

Pola Perceraian pada Pernikahan Dini: (Studi Kasus di Desa Taman Ayu, Kecamatan Gerung)

Pattern of Divorce in Early Marriage: (Case Study in Taman Ayu Village, Gerung District)

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji fenomena perceraian yang dialami pasangan yang menikah di usia muda di Dusun Bongor, Desa Taman Ayu, Kecamatan Gerung, Kabupaten Lombok Barat. Pernikahan dini merupakan masalah sosial yang cukup kompleks, terutama di daerah pedesaan Indonesia, dan Nusa Tenggara Barat merupakan daerah dengan insiden yang relatif tinggi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan sosiologi keluarga dengan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Pendataan dilakukan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan sepuluh informan, yang terdiri dari mantan pasangan yang bercerai, tokoh masyarakat setempat, tokoh agama, dan petugas dari Dinas Agama (KUA) Kabupaten Gerung. Hasil penelitian mengidentifikasi lima faktor utama yang mendorong perceraian pada pernikahan dini di daerah tersebut, yaitu: (1) ketidaksiapan psikologis dan emosional pasangan muda dalam mengelola konflik yang timbul dalam kehidupan pernikahan; (2) beban ekonomi yang berat karena latar belakang pendidikan yang rendah dan kesempatan kerja yang terbatas; (3) campur tangan yang berlebihan oleh keluarga besar dalam urusan rumah tangga; (4) perselingkuhan yang dipicu oleh ketidakdewasaan emosional; dan (5) kekerasan dalam rumah tangga (KDRT).

Kata Kunci : Perceraian, Pernikahan Dini, Sosiologi Keluarga, Desa Taman Ayu

Abstract

This study aims to examine the phenomenon of divorce experienced by couples who get married at a young age in Bongor Hamlet, Taman Ayu Village, Gerung District, West Lombok Regency. Early marriage is a complicated social problem, especially in rural Indonesia, and West Nusa Tenggara is one of the areas with a relatively high incidence rate. This study uses a family sociology approach with a descriptive qualitative method. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews with ten informants, consisting of divorced former couples, local

community leaders, religious leaders, and officers of the Gerung District Religious Affairs Office (KUA). The results of the study identified five main factors that encourage the occurrence of divorce in early marriage in the region, namely: (1) the psychological and emotional unpreparedness of young couples in managing conflicts that arise in married life; (2) heavy economic burden due to low educational background and limited job opportunities; (3) excessive interference of the extended family in domestic affairs; (4) infidelity triggered by emotional immaturity; and (5) domestic violence (KDRT).

Keywords: Divorce, Early Marriage, Family Sociology, Taman Ayu Village



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INTRODUCTION

Early marriage remains a serious social problem in Indonesia, particularly in rural areas where education levels and economic conditions are relatively lagging. According to 2022 data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), Indonesia ranks seventh globally in terms of early marriage rates. West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) consistently ranks among the provinces with the highest child marriage rates, reaching 22.17 percent for children under 18 in 2021. This situation has significant social impacts, one of which is the rising divorce rate among young couples.

Bongor Hamlet, Taman Ayu Village, Gerung District, West Lombok Regency, is one rural community that is clearly facing this problem. According to data from the Gerung District Religious Affairs Office (KUA), over the past three years (2021-2023), 47 divorce cases involving couples married under the age of 20 were recorded. Of these, 31 cases originated in Taman Ayu Village, which includes Bongor Hamlet. This data indicates a strong link between early marriage and a high risk of divorce in this community.

The phenomenon of divorce in the context of early marriage is not solely a personal issue between husband and wife, but rather the result of a complex social system. The family's socioeconomic conditions, prevailing cultural norms, educational attainment, and the role of social institutions such as the extended family, community, and the state significantly influence the strength of a young couple's marriage. The community in Bongor Hamlet still adheres to patriarchal culture and social norms that encourage marriage as a solution to various social problems, including poverty, parental concerns about their children's promiscuity, and pressure from the surrounding environment.

The long-term impact of early marriage divorce is extensive, felt not only by the divorcing couple but also by the children born from the marriage, the extended family, and society as a whole. Children from early marriages that end in divorce are at high risk of experiencing psychological developmental disorders, lack of attention and affection, and dropping out of school. Furthermore, the cycle of poverty tends to repeat itself because parents who divorce at a young age are generally do not yet have sufficient economic capacity to support themselves and their children.

