

Strengthening Parental Literacy to Prevent Sexual Violence and Child Marriage: A Community-Based Intervention Study

Aditama Nuriksan Wicaksono, Ainaya Arinawati, Daffa Dzaki Dhanurendra, Muhammad Harish Fithratullah, Imelga Mutiara Bintang, Nadine Maritzafiani Heriyanto, Putri Iva Lubana Maulida, Martini^{a)}, Aditya Kusumawati

Diponegoro University, Semarang, Indonesia

^{a)}Corresponding author: martini@live.undip.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study aims to strengthen parental literacy in preventing sexual violence and child marriage through a community-based intervention at Kranyak Kidul Public Health Center, Pekalongan. The program involved 20 parents and employed interactive lectures, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), communication simulations, and pre-test and post-test evaluations. The results showed a significant improvement in participants' knowledge, with post-test scores increasing from an average range of 7–9 to 9–10. Overall, 85% of participants demonstrated improved literacy. These findings indicate that literacy-based education combined with practical simulation is effective in enhancing parents' roles in protecting children from sexual violence and early marriage.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Submitted/Received: 20 March 2026

First Revised: 04 April 2026

Accepted: 20 April 2026

First Available online: 30 April 2026

Publication Date: 30 April 2026

Keyword :

Parental literacy

Sexual violence prevention

Child marriage

Community education

Family-based intervention

INTRODUCTION

Child marriage and sexual violence remain significant public health concerns, particularly in developing countries, including Indonesia. These issues have serious implications for children's physical, psychological, and social well-being (UNICEF, 2021; WHO, 2020). In regions such as Pekalongan, socio-cultural and economic factors contribute to the persistence of early marriage and the vulnerability of children to sexual violence.

Previous studies have highlighted the role of policy, education, and community awareness in addressing these issues. However, most interventions have focused on adolescents or institutional approaches, with limited attention given to the role of parental literacy at the community level (World Bank, 2020; UNFPA, 2022).

However, previous studies have primarily focused on policy and health impacts of child marriage and sexual violence, with limited emphasis on parental literacy interventions at the community level. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by implementing a literacy-based educational program targeting parents to strengthen their role in preventing sexual violence and early marriage.

METHOD

This study employed a pre-experimental one-group pre-test and post-test design. The activity was conducted as part of a community service program involving 20 parents with school-age children in Pekalongan.

The intervention consisted of several stages, including pre-test assessment, educational lectures, focus group discussions (FGD), simulation activities, and post-test evaluation. The educational materials focused on increasing parental literacy regarding sexual violence prevention and early marriage.

Data were collected using structured questionnaires designed to measure participants' knowledge and understanding. The instrument consisted of multiple-choice questions that had been reviewed for content validity by experts in public health and education.

Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively by comparing pre-test and post-test scores to assess changes in participants' knowledge. Qualitative insights from FGDs were analyzed using thematic analysis to support the quantitative findings.

RESULTS

The results showed an increase in participants' knowledge after the intervention. The average post-test scores were higher compared to pre-test scores, indicating improved understanding of sexual violence prevention and early marriage risks among parents.

Participants also demonstrated increased awareness and confidence in identifying risky situations and applying preventive measures in their family environment.



FIGURE 1. Delivery of Educational Material on Early Marriage and Sexual

The evaluation of the activity was conducted using pre-test and post-test assessments involving 20 participants, consisting of parents with children ranging from elementary school to adolescence who attended the educational session. The results showed an improvement in participants' knowledge and understanding regarding the prevention of sexual violence and early marriage.

