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**LEGAL COUNSELING ON THE IMPACT OF EARLY MARRIAGE ON
THE FUTURE OF TEENAGERS AT TRIGUNA VOCATIONAL
SCHOOL**

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| Article | Abstract |
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| <p><i>Received: Des 02, 2025; Reviewed: Jan 07, 2026; Accepted: Feb 09, 2026; Published: Feb 26, 2026</i></p> | <p><i>Legal counseling is a form of community service that aims to increase legal awareness and prevent early marriage among teenagers. This activity was motivated by the high risk of early marriage in Indonesia, including among students at Triguna Vocational School, which is influenced by a low understanding of the law, misguided social perceptions, and a lack of education about the impact of early marriage on the future of adolescents. The community service team conducted legal counseling with an emphasis on legal, health, educational, and socio-economic aspects as a preventive measure. The approach used was participatory and educational, actively involving students through the delivery of material, discussions, and case studies relevant to the lives of teenagers. The findings of the activity showed that some students did not understand the age limit for marriage according to the law and the legal and social consequences of early marriage. This education was able to increase students' understanding of children's rights, reproductive health risks, the potential for dropping out of school, and the long-term socio-economic impacts of early marriage. This activity was carried out at SMK Triguna, South Jakarta. This program is expected to be the first step in building legal awareness among adolescents and strengthening efforts to prevent early marriage through the active role of schools as educational and protective environments.</i></p> <p>Keywords: <i>legal counseling, early marriage, legal awareness among teenagers, legal education, community service</i></p> |

A. INTRODUCTION

Early marriage remains a serious social problem in Indonesia and has a broad impact on the quality of human resources, especially the younger generation. The practice of marriage below the age stipulated by law not only violates legal provisions but also has long-term consequences for the health, education, socio-economic conditions, and future of adolescents themselves. This phenomenon is influenced by various factors, including cultural norms that still tolerate child marriage, family economic pressures, lack of reproductive health education, and low understanding of legal aspects and children's rights.

In the context of vocational secondary education, the risks of early marriage have their own characteristics. Vocational high school students are in a crucial transition phase, namely the transition from education to the world of work and economic independence. At this stage, adolescents are faced with various life choices that require maturity of thought and mental preparedness. However, the lack of valid and comprehensive information often leads to premature decisions, including the decision to marry early, which ultimately hinders the achievement of educational and career goals.

Triguna Vocational School, as a vocational education institution, has a strategic role in preparing students to have job skills, economic independence, and mature future planning. However, the diverse socio-economic conditions of the students pose a challenge. Some students come from families with high economic pressure, social environments with traditional marriage norms, and limited access to adequate legal and reproductive health information. (Arabiyah, S., Hazdan, *Legal Counseling: Protecting Children from Early Marriage, Divorce, and Stunting*, 2025)

Based on initial observations and field observations, several conditions were found that reinforce the urgency of legal counseling on early marriage at SMK Triguna, including:

1. students' low understanding of the age limit for marriage as stipulated in Law Number 16 of 2019 concerning Marriage;
2. the existence of a misperception that early marriage can be a solution to family economic or social problems;
3. students' lack of understanding of the physical and psychological health impacts of pregnancy and childbirth in adolescence; and
4. limited access to integrated counseling, legal education, and reproductive health services in the school environment. (Budastra, C. G. 2021).

From a legal perspective, early marriage has the potential to violate statutory provisions and disregard the basic rights of children and adolescents, such as the right to education, the right to grow and develop optimally, and the right to protection from practices that are detrimental to their future. Lack of legal awareness causes adolescents and families to not understand the legal consequences, both for married couples and for those who facilitate underage marriage.

From a health perspective, marriage and pregnancy in adolescence increase the risk of pregnancy and childbirth complications, such as anemia, preeclampsia, premature birth, and even maternal and infant mortality. Psychologically, adolescents who marry early are prone to mental pressure, stress, anxiety, and emotional unpreparedness in taking on the roles of spouse and parent. (Arabiyah, S., Hazdan, *Legal Counseling: Protecting Children from Early Marriage, Divorce, and Stunting*, 2025)

Further impacts are seen in education and socio-economic aspects. Early marriage often

leads to dropping out of school, thereby hindering the development of skills and work competencies that should be acquired in vocational high school. This condition has implications for limited job opportunities, household economic instability, and the potential to perpetuate the cycle of poverty. In the long term, the economic and emotional immaturity of young couples often triggers domestic conflicts and increases the risk of divorce.