The study of the sociology of the family provides a comprehensive analytical framework for understanding this phenomenon. Family sociology not only views the family as the smallest social unit in society but also examines how the family interacts with the broader social system, including economic, political, religious, and cultural institutions. From a sociological perspective, divorce is not simply the failure of an individual marriage, but rather a reflection of structural tensions within a society undergoing a period of social and economic transition.

Several previous studies on early marriage and divorce in Indonesia have been conducted by various academics. Mubasyaroh (2016) found that economic, cultural,

and educational factors are the three main pillars underlying early marriage in rural Javanese communities. Meanwhile, Nurmala (2019), through her study in Lombok, revealed that the tradition of merariq (elopement) contributes to the high rate of early marriage among the Sasak people. However, studies specifically linking early marriage to divorce in the context of specific communities such as Bongor Hamlet are still very limited.

This research is here to fill this gap by conducting an in-depth and contextual study of the factors that cause divorce in couples who marry early in Bongor Hamlet. Using a family sociology approach and qualitative methods, this research attempts to unravel the social dynamics that take place in the married life of young couples in this rural community. It is hoped that a comprehensive understanding of the roots of this problem can become the basis for formulating more effective policies in dealing with the problems of early marriage and divorce in society.

In more detail, this study aims to: (1) identify the factors causing divorce in couples who marry early in Bongor Hamlet; (2) analyze the social dynamics in young families that lead to divorce; and (3) describe the impact of divorce on individuals, families, and the local community. This study is expected to provide an academic contribution to the study of family sociology, particularly in the context of rural communities in NTB, while also presenting practical recommendations for policy makers in efforts to prevent early marriage and divorce.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-phenomenological method. This qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to deeply understand the subjective experiences of individuals involved in the phenomenon of divorce due to early marriage and to uncover the social meanings behind this phenomenon. Phenomenology was specifically chosen because this research seeks to understand the 'lifeworld' of the informants, namely how they experience, interpret, and respond to the experience of early marriage and divorce in their daily lives.

The research location is Bongor Hamlet, Taman Ayu Village, Gerung District, West Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province. This location was selected based on several considerations: (1) the high rate of early marriage and divorce in the area according to data from the Gerung District Office of Religious Affairs; (2) the characteristics of a distinctive rural community with strong traditional values and Sasak culture; (3) ease of access for researchers to the location; and (4) the community's willingness to participate in the research. The research was conducted for four months, from February to May 2024.

Research informants were selected using purposive sampling techniques with the following criteria: (1) having had an early marriage, that is, married before

reaching the age of 20; (2) having been divorced or in the process of divorce; and (3) being willing to share experiences openly. In addition, researchers also interviewed key informants consisting of community leaders, religious leaders (tuan guru and ustadz), KUA officers in Gerung District, and village midwives. The total number of informants was ten people, consisting of seven former divorced couples (four women and three men) and three key informants. To protect the privacy of informants, names were replaced with initials.

Data collection techniques include three methods: (1) in-depth interviews conducted in a semi-structured manner to comprehensively explore the experiences, perspectives, and reflections of informants; (2) participant observation in the Bongor Hamlet environment to directly understand the social and cultural context of the community; and (3) documentation studies in the form of divorce records from the Gerung District Office of Religious Affairs and population data from the Taman Ayu Village Office. Data validity is guaranteed through source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking techniques.

Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman (1994) model, which includes three stages: (1) data reduction, namely sorting and simplifying raw data from interviews and field notes; (2) data presentation, namely organizing data into a format that facilitates drawing conclusions; and (3) drawing conclusions and verification, namely interpreting data to find meaning, patterns, and relationships between variables. Thematic analysis was applied to identify the main themes that emerged from the data, which were then interpreted within the theoretical framework of family sociology. This study fully adhered to research ethics. All informants received a full explanation of the study's objectives and procedures before providing informed consent. Their participation was voluntary, and their identities were kept confidential using their initials. The data collected was used solely for academic purposes and was not disseminated to unauthorized parties.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Social Profile of Bongor Hamlet and the Phenomenon of Early Marriage

Bongor Hamlet is one of six hamlets in Taman Ayu Village, Gerung District, West Lombok Regency. According to 2023 population data, the hamlet is home to approximately 287 families with a total population of approximately 1,142. The majority of the population is Sasak, a Muslim ethnic group, whose primary livelihoods are farming, farm laborers, and small traders. The education level of Bongor Hamlet residents is relatively low; most adults have only completed elementary or junior high school. This directly impacts their limited understanding of reproductive rights, family planning, and the importance of premarital education.

