

Perceptions of prospective brides about reproductive health in Pauh District on 2023

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World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews, 2024, 21(03), 526–532

Publication history: Received on 21 January 2024; revised on 01 March 2024; accepted on 03 March 2024

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2024.21.3.0718>

Abstract

The concern of prospective brides for reproductive health is still low. This research aims to explore prospective brides and grooms' perceptions of reproductive health. This study was a qualitative study with a phenomenological approach. The study was conducted at the Community Health Centers and Religious Affairs Office in Pauh District from February to December 2023. The selection of informants was done by purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques, with prospective brides serving as the main informants. Supporting informants included midwives involved in the prospective brides' program and immunization program, nutritionists, several Religious Affairs officials, and speakers from reproductive health counseling. The researcher himself was the instrument of the study, employing data collection methods such as in-depth interviews, observations, and document reviews. The analysis results found that prospective brides had a variety of understandings about reproductive health. Some prospective brides had good perceptions and some were less good. These differences were influenced by several factors such as: knowledge, attention, experience, culture owned by the brides. The conclusion of this study is that prospective brides have diverse perceptions in interpreting reproductive health. Unfortunately, this topic has yet to become a significant concern for them. The study hopes to encourage cross-sectoral cooperation from the government, health, and religious sectors to increase the awareness of prospective brides about the importance of these services.

Keywords: Perception; Reproductive Health; Prospective Brides; Premarital Screening; Knowledge

1. Introduction

Reproductive health is closely related to the target of accelerating the reduction of maternal mortality and stunting as stated in the 2020-2024 National Medium Term Development Plan (RPJMN). One of the priority activities on the RPJMN agenda is improving maternal and child health, family planning and reproductive health(1).

Improving reproductive health, especially in basic health services, is carried out through promotive and preventive efforts supported by innovation and the use of technology. This effort is carried out by introducing reproductive health according to an individual's development stages. The government has made various efforts to overcome reproductive health problems, but the results obtained have not met expectations. This is indicated by the still high Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR), namely 305 per 100,000 Live Births (LB) compared to Asia Pacific countries, namely 73 deaths per 100,000 LB and developed countries reaching 13 deaths per 100,000 LB(2).

Most causes of maternal death can be prevented by improving the quality of health services, especially for women as expectant mothers. So far, maternal health problems have only been addressed at the top and not explored to the root of the problem. In fact, reproductive health before pregnancy/preconception is the initial determination of maternal and child health which can be prepared from an early age (3).

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Prospective brides and grooms are men and women who do not yet have a legal relationship, either according to religious or state law, who are in the process of preparing and planning their wedding. Prospective Brides is the main target in efforts to improve reproductive health during the preconception period. Prospective Brides's understanding of reproductive health includes reproductive rights, gender equality, family planning and psychological preparedness. Prospective Brides must understand this, because Prospective Brides are two individuals who will carry out reproductive processes, functions and behavior (3).

Problems related to reproductive health often trigger family problems. Prospective Brides, who is not well prepared in terms of health, sometimes does not know about his own health problems. This incident will lead to blaming each other. Based on research conducted by Setiawati, it was still found that couples did not know about the importance of pre-marital health checks. This will increase the risk of health problems in the future. So to avoid this, Prospective Brides must have sufficient knowledge regarding pre-wedding preparations (4). Before the wedding, Prospective Brides was busy with a lot of preparations for the wedding event. Based on research conducted by Tawfiq in 2020, Prospective Brides prefers to use money to shop for all new equipment that will be used for life in the future. Prospective Brides feels that using money for medical examinations is useless and prioritizes material preparations related to the wedding procession (5).

There are two million pairs of Prospective Brides registered in Indonesia per year. However, the number of Prospective Brides who have access to health services is still low. In 2021, only 28.28% of Prospective Brides will have access to health services programmed by the government (6). Based on the results of the recap of reporting on the Padang City Prospective Brides health program in October-December 2022, the Pauh health center is one of the health centers that has the highest number of Prospective Brides registered with the Religious Affairs Office. However, the achievement rate for the implementation of the Prospective Brides reproductive health program is still low. The initial survey that the author conducted was that there were 41 Prospective Brides women registered at KUA Pauh in January 2023, 17 Prospective Brides women received Prospective Brides immunization at the Pauh community health center but only 5 female Prospective Brides people visited the puskesmas to get complete reproductive health services at the puskesmas. Based on the results of the author's interviews with several Prospective Brides who came from different backgrounds, among the Prospective Brides felt taboo and embarrassed to discuss matters related to reproductive health and sexuality. In fact, this knowledge is useful for Prospective Brides in preparing a healthy family and a quality generation.