Based on these conditions, the main problem faced by Triguna Vocational School is the low level of legal awareness and comprehensive understanding among students regarding the impact of early marriage, both from a legal, health, educational, and socio-economic perspective. In addition, the limited capacity of teachers and educational staff in delivering sensitive material in a multidisciplinary and participatory manner is also an obstacle to prevention efforts. (Budastra, C. G. 2021).

Therefore, preventive intervention is needed through structured and contextual legal counseling, with an emphasis on increasing legal awareness and preventing early marriage. This counseling is not only oriented towards conveying legal norms, but also towards forming critical attitudes and reflective awareness among adolescents so that they are able to consider the long-term impacts of every decision they make. Through legal education on the impact of early marriage at Triguna Vocational School, it is hoped that a comprehensive understanding and collective awareness will be built among students to delay marriage until a mature and responsible age, as well as to take advantage of their teenage years as a period for strengthening their education, skills, and planning for a better future. (Muslim, A. Fundamentals of Community Development, 2022)

Early marriage or young marriage can be defined as a marriage between a man and a woman who are still under the age stipulated by law or when they are young teenagers. Article 7 paragraph 1 of the 1974 Marriage Law stipulates that the minimum age for marriage for men and women or those who are considered legally competent to marry is 19 years. According to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), in 2023, only 68.29% of all adolescents in Indonesia will be unmarried. Meanwhile, adolescents who are married reached 30.61% of the total number of Indonesian adolescents, and adolescents who are divorced or widowed reached 1.10% of the total number. The issue of early marriage has become a concern for developing countries, especially Indonesia, as it is a determining factor in establishing national policies and programs. Early marriage itself poses many risks that can be detrimental to the country.

Many factors can influence the occurrence of early marriage. One of the main causes is that many people still do not understand marriage and many still hold the belief that marriage must be done at a young age. As a result, many parents do not understand the meaning of maturity in a child, and end up marrying off their children at a young age, which in this case often happens to girls or young women. They assume that once a girl has undergone significant physical changes, she should be married off. The minimum age for marriage has been specified in legislation, but in reality, many parents still maintain their traditions. Usually, those who still have the tradition of early marriage are parents in rural areas who still believe that early marriage is a tradition passed down by their ancestors, which will affect their children's education. Usually, parents in rural areas still believe that girls do not need to go to school until they are older. (Febrihadi Suparidho, 2025).

In essence, Indonesian law opposes early marriage because it is seen as detrimental to the country. However, in reality, marriages involving brides and grooms under the age of 19 are still common in Indonesia. Early marriage is very common among young people today who are still students, due to environmental factors, promiscuity, and other factors, causing early

marriage in Indonesia to increase. This is basically due to a lack of guidance, a lack of education, a lack of strict supervision from parents, and unrestricted socializing. Many students do not understand the legal provisions regarding the minimum age for marriage under Law No. 16 of 2019 (amending Law No. 1 of 1974), which sets the minimum age at 19 years for both men and women. Early marriage often occurs in Indonesia, especially among students, causing them to lose opportunities to study (drop out of school), lose opportunities for higher education, lose the chance to enjoy their youth, and be limited in developing their careers. (Muslim, A. Fundamentals of Community Development, 2022).

Not only that, adolescents who marry early are prone to mental stress, depression, and reproductive health problems because they are not yet biologically or emotionally mature. In addition, there is a lack of legal, social, and health knowledge due to early marriage. Article 6 paragraph 2 of Law No. 1 of 1974 states that in order to get married, a person who has not reached the age of 21 must obtain permission from both parents. However, in practice, in society in general, there are still many who get married at a young age or underage. The various explanations above can be summarized to mean that the issue of early marriage is still a serious issue that must be addressed by the state. (Soleman, N., Elindawati, (2021).

Considering the factors and consequences that can result from early marriage, the role of the state is not limited to simply making regulations, but it is also necessary to provide programs that can support the realization of regulations that can prevent early marriage. Therefore, there is a need for community service in the form of legal counseling on the impact of early marriage on the future of teenagers at Triguna Vocational School. (Febrihadi Suparidho, 2025).

B. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research method used in this legal counseling activity is empirical legal research (socio-legal research) with a qualitative approach. This method was chosen because the research not only examines legal provisions normatively, but also examines how the law is understood, responded to, and implemented in the social life of adolescents in the Triguna Vocational School environment. Empirical legal research is used to view law as social behavior (*law in action*), particularly in the context of students' understanding of legislation regarding the age limit for marriage and the impact of early marriage on their future. This approach allows researchers to identify the gap between applicable legal norms (*law in the books*) and the reality of understanding and practice in the field (*law in society*).

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. The Concept of Community Empowerment

The concept of community empowerment is an empowerment to improve the capabilities and independence of the community so that they can solve or find solutions to problems that arise in the community. Empowerment is not merely providing assistance or facilities, but rather emphasizes efforts to develop the awareness, capacity, and skills of the community so that they no longer depend on outside parties. According to participatory development theory, empowerment must be carried out based on the principle of active participation, where the community is directly involved in every stage, from planning and implementation to program evaluation. Empowerment also emphasizes the principles of

equality, justice, and sustainability, so that the results achieved are not only temporary but can bring about long- term change. Through empowerment, the community is encouraged to be more critical, have social control, and be empowered in the economic, social, legal, and cultural fields. Therefore, the concept of community empowerment can be understood as a strategy that prioritizes strengthening the capacity of individuals and groups in order to create an independent, prosperous community that is aware of its rights and obligations in social and state life. Empowerment can also be understood as a positive effort to transform weak or powerless conditions into strong and independent ones.⁸ According to Sumodiningrat and Wulandari, empowerment means providing encouragement or energy so that a person or group can move and act independently. In addition, empowerment is also a strategic step to increase active community participation in the development process. This includes a shift from a community that lacks knowledge, skills, or attitudes that support development to a community that is more aware, skilled, and has a productive mentality. Muhammad, F., Yulia Kurniaty, Puji Sulistyaningsih, Basri, & Habib Muhsin Syafingi. (2025)

Community empowerment can be realized through active community participation facilitated by empowerment actors. The main targets of community empowerment are those

Who weak and lack the power, strength, or ability to access productive resources, or communities that are marginalized in development. Community empowerment is the possession of power, strength, or ability by the community to identify potential and problems and to determine alternative solutions independently. Community empowerment is measured through three aspects: (a) decision-making ability, (b) independence, and (c) ability to utilize efforts for the future. (Soleman, N., Elindawati, (2021)

2. Extension

Extension is an effort to disseminate information and knowledge in order to create a community that behaves in accordance with daily life. Extension is a process of educating, communicating, influencing, and motivating the community to overcome their own problems by finding their own solutions and behaving positively. Extension is not only about providing information or knowledge, but also encouraging the community to create a better quality of life by generating new ideas. Extension is derived from the word "extension," which is widely and commonly used in Indonesian. Extension comes from the root word "suluh," which means a source of light in the darkness. In Dutch, extension is called Voorlichting, which means providing information to help someone find their way. In English and German, extension is referred to as giving advice or *Beratung*, which means that someone can provide guidance to another person, but it is the other person who has the right to make their own choices. An example is legal education, which is carried out with the aim of creating greater legal awareness among the community so that every member of society realizes and appreciates their rights and obligations as citizens and embodies a culture of law in their attitudes and behavior that is conscious, obedient, and compliant with the law.

3. Education

Education is a process undertaken by an individual to discover their true self, which is done by observing and learning, which then gives rise to actions and behaviors. Education is actually not much different from learning as developed by the behaviorist school of psychology. It's just that this term is often understood and interpreted differently from learning. And this term is often used in educational approaches, which certainly have a meaning beyond just learning. (Iim Fahimah, 2025).

Education is a learning process that aims to develop an individual's potential in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits. Education does not only take place formally in schools or educational institutions, but can also be carried out non-formally or informally in everyday life. This process involves conscious guidance so that a person can experience positive changes in the way they think, feel, and act. Education also plays an important role in shaping a person's character and morals so that they are not only smart in science, but also have good and responsible behavior. With education, it is hoped that individuals can become independent, broad-minded, and able to contribute positively to society. Munawar, N. "Community Empowerment." (2021)

4. Early Marriage

Early marriage is a marriage between couples who are below the age that is legally or socially considered ready for marriage, usually before the age of 19. In the context of Indonesian law, anyone who marries before the age of 19 for men and 16 for women can be categorized as early marriage. Another definition describes early marriage as a marriage that occurs when one or both partners are still children or adolescents, who do not yet have the physical, mental, and emotional maturity to build a household. (Iim Fahimah, 2025).

