

# **The Neglected Vulnerable Groups:**

**Study of Children from Child Marriage  
Families in East Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara**



## STUDY REPORT

The Neglected Vulnerable Groups:

Study of Children from Child Marriage Families in East Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara

The authors of this study are Senza Arsendy, George Adam Sukoco, and Rasita Ekawati Purba.

November 2021

**Suggested Citation:** Arsendy, S., Sukoco, G.A., and Purba, R.E. (2021). *Neglected Vulnerable Groups: The Study of Children from Child Marriage Families in East Lombok*. Jakarta: INOVASI.

**Acknowledgements:** The author would like to thank those who contributed to writing this report. Gilang Permata Sari and Raka Rizky Fadilla for their help in processing data. Michelle Moffatt, Lutri Huriyani, and Repelita Tambunan from the INOVASI Gender and Education team and the INOVASI West Nusa Tenggara team, represented by Sri Widuri and Anhar Iswanto, for their useful comments and input. In addition, the researcher thanks the INOVASI Communication team for helping to finalize the report. Finally, this study could not have been completed without the support of the INOVASI management team, particularly Mark Heyward and Feiny Sentosa.

**Disclaimer:** The findings and interpretations in this paper do not reflect the government of Indonesia or the government of Australia. Readers are welcome to copy, submit, and distribute the work for noncommercial purposes.

### INOVASI – INOVASI for Indonesian School Children

Ratu Plaza Office Tower 19<sup>th</sup> Floor,

Jl. Jend. Sudirman Kav 9, Central Jakarta, 10270

Indonesian

Tel: (+6221) 720 6616 ext. 304

Fax: (+6221) 720 6616

<http://www.inovasi.or.id>

*The Governments of Australia and Indonesia are partnering through the INOVASI for Indonesian School Children (INOVASI) program.*

INOVASI is an Australia–Indonesia Government Partnership – Managed by Palladium.



[info@inovasi.or.id](mailto:info@inovasi.or.id)



[www.inovasi.or.id](http://www.inovasi.or.id)



[www.facebook.com/InovasiPendidikanAIP](https://www.facebook.com/InovasiPendidikanAIP)

**The Neglected Vulnerable Groups:**

**Study of Children from Child Marriage Families in East Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara**

Submitted XX August 2021

| Version | Submission date   | INOVASI approved by | DFAT approved by |
|---------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 1.0     | October 21, 2021  |                     |                  |
| 2.0     | November 02, 2021 |                     |                  |

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| LIST OF FIGURES .....  | iv        |
| LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....  | v         |
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....  | 1         |
| <b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| Background and Purpose of the Study .....                            | 3         |
| Analysis Framework and Research Questions .....                      | 4         |
| <b>2. METHODOLOGY .....</b>  | <b>7</b>  |
| Instruments .....  | 7         |
| Survey Implementation .....  | 7         |
| Research Limitations .....   | 8         |
| <b>3. FINDINGS .....</b>   | <b>9</b>  |
| Child Marriage Phenomenon in East Lombok .....                       | 9         |
| Family Background of Child Marriage in East Lombok .....             | 10        |
| Vulnerability of Children from Child Marriage in East Lombok .....   | 13        |
| Children's Learning Processes and Outcomes from Child Marriage ..... | 16        |
| <b>4. CLOSING .....</b>  | <b>25</b> |
| Discussion .....   | 25        |
| Conclusion .....   | 26        |
| Policy Response .....  | 28        |
| <b>REFERENCES .....</b>  | <b>30</b> |
| <b>ANNEX .....</b>   | <b>33</b> |

