward delaying marriage.¹⁵ Child empowerment through life-skills training, economic support, and involvement in decision-making strengthens adolescents' confidence to resist pressure to marry. The National Strategy for the Prevention of Child Marriage targets a reduction in prevalence to 8.74% through coordination with ministries, optimization of children's capacities, and strengthening of regulations such as Law No. 16 of 2019, which sets the minimum marriage age at 19 years.¹⁶

This outreach and question-and-answer discussion (Figure 2) is expected to raise community awareness of the importance of setting a minimum marriage age for children in Seneng, Banyurojo Village. This activity is a strategic step to reduce the number of early marriages in the area, because initial data show that some underage adolescents still choose to marry early, including among the community of Seneng, Banyurojo Village.



Figure 2. Outreach and question-and-answer session with the community

Participants in Seneng, Banyurojo Village showed extraordinary enthusiasm throughout the outreach. When the question-and-answer session opened, several participants asked questions, creating a lively discussion in which everyone inspired one another. As a token of appreciation, we gave prizes to the most active participants. This further increased their enthusiasm and commitment to rejecting early marriage.

¹⁵ Abdul Jafar et al., "Problematika Perkawinan Usia Dini Pada Remaja Perspektif Hukum Dan Agama Islam," October 22, 2024, <https://ojs.um-palembang.ac.id/index.php/asabiyah/article/download/299/100>.

¹⁶ Pattimahu et al., "Analisis Pidana Mati Terhadap Korupsi Dana Dalam Keadaan Darurat."

This outreach activity succeeded in increasing the knowledge and understanding of the Seneng, Banyurojo Village community about the risks of early-age marriage, from legal and social aspects as well as family life. Through the presentation of material and interactive discussion, the community gained a better understanding of the importance of preventing early-age marriage and its possible impacts on children's education, health, mental readiness, and future well-being. In addition, the activity provided an understanding of preventive steps that parents and the community can take to protect children from the practice of early-age marriage. The community also received information on the minimum marriage age and the procedure for applying for a marriage dispensation through the court in accordance with applicable legislation. Accordingly, the activity is expected to raise the community's legal awareness and encourage parents and the surrounding environment to play an active role in preventing early-age marriage in Seneng, Banyurojo Village.

As a follow-up, *PKK* cadres and mosque youth should be formed as local facilitators through regular training on the legal impacts and prevention of early-age marriage. Village funds can be used to provide educational media and to hold outreach and counseling activities through adolescent *posyandu* (integrated health posts). Periodic evaluation should also be carried out to measure improvements in understanding and changes in community behavior. In addition, a digital innovation in the form of a WhatsApp-based reporting service for early-age marriage risks, integrated with a Legal Aid Institute, should be developed to make information, consultation, and legal assistance easier for the community to access.

Conclusion

The outreach activity on early marriage held in Seneng, Banyurojo Village, succeeded in addressing the main problem, namely low legal understanding and social awareness regarding Law No. 16 of 2019 on the Amendment to Law No. 1 of 1974 on Marriage. The activity reduced the community's intention to marry early and increased legal awareness among participants, who consisted of adolescents and parents. The outreach was in line with its main aim, namely, to encourage compliance with the minimum marriage age of 19 through a participatory approach, thereby reducing the risk of marriages being null and void by law, domestic violence, and family breakdown in vulnerable communities.

Overall, the early marriage outreach, carried out through collaboration among students of the Faculty of Law of Universitas Muhammadiyah Magelang, Advocate M. Hassan Latief, S.H., M.H., and the Head of Banyurojo Village as partner,

demonstrates the effectiveness of legal education in breaking the cycle of poverty, gender injustice, and family breakdown caused by early marriage. For the program to be sustainable, outreach should be held regularly through various discussions, with emphasis on mandatory premarital counseling and monitoring of marriage dispensations with community instruments. Digital innovation should also be developed, for example a WhatsApp-based application for reporting early marriage risks, integrated with a Legal Aid Institute.

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