The phenomenon of early marriage in Bongor Hamlet cannot be separated from the Sasak cultural context which historically views marriage as a social

obligation that must be fulfilled as early as possible, especially for women. The tradition of merariq (elopement) which is still practiced in some families creates a situation where marriage can take place without proper preparation. Besides cultural factors, economic pressures also play an important role: for poor families, marrying off girls early is seen as a way to lighten the burden of life. Gerung District KUA data records that between 2021 and 2023, there were 63 requests for marriage dispensation from Taman Ayu Village, and 41 of them were granted by the Religious Court.

2. Psychological and Emotional Unpreparedness Factors

One of the main factors driving divorce among couples who marry early in Bongor Hamlet is psychological and emotional unpreparedness. Interviews with seven divorced informants revealed that they lacked sufficient emotional maturity when entering marriage. SA (23 years old, divorced after two years of marriage at the age of 17) revealed that she did not know how to resolve conflicts with her partner without exploding emotionally. This inability to manage emotions and communicate healthily in conflict situations triggers disputes that escalate and ultimately lead to divorce.

Psychological unpreparedness is also evident in the inability of young couples to adjust to their new roles as husband or wife. From the perspective of Duvall's Family Development Theory, couples who marry early are often still in the adolescent developmental stage, characterized by a search for identity, dependence on peers, and a tendency toward egocentric thinking. Upon entering marriage, they are suddenly required to assume adult responsibilities for themselves, their partners, and their children. This tension between the developmental needs of adolescents and the demands of adult roles creates significant psychological stress, especially without adequate guidance.

3. Economic Pressure as a Structural Factor

Economic pressure is the most dominant structural factor in divorce cases among young couples in Bongor Hamlet. Couples who marry early generally lack sufficient education to access decent-paying jobs, creating chronic financial stress within the household. Informant MH (25 years old, divorced after three years of marriage at age 18) recounted that he and his wife constantly argued about finances, as his income as a daily laborer was insufficient to meet the needs of their small family. Repeated disputes over money gradually eroded the love and trust between them.

Within the framework of conflict theory, poverty and limited economic resources create conditions in which conflict within young families becomes almost inevitable. When available resources are insufficient to meet the needs of all family members, clashes of interests between members of the nuclear and extended

families intensify. This study found that economic issues often become the trigger for other conflicts, such as arguments over child-rearing patterns, dissatisfaction with gender role allocation, and social jealousy. The inability of young husbands to fulfill the role of breadwinner, which is highly emphasized in patriarchal Sasak culture, is also a significant source of conflict.

4. Extended Family Intervention and Power Dynamics

One of the most striking findings in this research is how powerful the influence of extended family intervention is in exacerbating young couples' marital conflict. In Bongor Hamlet, a strong patrilineal kinship system means that the husband's family has dominant authority over the domestic life of young couples. For couples who still live with their husband's parents - which is a common pattern due to economic limitations, conflict between the daughter-in-law and mother-in-law is one of the main sources of tension.

Informant RL (21 years old, divorced after 18 months of marriage at the age of 16) revealed that her mother-in-law always interfered in her household affairs, from how to cook, how to raise children, to how to dress. Her husband, who was still very dependent emotionally and financially on his parents, often sided with his mother in every dispute. This intervention by the extended family, which in Parsons' functionalist perspective is a threat to the boundaries of the nuclear family subsystem, caused serious dysfunction in the married life of the young couple. The inability of the young husband to separate loyalty to his family of origin from commitment to his new family became a paradox that was difficult to resolve.