Research by Yulivantina, et al stated that women do not have a good perception of preconception screening due to a lack of knowledge regarding the importance of preconception screening before marriage. Likewise with male cats. Preconception screening services have been provided by the government but have not been implemented optimally. One of the reasons is because Prospective Brides's awareness of health is still low (7). According to research by Atrash and Jack, preconception screening is one of the reproductive health services that Prospective Brides must follow. Preconception services have been proven to improve the quality of pregnancy that future mothers will undergo(8). Prospective Brides's participation in carrying out preconception services is also supported by Prospective Brides's knowledge of this matter. Prospective Brides's knowledge and attitudes will influence understanding and acceptance of information regarding reproductive health and sexuality. Good understanding will support the bride and groom's decision to participate in reproductive health services programmed by the government (9).

Knowledge is one of the determining factors in the formation of perceptions apart from needs, mood, memory, motivation and attention. Perception is a person's way of looking at interpreting something or interpreting incoming information in order to create a picture of something that has meaning. If someone has good knowledge then a good perception of something is formed(10).

According to Notoatmodjo, perception is one of the factors that determines a person's behavior. Perception of an object will encourage someone to act/ behave in accordance with that perception. By knowing Prospective Brides's perception of reproductive health, this perception can be a reference in increasing Prospective Brides's interest in all things related to reproductive health. Many previous studies have linked knowledge to the influence of an individual's behavior. However, the thing that bridges these two things, namely perception, is often ignored. Perception greatly influences a person's behavior. Own perceptions can be explored through in-depth interviews. Based on the description above, the author wants to conduct qualitative research regarding the perceptions of prospective brides and grooms regarding reproductive health in Pauh District in 2023.

2. Material and methods

This research was a qualitative study using a phenomenological approach. The study was conducted at the Public Health Center and Religious Affairs Office in Pauh District from February to December 2023. Informants were selected using

purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques. The main informants in this study were prospective male and female brides. Supporting informants were midwives holding the reproductive health program for prospective brides, midwives holding the immunization program, nutritionists, several Religious Affairs officers, and midwifery professional students who were resource persons for reproductive health education during the study. The research instrument in qualitative research was the researcher himself. The data collection methods in this study were in-depth interviews, observations, and document reviews. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman model consisting of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data validity techniques consisted of an internal validity test (credibility) which was done by extending the observation time, increasing accuracy / diligence, source triangulation and method triangulation as well as supporting materials (references), external validity test (transferability), reliability test (dependability), and objectivity test (confirmability).

3. Results and discussion

Table 1 Characteristics of in-depth interview informants

No	Informant Code	Informant	Age (year)	Education	Work
1.	IF1	Prospective bride	27	DIII	Self-employed
2.	IF2	Prospective groom	27	high school	Private sector employee
3.	IF3	Prospective bride	24	S1	Freelancing
4.	IF4	Prospective groom	33	Senior High School	Self-employed
5.	IF5	Prospective bride	23	vocational school	Doesn't work
6.	IF6	Prospective groom	28	Senior High School	Laborer
7.	IF7	Prospective bride	25	S1	Private sector employee
8.	IF8	Prospective groom	27	S1	Private sector employee
9.	IF9	Prospective bride	26	Senior High School	Self-employed
10.	IF10	Prospective groom	25	DIII	Private sector employee
11.	P1	Religious Counselor	51	Senior High School	Honorary
12.	P2	Religious Counselor	56	S2	Civil servants
13.	P3	Chief	57	S1	Civil servants
14.	P4	KUA staff	46	S1	Civil servants
15.	BD1	Midwife who holds the bride and groom's program	55	DIII	Civil servants
16.	BD2	Midwives who run the immunization program	45	DIV	Civil servants
17.	GZ1	Nutritionists	46	S1	Civil servants
18.	M1	Midwife Profession Student	23	S1	Student
19.	M2	Midwife Profession Student	23	S1	Student

20.	M3	Midwife Profession Student	23	S1	Student
21.	M4	Midwife Profession Student	23	S1	Student

3.1. Prospective Brides's perception about definition of reproductive health

As a result of the in-depth interviews conducted, in general Prospective Brides had heard the term reproductive health from various sources such as health education activities, social media such as Instagram and YouTube, print media and health service settings.

