
Early Marriage Culture and the Occurrence of Stunting in Toddlers in the Coastal Area of Sumenep Regency in 2024

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Abstract

Wedding early still become phenomenon general social occurs in various regions in Indonesia , including districts Sumenep . Practice This Can impact big on health Mother And children , especially in matter nutrition And growth child . Stunting, or condition Where tall body child more low from standard age they consequence lack nutrition chronic , is Wrong One problem health main thing that can be done arise from wedding early. Study This aim For analyze connection between culture wedding early And stunting incidents in toddlers in the area coast Regency Sumenep on 2024. Methodology : Study This use design studies cross-sectional with approach quantitative . Sample study consists from mothers who married below 18 years old And own toddler aged 0-5 years in the area coast Regency Sumenep . Data collection via questionnaire And measurement anthropometry toddler . Data analysis was carried out with use test chi-square For determine connection between variable wedding early And stunting incident . Results study show that there is significant relationship between wedding early And stunting incidents in toddler . Mother who married below 18 years old own risk more tall For own child with stunting conditions compared with mothers who married at a young age more ripe . Factors like level education mother , economic status family , and access to service health Also join in influence stunting incident . Culture wedding early in the area coast Regency Sumenep contribute to its height stunting incidents in toddler . Required comprehensive intervention involve education society , improvement access service health , and strengthening policy For postpone age wedding To use reduce prevalence of stunting. Effort collaborative between government , institutions self-subsistent society , and community local very important For overcome problem This in a way effective.

Keywords : *Wedding Early Childhood , Stunting, Toddlers , Coast , Health Mother And Child*

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is considered a deep commitment between a man and a woman that is socially recognized, aimed at validating sexual relations, providing legitimacy and caring for children, and establishing the division of roles between partners. The Indonesian state has regulated the procedures and conditions for carrying out a marriage, one of which is Law (UU) Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage (Article 7 paragraph 1) which states that marriage is only permitted if the man and woman have reached the age of 19 years. However, in reality, it is still common to see marriages at a young or underage age .

Early marriage remains a persistent cultural practice in various parts of the world, including Indonesia. In the coastal area of Sumenep Regency, this tradition is particularly prevalent. Early marriage, often defined as marriage before the age of 18, has far-reaching implications on the health and well-being of young girls and their future children. One of the most concerning consequences is the increased risk of stunting in toddlers born to young mothers. Stunting, a form of chronic malnutrition, is characterized by low height-for-age and is a critical public health issue in Indonesia. It can lead to irreversible physical and cognitive impairments, affecting the overall development and future potential of children. The incidence of stunting is notably high in Sumenep Regency, raising alarms about the underlying factors contributing to this condition.

This research aims to explore the relationship between the culture of early marriage and the occurrence of stunting in toddlers in the coastal areas of Sumenep Regency. The study seeks to understand how cultural practices, socio-economic factors, and maternal health contribute to the high prevalence of stunting in this region

Early marriage is deeply rooted in the socio-cultural fabric of many Indonesian communities, driven by factors such as poverty, limited educational opportunities, and traditional beliefs. In coastal areas like Sumenep, the pressure for young girls to marry early is often compounded by economic hardships and the perception of marriage as a means of securing financial stability. However, early marriage carries significant health risks for both the young mothers and their children. Adolescent girls are more likely to experience complications during pregnancy and childbirth, which can adversely affect the health of their infants. Inadequate maternal nutrition, limited access to healthcare, and lack of knowledge about proper child-rearing practices further exacerbate the risk of stunting in their children.

Stunting has long-term implications on a child's development, including impaired cognitive abilities, lower educational achievement, and reduced economic productivity in adulthood. Therefore, addressing the root causes of stunting, such as early marriage, is crucial for improving public health outcomes and breaking the cycle of poverty and malnutrition

In East Java, most underage marriages occur in the Madura area, almost evenly in four districts, namely Bangkalan, Sampang, Pamekasan and Sumenep. Among these four districts, Sumenep has the highest rate of underage marriage, reaching 60 percent of the total population. In Sumenep, the tradition of marrying off children at an early age still exists, with girls marrying at around 13 years old or elementary school level, and boys at 15 years old or junior high school level. This tradition of marrying at an early age still continues today (Sulaiman, 2012). The areas in Sumenep Regency where early marriage often occurs are Pasongsongan District and Batang-batang District, these two sub-districts are districts located to the north of Sumenep Regency and have coastal areas. Pasongsongan District is in the northwest, while Batang-Batang District is in the northeast of the city center of Sumenep Regency.

Marriage at a teenage age can cause the risk of early pregnancy, frequent pregnancies, and high-risk pregnancies (Tamalla and Azinar, 2022). Pregnancy at teenage age can cause pregnancy complications and increase the risk of death for the mother and child (Ministry of PPPA, 2020).