Early marriage is generally viewed as a marriage that is entered into without careful preparation, especially in terms of mental and economic readiness, and often carries negative risks such as a lack of knowledge about marriage and family, and the potential for problems in resolving domestic conflicts. In practice, early marriage can also be influenced by social, cultural, economic, and educational factors. Early marriage is a marriage that takes place before the age set by state law or before the individual is psychologically and socially ready to live a family life.

5. Legal Counseling on the Impact of Early Marriage on the Future of Teenagers at Triguna Vocational School

Legal counseling on the impact of early marriage is a strategic educational effort to increase adolescents' legal awareness of the various consequences of marriage at a young age. This activity aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of early marriage, from legal, educational, health, and social aspects, so that adolescents are able to be more wise and responsible in planning their future.

a. Legal Counseling on Understanding Children's Rights and Marriage Regulations

Legal education on the impact of early marriage at Triguna Vocational School began with providing a comprehensive understanding of the legal aspects of marriage and the protection of children's rights. The counseling material focused on explaining Law Number 16 of 2019 concerning Amendments to Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage, which sets the minimum age for marriage for men and women at 19 years. The presentation of the material not only emphasized normative aspects such as prohibitions and sanctions, but also explained the legal rationale behind the setting of this age limit, which is to ensure the physical, mental, and social readiness of prospective spouses. In addition, the counseling also discussed the rights of adolescents protected by law, such as the right to education, health, growth and development, and protection from practices that are detrimental to children's futures. With this approach, students are expected to

understand that early marriage is not only a personal or family matter, but is also closely related to human rights violations and the state's legal responsibility to protect the younger generation. Muhammad, F., Yulia Kurniaty, Puji Sulistyarningsih, Basri, & Habib Muhsin Syafingi. (2025)

b. Counseling that Links Health, Education, and Socio-Economic Impacts

The next form of legal counseling was conducted through an interdisciplinary approach that linked the law with the health, educational, and socio-economic impacts of early marriage. In this session, participants were given an explanation of the reproductive health risks faced by adolescents who marry and become pregnant at a young age, such as pregnancy complications, anemia, risks of maternal and infant mortality, and long-term health disorders. From an educational perspective, the counseling highlights the fact that early marriage often leads to dropping out of school, limited access to further education, and the loss of opportunities to develop skills that are much needed in the world of work, especially for vocational school students who are being prepared to become skilled workers. The socio-economic aspect was also an important focus, explaining that young couples generally do not have financial readiness and job stability, making them vulnerable to domestic conflict, economic dependence, and structural poverty. By integrating these various aspects, legal counseling is no longer understood narrowly, but rather as a preventive instrument that protects the future of adolescents as a whole. (Muhammad Tahir, 2024).

c. Participatory Counseling as a Strategy for Prevention and Strengthening Legal Awareness among Youth

The form of legal counseling at SMK Triguna is also designed to be participatory in order to encourage the active involvement of students in the learning process and the prevention of early marriage. The methods used include group discussions, case studies relevant to the lives of adolescents, decision-making simulations, and interactive question and answer sessions that allow students to express their views and experiences. Through this approach, students are not only the objects of education, but also subjects who are encouraged to think critically about social norms and environmental pressures that encourage early marriage. In addition, the education also emphasizes the formation of legal awareness, namely the ability of adolescents to recognize legal and social risks, understand their rights and obligations, and dare to make responsible decisions for their future education and career. Thus, legal counseling does not stop at the transfer of knowledge, but serves as a means of empowerment that fosters awareness, resilience, and commitment among Triguna Vocational School students to delay marriage until they are mature and ready legally, physically, and socially. (Muhammad Tahir, 2024).