## LIST OF FIGURES

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Figure 1: Child Vulnerability Analysis Framework.....                                       | 4  |
| Figure 2: Prevalence of Child Marriage in East Lombok and National Prevalence .....         | 9  |
| Figure 3: Child Marriage Family Expenses.....   | 10 |
| Figure 4: The Professions of Child Marriage Family Parents.....                             | 11 |
| Figure 5: The Education Level of Parents of Child Marriage Families .....                   | 12 |
| Figure 6: Number of Children with Disabilities in a Child Marriage Family .....             | 13 |
| Figure 7: A Companion Living with a Child from a Child Marriage Family .....                | 14 |
| Figure 8: Marital Status of Child Marriage Family Parents.....                              | 14 |
| Figure 9: Number of School-Age Children Who Do Not Attend School in Child Marriage Families | 15 |
| Figure 10: Ownership of Child Learning Facilities from Child Marriage Families .....        | 16 |
| Figure 11: Ownership of Learning Facilities by Gender .....                                 | 17 |
| Figure 12: Learning Mode during the Pandemic.....   | 18 |
| Figure 13: Additional Tasks of Children at Home .....                                       | 19 |
| Figure 14: Additional Tasks of Children at Home by Gender .....                             | 20 |
| Figure 15: The Role of Parents during the Pandemic.....                                     | 21 |
| Figure 16: Allocation of Learning Assistance Time by Parents .....                          | 21 |
| Figure 17: Child Learning Companion.....  | 22 |
| Figure 18: Children's Numeracy and Literacy Learning Outcomes .....                         | 23 |
| Figure 19: Numeracy and Child Literacy by Gender.....                                       | 24 |

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| ACER                  | : Australian Council for Educational Research – An independent research institute based in Australia that focuses on a variety of activities supporting the improvement of education quality |
| AKSI                  | : <i>Asesmen Kompetensi Siswa Indonesia</i> (Assessment of Competency of Indonesian Students)  |
| APS                   | : <i>Angka Partisipasi Sekolah</i> (School Participation Figures)  |
| BDR                   | : <i>Belajar Dari Rumah</i> (Learning from Home)   |
| BPS                   | : <i>Badan Pusat Statistik</i> (Central Statistics Agency)   |
| HLE                   | : Home Literacy Environment  |
| Kemendikbud<br>Ristek | : Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology   |
| KIP                   | : <i>Kartu Indonesia Pintar</i> (Smart Indonesia Card)   |
| MAMPU                 | : Australian government (DFAT) and Indonesian government partnership program (BAPPENAS) to improve poor Indonesian women's access to government programs.                                    |
| TPB                   | : <i>Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan</i> (Sustainable Development Goals)  |
| PISA                  | : Programme for International Student Assessment - an international assessment method that is an indicator to measure the competence of Indonesian students at the global level.             |
| PRG                   | : <i>Pusat Riset Gender</i> (Gender Research Center)   |
| Puslitjak             | : <i>Pusat Penelitian Kebijakan</i> (Center for Policy Research)   |
| REDI                  | : Regional Economic Development Institute – Independent research institute.  |
| SUSENAS               | : <i>Survei Sosial Ekonomi Nasional</i> (National Socioeconomic Survey)  |
| TA                    | : <i>Tahun Ajaran</i> (School Year)  |
| TIMMS                 | : Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study – an international study of first-level advanced school students' mathematical and scientific achievements.                          |
| UMK                   | : <i>Upah Minimum Kabupaten/Kota</i> (District Minimum Wage)   |
| UNFPA                 | : United Nations Population Fund   |
| UNICEF                | : United Nations Children's Fund   |





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Estimates suggest that child marriage rates in Indonesia increased during the pandemic. In addition to threatening the government's efforts to reduce child marriage rate to 8.74% by 2024, this phenomenon will have a serious impact on child marriage victims, their families, and society in general. Studies on child marriage show a strong association between child marriage and vulnerabilities in children born in these families. These vulnerabilities are believed to have increased during the pandemic because of worsening economic conditions and school closures.

INOVASI conducted a study on child marriage to understand the vulnerabilities of children whose mothers married when they were children (from this point onward this will be referred to as child marriage families) and its implications on children's learning process during the pandemic. Data collection was carried out in East Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara<sup>1</sup>, because this province is one of the locations with the highest prevalence of child marriage rates in Indonesia. Given that the INOVASI program focuses on education, especially at the elementary level, the study involves only families who have children in INOVASI partner schools. To understand the vulnerabilities of these children, the study explored the following: (1) the background of the parent of the child marriage family, (2) the potential vulnerabilities of the child born to the child marriage family, and (3) the child's learning process and outcomes during the pandemic.

The findings in this study suggest that children of mothers who marry at child age are likely to be in a vulnerable condition. More than 60% of children have parents who lack of education, have temporary work, and live below the poverty line. When compared to fathers, mothers tend to be more vulnerable because of their more limited education and employment, which reinforces the view that child marriage exacerbates gender inequalities.