5. Domestic Violence (DV)

This study also found that domestic violence (DV) was a direct cause of divorce in a number of cases. Of the seven informants interviewed, four admitted to experiencing physical violence from their partners, while all female informants reported experiencing verbal and psychological abuse. This violence is often triggered by the inability of young husbands to manage frustration caused by economic pressures, jealousy, or the influence of alcohol. Patriarchal culture, which places women in a subordinate position, also plays a role in normalizing domestic violence in rural communities.

These findings align with research by Hayati et al. (2021), which showed that women who marry at an early age are at a significantly higher risk of becoming victims of domestic violence than women who marry later in life. The economic powerlessness and social dependence of women who marry young make it difficult for them to report violence or leave abusive relationships. In Bongor Hamlet, the social stigma attached to divorced women also hinders victims of domestic violence from deciding to separate, even when their marriages are already severely

inadequate. This situation reflects how entrenched gender inequality in society exacerbates the vulnerability of women who marry early.

6. The Impact of Divorce on Individuals and Families

The impact of divorce on the individuals involved, especially women, is very large, both from a psychological, social and economic perspective. Psychologically, divorced female informants reported feelings of failure, shame, and deep worries about their future. The social stigma of being a 'young widow' in a conservative community like Dusun Bongor adds to the heavy psychological pressure they bear. Informant SA admitted that he had experienced depression for several months after the divorce, feeling worthless and overwhelmed in taking care of his infant child.

The economic impact of divorce is also significant, especially for women who lack adequate skills and education. Many young widows in Bongor Hamlet are forced to return to their parents' homes and become dependents of their families of origin, while others are forced to work as laborers or domestic workers for very low wages. Their rights to iddah (waiting period), mut'ah (waiting period), and child custody are often denied due to their ex-husbands' similar lack of financial capacity. This situation perpetuates a cycle of poverty and vulnerability that is difficult to break without planned intervention from the government and social institutions.

7. The Impact of Divorce on Children and Reproduction Social Problems

The most worrying impact of divorce is its impact on children born from early marriages that end in divorce. In Bongor Hamlet, children of divorced couples are often raised by their maternal grandmothers, either because the mother has to work or because both young parents are unable to provide optimal care. This sub-optimal parenting pattern impacts the psychological development of children, who are vulnerable to insecure attachments, behavioral disorders, and difficulties in school. This situation has the potential to create an intergenerational reproduction of social problems, where children who grow up in unstable families due to divorce are at higher risk of repeating the same patterns later in life.

CONCLUSION

This research has successfully uncovered the complexity of the divorce phenomenon in the context of early marriage in Bongor Hamlet, Taman Ayu Village, Gerung District. The research findings indicate that divorce among couples who marry early is not an isolated event, but rather the result of a complex interaction between individual, relational, and structural factors. At the individual level, the psychological and emotional unpreparedness of young couples is a key factor that undermines the foundation of marriage. At the relational level, the inability to

manage conflict, excessive interference from the extended family, and entrenched gender inequality further exacerbate domestic tensions. At the structural level, poverty, low levels of education, and a weak social protection system create a climate that is not conducive to the sustainability of young couples' marriages.

Analysis using a family sociology framework demonstrates that structural dysfunction in young families, as described in Parsons' structural functionalism theory, is a root cause that requires systematic addressing. Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach emphasizes that effective interventions must be multi-layered, not only at the nuclear family level but also at the community, social institutions, and public policy levels. Strong social capital has been shown to be a protective factor that can mitigate these pressures, making strengthening community social networks a crucial part of the solution.

Based on the research findings, several recommendations warrant serious consideration. The West Lombok Regency Government needs to strengthen the implementation of policies to prevent early marriage through more effective education, outreach, and law enforcement programs. The Office of Religious Affairs needs to develop a more comprehensive premarital counseling program, encompassing not only administrative aspects but also psychological aspects, household financial management, and conflict management. Educational institutions and civil society organizations need to be more active in empowering women and girls, particularly in the area of health education, reproduction, life skills, and awareness of their legal rights. This study has limitations in terms of the number of informants and the limited coverage of one hamlet, so generalization of the findings requires caution. Further research with a broader scope and using mixed methods is warranted. (mixed methods) is highly recommended to provide a more comprehensive picture of this phenomenon at the district and provincial levels.

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