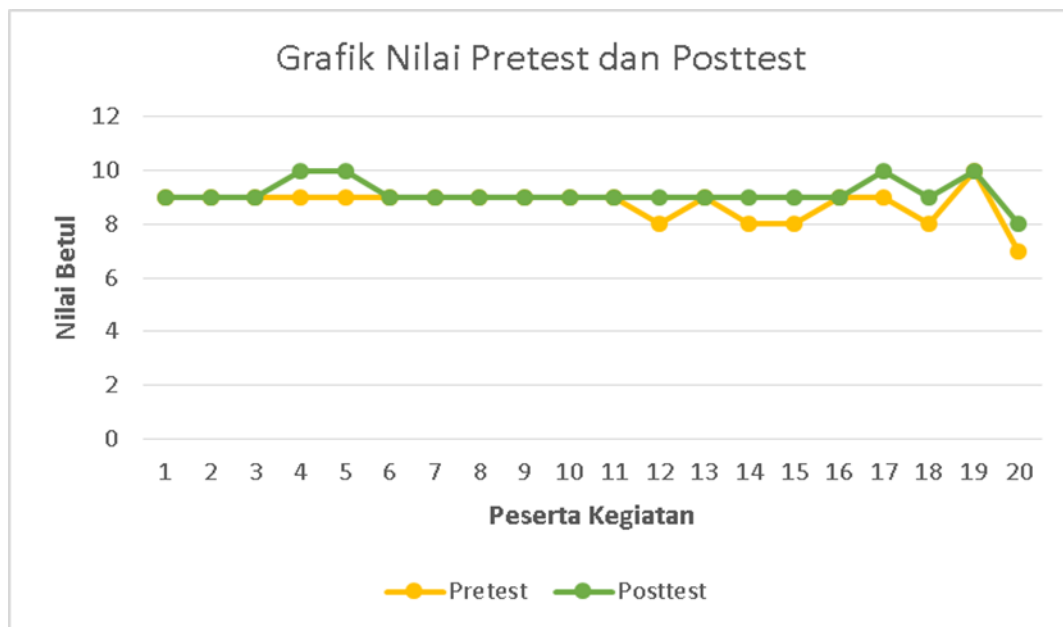


FIGURE 2. Test Results Based on the Number of Correct Answers of Participants in the Parental Literacy Strengthening Program for Preventing Sexual Violence and Early Marriage (Pre-test and Post-test).

Figure 2 presents a comparison of pre-test and post-test scores. Before the intervention, the average participant scores ranged from 7 to 9. After the intervention, a significant improvement was observed, with the average post-test score reaching 9, and several participants achieving a perfect score 10.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that interactive and participatory educational approaches, such as lectures combined with FGDs and simulations, are effective in improving parental literacy.

This result is consistent with previous studies showing that family-based education plays a crucial role in enhancing awareness and preventive behaviors related to child protection (García-Moreno et al., 2021; UNFPA, 2022). Parental involvement is essential in creating a safe environment for children,

especially in communities with high vulnerability.

The improvement in knowledge suggests that empowering parents through literacy-based interventions can serve as an effective strategy to prevent sexual violence and early marriage. Similar findings have been reported in previous studies, indicating that increased parental awareness contributes significantly to reducing child vulnerability to violence (UNICEF, 2021).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that literacy-based educational interventions are effective in improving parental knowledge and awareness regarding the prevention of sexual violence and early marriage. The program successfully enhanced participants' understanding and readiness to implement preventive measures within their families. However, this study is limited by its small sample size and short-term evaluation. Future studies should involve larger populations and include long-term assessments to evaluate behavioral changes and the sustainability of parental practices.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to the Faculty of Public Health for funding this community service program in 2024 (Semester 1). Appreciation is also extended to the community partners and participating parents in Pekalongan for their active involvement and cooperation throughout the program.

REFERENCES

- García-Moreno, C., Hegarty, K., d'Oliveira, A. F. L., Koziol-McLain, J., Colombini, M., & Feder, G. (2021). The health-systems response to violence against women. *The Lancet*, 385(9977), 1567–1579. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(14\)61837-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(14)61837-7)
- Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak. (2022). *Profil Anak Indonesia 2022*. Jakarta: KemenPPPA.
- Lestari, N. (2021). Literasi Keluarga dan Perlindungan Anak dari Kekerasan Seksual. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat*, 9(1), 45–55.
- Santoso, A. (2019). Peran Orang Tua dalam Pencegahan Pernikahan Anak di Indonesia. *Jurnal Psikologi Sosial*, 7(2), 112–120.
- UNICEF Indonesia. (2020). *Child Marriage in Indonesia: Progress and Challenges*. Jakarta: UNICEF.
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2021). *Child marriage: Latest trends and future prospects*.
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). (2022). *Adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights*.
- World Bank. (2020). *Economic impacts of child marriage: Global synthesis report*.