Most Prospective Brides define reproductive health as a healthy lifestyle that includes diet, rest and regular physical activity. However, there is a pair of Prospective Brides who view reproductive health as a broader aspect, namely comprehensive health from a physical, mental and social perspective. Reproductive health is a condition that shows a person's physical, mental and social health condition which is related to their reproductive functions and processes and does not have diseases or disorders that can affect reproductive activities (11).

Understanding the definition of reproductive health for Prospective Brides is useful for increasing Prospective Brides's knowledge and awareness in preparing themselves as prospective parents. Men and women have different views in interpreting reproductive health. Female Prospective Brides will usually focus on paying attention to reproductive health, such as carrying out reproductive health checks and preparing for pregnancy. Meanwhile, male cats will focus on the quality and quantity of sperm.

This research reveals that Prospective Brides has a closed attitude in discussing reproductive health with other parties. Some cats consider reproductive health to be taboo and inappropriate to discuss openly. The absence of a culture of openness means that Prospective Brides has a perception that she does not understand the definition of reproductive health. This is in accordance with research showing that some adult women have good knowledge but have poor perceptions regarding reproductive health (12).

Previous research regarding reproductive health education among early adult women showed that reproductive health knowledge was still low and barriers were found in obtaining reproductive health services. Women in this country rarely receive information related to reproductive health from parents and teachers. So that reproductive health information will be obtained if an individual experiences certain problems and checks with a health worker (13).

Prospective Brides in this study preferred to look for information related to reproductive health via the internet and social media rather than asking other people directly. This is in accordance with research conducted in Saudi Arabia where women in that country very rarely receive reproductive health information from parents or teachers and choose the internet as a source for obtaining information about reproductive health (14).

3.2. Prospective Brides's Perception of Reproductive Organs

The results of in-depth interviews with Prospective Brides showed that most Prospective Brides could only name a few reproductive organs and their functions. Some cats do not understand the organs, functions and reproductive processes of themselves or their partners. There are cats who are confused by the term reproductive organs and are embarrassed to mention reproductive organs.

In this study, most Prospective Brides only understood that the female reproductive organs were the vagina and uterus. The vagina is an organ that functions for sexual intercourse and the uterus is the organ where the fetus develops during the pregnancy process. Meanwhile, the male reproductive organs are the penis and testicles. The penis is an organ for sexual intercourse and the testicles are a place to store sperm which will fertilize the egg. Basically it is important for cats to have a good understanding of the reproductive organs. This can help women understand the function and care of reproductive organs and make wise decisions regarding reproductive health such as the use of contraception and prevention of infectious diseases (15).

3.3. Prospective Brides's perception about maintaining reproductive health

This research shows that Prospective Brides have a good perception of how to maintain reproductive health. Perceptions of Prospective Brides influence attitudes about how to maintain reproductive health. In general,

Prospective Brides has taken proper steps to maintain reproductive health, such as maintaining reproductive organs, maintaining diet, rest, physical activity and regular exercise and avoiding casual sex.

If Prospective Brides maintains reproductive health well, it will reduce the emergence of problems related to reproductive health. Reproductive health must be prepared to plan a pregnancy. Healthy pregnancy planning will produce healthy and quality children later. Not only female female partners, male female partners must also maintain their reproductive health. Because in preparing for pregnancy, both parties, both women and men, must be ready and healthy (16).

3.4. Prospective Brides's perception about reproductive health problems

Some Prospective Brides have a good perception of reproductive health issues so they realize the importance of maintaining reproductive health before marriage. In general, men are less concerned about reproductive health problems and therefore are not aware of the risks that will occur related to the health problems they face. Prospective Brides must have an understanding of the reproductive health problems they may face. A good perception of reproductive health problems can help women seek medical help if necessary. Reproductive health problems can occur throughout the human life cycle. The status and position of women in society is the main cause of reproductive health problems faced by women because it causes women to lose control of themselves.