6. The impacts of early marriage on the future of adolescents, from legal, educational, health, and social perspectives

Early marriage is a social phenomenon that still occurs widely among teenagers and has various serious consequences for their future. The impact is not only personal but also touches on legal, educational, health, and social aspects, which as a whole can hinder the development of teenagers' potential and their quality of life in the future. Below are

the impacts of early marriage on the future of adolescents, in terms of legal, educational, health, and social aspects, among others:

a. The Impact of Early Marriage on Legal and Educational Aspects

Early marriage has a significant impact on legal and educational aspects, especially for adolescents who are still of school age. From a legal perspective, marriages conducted below the age stipulated by Law Number 16 of 2019 concerning the Marriage Registration System have the potential to violate the provisions of laws and regulations and the rights of children guaranteed by the state. Adolescents who marry early often do not understand the legal consequences that accompany marital status, such as vulnerability to uncertainty in population administration, difficulties in obtaining marriage certificates, and limited legal protection in the event of domestic conflict or domestic violence. In addition, early marriage also has a direct impact on education, as most adolescents who marry during their school years are forced to discontinue their formal education. Dropping out of school results in the loss of opportunities to develop academic competencies and vocational skills, which should be the main foundation for the future careers and economic independence of adolescents, especially for vocational high school students who are being prepared to enter the professional world. Soleman, N., Elindawati, Early Marriage in Indonesia. (2021)

b. The Impact of Early Marriage on Physical and Psychological Health

From a health perspective, early marriage poses significant risks to the physical and psychological health of adolescents, especially young women. Pregnancy and childbirth at a young age carry the risk of various complications, such as anemia, preeclampsia, premature birth, and increased maternal and infant mortality rates. The biological immaturity of adolescents means that their reproductive systems are not ready for pregnancy, which has an impact on their long-term health. In addition, from a psychological perspective, adolescents who marry early tend to experience mental stress due to household responsibilities that are not in line with their emotional development stage. Stress, anxiety, depression, and feelings of isolation often arise due to limited social support, domestic conflicts, and sudden changes in roles from student to spouse or parent. These psychological impacts often affect the quality of family relationships and hinder the optimal development of adolescents' personalities.

c. The Impact of Early Marriage on Social Aspects and Socioeconomic Future

The impact of early marriage is also strongly felt in the social and socio-economic aspects of adolescents' futures. Adolescents who marry early generally do not have adequate economic preparedness and job skills, making them vulnerable to financial difficulties and economic dependence on their extended families. This condition can trigger domestic conflicts, increase the risk of divorce, and prolong the cycle of intergenerational poverty. Socially, adolescents who marry early often experience limitations in interacting with their peers, reduced social participation, and the emergence of social stigma, especially for adolescent girls. The loss of opportunities to build social networks, develop their potential, and plan their careers carefully makes early marriage a major obstacle to the realization of an independent, productive, and prosperous future for adolescents. Therefore, early marriage not only affects individuals but also has broad implications for the quality of human resources and social development as a whole. Soleman, N., Elindawati, Early Marriage in Indonesia. (2021)

D. CONCLUSION

Forms of legal counseling on the impact of early marriage on the future of adolescents at Triguna Vocational School include: legal counseling based on understanding children's rights and marriage regulations, interdisciplinary counseling that links health, education, and socio-economic impacts, and participatory counseling as a strategy for prevention and strengthening adolescents' legal awareness. Meanwhile, the impacts of early marriage on the future of adolescents, in terms of legal, educational, health, and social aspects, include: Early marriage has a significant impact on the future of adolescents in terms of legal, educational, health, and social aspects. From a legal perspective, marriage below the age stipulated in Law Number 16 of 2019 has the potential to violate statutory provisions and children's rights, and creates vulnerability to administrative issues and a lack of legal protection. From an educational perspective, early marriage often leads to dropping out of school, thereby hindering the development of competencies and skills necessary for the future careers and economic independence of adolescents. From a health perspective, marriage and pregnancy at a young age increase the risk of pregnancy and childbirth complications and have an impact on long-term reproductive health. Psychologically, adolescents who marry early are prone to mental pressure, stress, and emotional unpreparedness due to household responsibilities that are not in line with their stage of development. Meanwhile, from a social and socio-economic perspective, early marriage often triggers economic instability, domestic conflict, limited social interaction, and perpetuates the cycle of poverty. Thus, early marriage not only harms adolescents as individuals, but also has a broad impact on the quality of human resources and social development.

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