This study also finds that children from child marriage families had no functional difficulties. In addition, the majority of these children also live with complete families—this differs from previous findings. This may be because the percentage of divorced parents who participated in the study tended to be low, and the study also did not identify whether the child lived with a biological parent. Sample limitations may have contributed to different results.

Furthermore, children from child marriage families tend to face significant challenges when learning from home because of limited facilities. Most children learn more offline than online. However, as is the case with parents who are not from child marriage families, parents of child marriage families also allocate time for the child's learning process. In addition to mothers, relatives are most involved in a child's learning process.

Finally, measurements of student learning outcomes showed that children from child marriage families had lower learning outcomes, which is equivalent to seven months of learning, than those who were not from child marriage families. In child marriage families, girls have better literacy and numeracy learning outcomes than boys. The findings suggest that even in more vulnerable conditions, women tend to perform better academically than men.

The study successfully represents the vulnerability of children from child marriage families, including comparing them to families in which parents were not married when they were under the age of 18. Taking into account that these children are also children of the poor, the study found it difficult to

---

<sup>1</sup> Data collection was carried out in conjunction with other INOVASI studies, namely the Learning Gap studies conducted in 20 districts.

separate whether the vulnerability was due to poverty or child marriage. Nevertheless, some previous analyses have shown that child marriage exacerbates the cycle of poverty and has the potential to lower families' income by up to 9%.

Given that INOVASI focuses on interventions in schools, particularly at the elementary level, the recommendations of this study are intended to improve the learning process to make it more inclusive for vulnerable groups, including children from child marriage families. Some recommendations include:

1. Governments and schools need to ensure that children from child marriage families can obtain official identity cards that allow them to attend school and receive social assistance.
2. Governments and schools need to open schools that allow children from vulnerable families, including those from child marriage families, to learn safely and comfortably. For children who have lost access, schools and teachers need to collect their data and return them to school.
3. If online learning needs to be done, the government, schools, and teachers need to implement inclusive learning modes and specifically ensure the online learning needs of children from child marriage families can be met, such as by distributing learning facilities and improving learning materials.
4. Schools and teachers need to minimize tasks related to household skills, especially for girls, considering that most children do these tasks without direction from school.
5. Schools and teachers need to encourage more active paternal involvement in the child's educational process. If parents find it difficult to get involved, schools and teachers need to work closely with communities and volunteers to help the child's learning process.
6. The recommendation for long-term, sustainable interventions is to eliminate gender inequality in schools, including those that affect student learning outcomes. The government needs to prepare schools and teachers to implement gender-responsive learning practices, which need to start with increased knowledge of inclusive perspectives that include considering gender's effect on the learning process. This process needs to be followed by strengthening it at the implementation level to encourage teachers and education personnel to prepare gender-sensitive learning strategies and recognize and address gender-related issues in schools.

Taking into account that children from child marriage families are vulnerable, we suggest that efforts to prevent child marriage also need to involve socialization or ongoing campaigns related to the potential impact of child marriage on future generations. Campaigns need to clearly describe the effects of various aspects, including the interconnectedness of health, education, and economic aspects. Clarity of the negative impact on various aspects of life at the family, societal, and ultimately, the national level, will increase the knowledge and awareness of various key actors, stakeholders, and the broader society of the urgency of child marriage issues.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Background and Purpose of the Study

In recent years, the child marriage trend in Indonesia tends to decline (Bappenas, 2020; Marshan et al., 2013). However, it is predicted that the pandemic has increased the prevalence of child marriage, especially among girls. Save the Children (2020) estimates that 1.3–2.5 million girls are at risk of child marriage over the next five years because of deteriorating economic conditions during and after the pandemic. If child marriage rates remain high, Indonesia's goal listed in the Sustainable Development Goals (TPB)<sup>2</sup> to reduce child marriage rates—from 11.2% in 2018 to 8.74% in 2024—will be challenging to achieve (Bappenas, 2020; BPS et al., 2020).

Child marriage not only negatively affects parents who experience child marriage but also their children. Studies conducted by MAMPU program show that children born to child mothers are at greater risk of infant death and stunting with future health risks (Cameron et al., 2020). The analysis also shows that the children tend to perform poorly on cognitive tests. Other data shows that many children from child marriage families do not have birth certificates (BPS et al., 2020; Gunawan et al., 2019), which limits their access to government facilities and assistance. A study by Wall-Wieler et al. (2019) even shows that the phenomenon emerges in child marriage families is multigenerational. This means that vulnerabilities caused by child marriage can be observed to the grandchildren of those perform child marriage.