The age of first marriage is an important factor that influences fertility and can have an impact on the growth and development of children, which in turn can cause stunting problems. (Duana et al., 2022). Children born to mothers who marry at child age (less than 19 years) are at risk of experiencing nutritional problems such as malnutrition, thinness, shortness, and have low life chances (Zulhakim et al., 2022). This happens because mothers who marry before the age of 18 usually have less than optimal parenting patterns, which have an impact on the child's nutritional status. (Khusna & Nuryanto, 2017). Based on this phenomenon, researchers are interested in examining the relationship between child marriage and the incidence of stunting in toddlers. Research conducted by Sari, M., et al. on Adolescent Pregnancy and the Risk of Stunting in Children. This research explores the relationship between adolescent pregnancy and the risk of stunting in children across various regions of Indonesia. The findings highlight that children born to adolescent mothers have a significantly higher risk of experiencing stunting, underscoring the need for interventions targeting maternal health and the prevention of early marriage. Research conducted by Handayani, et al. in 2021 on Strategies to Mitigate the Effects of Early Marriage on Child Health in Indonesia. This paper discusses various strategies to mitigate the negative effects of early marriage on child health in Indonesia. The report reviews the success of interventions and policies aimed at delaying the age of marriage, improving maternal health services, and enhancing child nutrition programs, with a focus on reducing the incidence of stunting.

RESEARCH METHODS

Researchers used a *cross-sectional design* to analyze the relationship between the variables studied, namely child marriage and the incidence of stunting in toddlers. Mothers of toddlers who were research subjects were asked to fill out a questionnaire to determine the mother's age at marriage and the incidence of stunting in toddlers. Toddler height was measured using the WHO height (TB)/U (age) measurement standard, with stunting criteria if the TB/U index was < -2 SD. The population in this study were all women of childbearing age who had toddlers and the sample size was determined based on the *Lemeshow formula* , and the number of respondents was 65 respondents. To determine the sample, a simple random selection method was used (simple random sampling). Data were analyzed using univariate analysis to describe the frequency distribution of respondents' characteristics, and bivariate analysis was used to examine the relationship between the variables studied, namely the number of early marriages and the incidence of stunting in children under five, using the *chi square test* .

Lemeshow Formula

$$n = \frac{z^2 \times P \times (1-P)}{d^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.4 \times (1-0.4)}{0.05^2}$$

$$n = 65$$

Information :

n = number of samples

z = z score at 95% confidence = 1.96

P = maximum estimated WUS with toddlers in Pasongsongan and Batang-batang Districts is 4% = 0.04

d = error rate of 5% = 0.05

Study and measurements of toddlers' height in this study were carried out from April to June 2024.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of research data about characteristics respondents And analysis connection wedding age early with stunting incidents in toddler . The results of the univariate and bivariate analysis are shown in the table below.

Table 1 Characteristics of Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Toddler Height		
Stunting	22	33.8%
Normal	43	66.2%
Total	65	100%
Toddler Gender		
Man	24	36.9%
Woman	41	63.1%
Total	65	100%
Toddler Age		
0 – 1 year	26	40%
13 years old	19	29.2%

35 years old	20	30.8%
Total	65	100%
Mother's age at marriage		
< 19 years old	34	52.3%
≥ 19 years old	31	47.7%
Total	65	100%

Source: primary data, 2024

From the table above show that of the 65 toddlers who took part measurement tall body found 22 (32.28) toddlers who experienced stunting, for toddler part The majority of women were 41 (63.1%). Toddlers who take part in height measurement activities almost half 0 -1 year old were 26 (40%) and some of the mothers were married Most married aged <19 years were 34 (52.3 %).

Table 2. Relationship between early marriage age and stunting

Variable	Stuntin g		Normal		Total		PR 95%CI	pValue
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Marriage age							1,984 (1,243- 3,168)	0.004
Married < 19 years	14	41.2%	20	58.8%	34	100%		
Married ≥ 19 years	8	25.8%	23	74.2%	31	100%		

Source: primary data, 2024

From the data above there is results bivariate analysis with using chi square has p value < 0.05 , which indicates a relationship between the variable age of early marriage and the incidence of stunting in toddlers . The percentage of toddlers who experienced stunting was 14 toddlers (41.2%), with the risk level (prevalence ratio/PR) for experiencing stunting in toddlers who married as children of 1.984 times compared to toddlers who married as adults, with a confidence interval 95% is 1,243-3,168.