Women are more vulnerable to facing reproductive health risks such as pregnancy, childbirth, use of contraceptives, etc. This problem cannot be separated from the relationship between men and women. Some of the problems that cats may face related to reproductive health are menstrual disorders, hormonal disorders, sperm quality problems, sexually transmitted diseases and infertility. This problem can be identified by carrying out a health examination before marriage. If problems are encountered, intervention can be carried out early so that they can be resolved so as not to cause conflict after marriage. Regarding the issue of infertility, Prospective Brides's attitude of not being open about reproductive health affects Prospective Brides's perception so that there is no openness to seeking information or medical advice if she experiences this. Research related to infertile couples' perceptions of infertility problems considers that infertility is a sensitive problem, drains the mind and triggers stress (17). So it is important for cats to understand reproductive health problems so they can make the right decisions as a solution to these problems.

3.5. Prospective Brides's perception about sexuality

In this study, Prospective Brides had a positive perception in understanding sexuality. For Prospective Brides, sexual relations are carried out according to religious norms and there needs to be communication to discuss the wishes of each partner in order to create security and comfort. Views on sexuality are a very personal matter and can differ between individuals. However, the importance of mutual respect and respect as well as ensuring open communication and mutual understanding in sexual relations will create a quality relationship. The relationship between husband and wife must be based on respect for each partner and carried out at the time they want together without elements of coercion, threats and violence. Reproductive rights also include easy, complete and accurate information for the prevention and transmission of diseases that will have a negative impact on reproductive health (15).

3.6. Prospective Brides's perception about pre-wedding preparations

The results of in-depth interviews showed that most of the Prospective Brides were more focused on physical preparation only and only a few Prospective Brides had prepared psychologically, socially and economically. In this study, women generally had a good perception of premarital preparation, which was manifested in their attitude towards carrying out reproductive health examinations at the community health center. Meanwhile, male Prospective Brides make pre-wedding preparations by maintaining a healthy lifestyle without carrying out pre-marital screening.

All preparations made by Prospective Brides must be balanced to avoid problems when they are married. It is recommended that pre-wedding preparations be carried out at least 3 months before marriage. So that if a problem is found it can be resolved immediately and not cause more serious problems. One of the premarital preparations is carrying out a reproductive health examination known as premarital screening. Research conducted by Hamed et al shows that the majority of women have heard about premarital screening and have positive perceptions and attitudes towards premarital screening (18).

So far, many people do not understand the importance of health during the preconception period so that prospective fathers and mothers only focus on preparing material related to the process of pregnancy and childbirth. This occurs due to a lack of knowledge about the importance of examination before pregnancy (15). Apart from physical preparation, psychological and mental preparation is also important before marriage. In Saudi Arabia, mental health

examination has become a new concept in premarital screening. Health checks should be considered important because spending life with someone who is vulnerable or has mental problems will cause problems later in life. Knowing the mental status of a potential partner should be everyone's right so that problems can be resolved if problems are discovered (19).

In this study, not a single Prospective Brides carried out a mental health examination and there was no counseling from health workers who conveyed that a mental examination was something that had to be done. Mentally unhealthy and not ready to carry out marriage will cause problems in the family and often result in divorce (19). In line with research conducted by Eprila&Yunike in 2022 which stated that incomplete and unbalanced pre-wedding preparation has the potential for marriage failure. Because marriage will make someone have a new role. If you are not ready for this new role, it will trigger problems in the family (20).

4. Conclusion

Prospective Brides has various perceptions in interpreting reproductive health. This is influenced by knowledge, level of education, attention, culture and experience. Male Prospective Brides and female Prospective Brides have different views about reproductive health. Some cats have limited knowledge regarding reproductive organs and the use of contraceptives. Most Prospective Brides have a good understanding of reproductive health which includes how to maintain reproductive health and issues, sexuality and premarital preparation

It was found that Prospective Brides tried to find information related to reproductive health on his own without discussing it with experts so he was unable to analyze the information properly. Basically, reproductive health is not yet a complete concern for women in preparation before marriage. Prospective Brides prepared more materially than physically or mentally before marriage. Researchers suggest to health workers and and Religious Affairs officers to raise awareness of prospective brides and grooms about reproductive health so that the objectives of the programs provided by the government can be achieved. Apart from that, the prospective bride and groom are also expected to undergo a health examination according to established procedures.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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