With the risks, the pandemic has the potential to make children from child marriage families more vulnerable. Initial surveys conducted by INOVASI at the beginning of the pandemic showed that children from economically low-income families who lived in remote areas and/or lacked the resources to access learning on the internet experienced significant barriers to accessing educational services online. Indications of this negative impact were also found in the INOVASI study related to the readiness of local governments to organize education in the school year 2020/2021. Unfortunately, studies that have focused on exploring the vulnerabilities of child marriage families due to the pandemic in Indonesia are by far relatively limited. Some studies and analyses conducted on child marriage are currently focused on estimating the prevalence of child marriage, such as those by Save the Children (2020) and UNFPA & UNICEF (2020).

The INOVASI study on child marriage was conducted to understand the vulnerabilities of children from child marriage families and their effects on children's learning during the pandemic. This study is the second in a series of INOVASI studies on child marriage in partner areas. The first study focused on understanding the phenomena and mechanisms of child marriage during the pandemic<sup>3</sup>. Unlike the first study in West Nusa Tenggara, East Nusa Tenggara, and East Java, the second study was conducted only in West Nusa Tenggara. This is taking into account that West Nusa Tenggara province is one of the regions with the highest prevalence of child marriage in Indonesia (BPS et al., 2020; Marcoes et al., 2015), including when compared to two other INOVASI partner provinces. In addition, initial discussions in Lombok with stakeholders and teachers also showed that children from child marriage families tend to have learning problems.

---

<sup>2</sup> These are also known as sustainable development goals (SDGs).

<sup>3</sup> The study was conducted separately by INOVASI's partner, the Gender Research Center (PRG) University of Indonesia, using a qualitative approach. Report of this study can be found here: <https://www.inovasi.or.id/id/publikasi/studi-kualitatif-perkawinan-anak-selama-pandemi-covid-19-di-jawa-timur-nusa-tenggara-barat-dan-nusa-tenggara-timur/>.

The relevance of this study can also be understood from the point of view of the vulnerability of economically marginal groups, especially in the countryside, making them less likely to be 'silent'—described by Chambers (1983) as 'voiceless'. Chambers further explains that poor women in the countryside are becoming less visible than, for example, poor women in urban areas. This low visibility is due to unbalanced power relations coupled with the remote access to decision-makers.

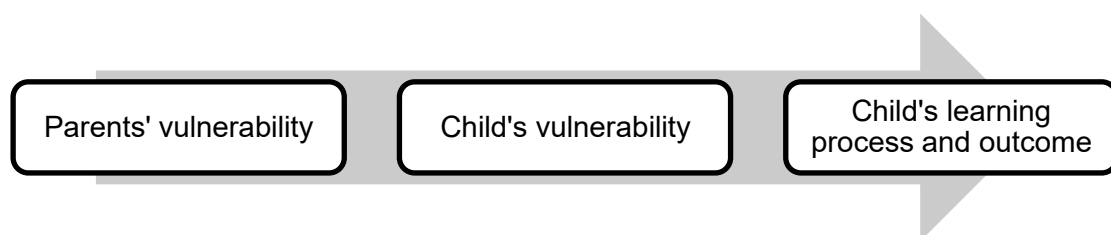
A study by Purba (2005) reinforces this finding in the context of Lombok, namely, the dimensions of poverty associated with 'powerlessness' and 'voiceless'. This condition is 'passed down' to their children, who tend to be 'silent', for example mainly when government programs intended for the poor, such as scholarships, did not reach them (Purba, 2005). The 'powerless' dimension caused by the unbalanced relationship between children and parents and the 'voiceless' in children of this vulnerable group is suspected to affect decision-making critical to their future, such as the decision to marry. Blackburn and Bessel (1997) explain that when marriage occurs at the child's age and parents have the full right to make decisions, it is very rare for children to be asked for their opinions.