Discussion

Based on study from prevalence of marriage early adapted high number as big as 34 (52.3%), which means more than half of the respondents married as children. The risk factors underlying early marriage include: first, low levels of household expenditure, where women from families with low expenditure are five times more likely to marry under the age of 19 compared to women from families with high expenditure. Second, rural areas, where women living in rural areas are three times more likely to marry under the age of 19 compared to women in urban areas. Third, the low level of family education, where women from families who have only completed primary education are three times more likely to marry at a young age compared to those from highly educated families (UNICEF Indonesia, 2022).

relationship between child marriage and the incidence of stunting has a p value of 0.004, meaning age child risk 1,984 times more big experienced stunting compared with the marriage took place age Where obtained a 95% CI of 1.243-3.168. Efevbera (2017) stated that the impact from marriage at age young that is experiencing stunting, besides That Also cause growth And slow physical development . From an obstetric perspective , namely risky pregnancy , occurrence complications on Mother still pregnant young . Research from Khairunnisa & Yuniarti (2020) and Larasati et al. (2018) revealed that pregnancy at childhood has a high risk of giving birth to a stunted baby, with young mothers having a 60% risk of stunting.

According to Fitriahadi (2018), around two-thirds of mothers who give birth under the age of 20 years have a 1.5 times greater chance of having a stunted child. Whereas study from Khusna & Nuryanto (2017), Ode & Nurbaena (2019), and Permatasari (2022) state that the factor in the occurrence of stunting is not from wedding age child And in results analysis No There is significant relationship between age Mother moment Marry with stunting, wrong the only one with pattern foster care Correct can affect nutritional status child . (BKKBN, 2021). Research by Zulkhakim et al. (2022) supports this by showing that 61.5% of mothers who married as children implemented poor parenting patterns, which is associated with the incidence of stunting. Aninora & Satria (2021) also stated that poor parenting patterns often occur in mothers who marry at a young age due to a lack of knowledge about good parenting. Mothers have an important role in raising children, and their parenting patterns can be influenced by various factors such as education level, employment status, nutritional status, and the mother's age at birth (Yusnia et al., 2022).

The cause of stunting is wrong the only one that is wedding age young Because impact on moment birth namely premature, disorders intrauterine growth , death baby Also experience lateness in grow the flowers . According to research by Astika (2020), pattern care provided by a Mother in give food can 6 times more risk big cause stunting compared with pattern foster Mother in giving insufficient food pattern care provided like providing MP- ASI , healthy food , nutritious intake And arrangement portion in food given to child . Nutritional parenting patterns influence children's food intake, including protein intake. Sari's research (2016) shows that babies who get low protein intake are 1.87 times more likely to experience stunting compared to babies who have sufficient protein intake. Based on this, early marriage is an indirect factor in the occurrence of stunting, indicating that there are other determinants that influence the incidence of stunting.

The research results show significance in the characteristics of respondents under 20 years of age. At that age, respondents were not physically and psychologically ready to face pregnancy. Previous research shows that under the age of 20 years, reproductive organs such as the uterus and pelvis often have not yet reached the physical maturity required to optimally bear the burden of pregnancy (Cahyani, 2020). Apart from that, the risk of pregnancy in teenagers who are too young also often arises because they are not psychologically ready to face the role of mother. Some of the psychological impacts that may arise include stress, depression, and experiences of abuse of babies, and often teenagers have to stop going to school because of their pregnancy (Faridah, 2016). Pregnancy at a teenage age can disrupt the teenager's future planning because they are forced to abandon their education, which has the potential to hinder the achievement of their dreams. In addition, teenage pregnancies often result in unwanted births, which can impact the emotional relationship between mother and child. The future of children born from teenage pregnancies often faces significant obstacles due to the lack of optimal support and care from mothers who are still teenagers and are not yet physically and emotionally ready to face the role of a mother.

Based on study This obtained The average respondent's highest level of education was Junior High School/Equivalent (SMP). Previous research has stated that education level is not a factor that is directly related to health literacy (Faridah, 2016). However, other research shows that access to media and low levels of knowledge correlate with levels of health literacy (Finbråten, 2018). On average, respondents in this study work as housewives. Previous studies have shown that employment status has an impact on the utilization of pregnancy screening services. Mothers who do not work tend to use less pregnancy check-up services, showing a lack of awareness of the importance of health care and reluctance to have pregnancy check-ups (Saragih, 2018). However, based on this research, the average respondent carries out pregnancy checks at least six times, in accordance with recommendations in the Maternal and Child Health (KIA) book, indicating that pregnant women who work as housewives utilize pregnancy check-up services as part of their pregnancy care.

CONCLUSION

Problem complex chronic nutrition on child or Stunting is wrong One the culprit that is wedding age child . complex chronic nutritional problems that can be caused by various factors, one of which is marriage at a young age . the 65 toddlers who took part measurement tall body found 22 (32.28) toddlers who experienced stunting, for toddler part The majority of women were 41 (63.1%). The results bivariate analysis with using chi square has p value < 0.05 , which indicates a relationship between the variable age of early marriage and the incidence of stunting in toddlers . The percentage of toddlers who experienced stunting was 14 toddlers (41.2%), with the risk level (prevalence ratio/PR) for experiencing stunting in toddlers who married as children of 1.984 times compared to toddlers who married as adults, with a confidence interval 95% is 1,243-3,168.

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