Through this study, INOVASI wants to contribute to the knowledge renewal and a more in-depth information about the learning aspects of children who have been vulnerable since birth and understand the implications of these vulnerabilities in a pandemic context. Hence, this study is expected to contribute to the initial discourse on the existence of newly vulnerable groups that may have been neglected. Indications of this specific vulnerability are expected to inspire stakeholders, especially at the school level, to pay special attention so that children from child marriage families are not further left behind in the learning process. This practical action is undoubtedly insufficient, and interventions involving cross-sectors and the legal enforcement of marriage ages are required.

## Analysis Framework and Research Questions

The study explored three domains of vulnerability to understand the vulnerability of children from child marriage families more comprehensively: (1) potential causes of vulnerability, (2) child vulnerability, and (3) the potential impact of vulnerability on child learning. First, the potential causes of vulnerability focus on the background and conditions of parents in child marriages. This information is essential for understanding the context in which the child in the study grew up and lived. Second, children's vulnerabilities include their potential vulnerabilities during the pandemic. This illustrates the direct consequences that occur on the children of couples who marry at child age. Third, the learning process and outcomes of children during the pandemic. This domain provides a proxy overview of the potential impact of child marriage vulnerability during the pandemic on aspects of school and learning from children born to parents who married in childhood. Below is a summary of the dynamics of the relationship among the domains:

**Figure 1: Child Vulnerability Analysis Framework**



## Parent's Vulnerability

Child marriage is associated with the vulnerable lives experienced by its victims. In this study, child marriage families are defined as those whose the mothers experienced child marriage. An analysis conducted by BPS et al. (2020) using data from the 2018 National Socioeconomic Survey (Susenas) showed that those who did child marriages tend to come from families of low economic status and live in rural areas. This finding is in line with Marshan et al. (2013), which found that 61% of child marriage people ~~who experiences child marriage~~ come from very poor and poor families..

In addition to poverty, people who experience child marriage also tend to have low education. Both women and men who are married under the age of 18 tend to have the most elementary education (BPS et al., 2020). The limited level of education of child marriage people contributed to the high unemployment rate, particularly among the women (Benedicta et al., 2017; Clarke, 2015).

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that child marriage survivors have vulnerabilities related to their economic conditions, education, and employment **statuses**. As the first research question, the study wanted to explore the following: ***"What is the background of parents of child marriage families in East Lombok?"***

## Child's Vulnerability

Child marriage adversely affects the victims and the children born to them. First, children born to ~~these~~ parents who experience child marriage are prone to having health problems. This risk is because of pregnancy complications that are susceptible to be experienced by their mothers who become pregnant at the age of the child (Card, 1981). In Indonesia, complications during pregnancy and childbirth are the primary cause of death of women between the ages of 15 and 19 (Bappenas, 2020).

Second, children from child marriage families tend not to live with their parents. In their research conducted in Sukabumi, Rembang, and West Lombok, Benedicta et al. (2017) found that couples in child marriages are prone to divorce. Furthermore, another factor that causes these children to not live with their parents is the large number of parents who migrate abroad to work (Marcoes et al., 2015). Finally, compared to children born to mothers over 18, children from child marriage families also tend to have lower education levels (Aizer et al., 2020).

This section describes the direct vulnerabilities experienced by children whose parents ~~were~~ married under 18, including health risks, the risk of not living with a complete family, and low education levels. As a second research question, the study wanted to explore the following: ***"What is the vulnerability of children born to families with parents who experienced ~~perform~~ child marriage in East Lombok?"***

## Vulnerability of Child's Learning Processes and Outcomes

The learning process for children who come from child marriage families tends to be challenging, contributing to their low learning outcomes. For example, a study conducted by Burgess (2005) to understand the extent to which a child's home environment supports a home literacy environment (HLE) shows that children from child marriage families have more limited learning facilities, which can stimulate only some of the child literacy experience. In addition, ~~to having limited learning facilities~~, the same study also showed that mothers who married at the child's age also were less

effective parents, including parenting aspects related to the child's learning process. This finding does not always mean they do not care about their child's education, but, rather, the context in which they live and the limitations of their economic conditions tend to limit their choices.

Less supportive facilities and parenting also contribute to students' low learning abilities. Aizer et al. (2020) found that children from child marriage families have less cognitive skills than other children. Another study from Wall-Wieler et al. (2019) showed that such children also tend to have lower school readiness.

The above literature describes the vulnerability of children of child marriage families being less prepared for the learning process that is likely to implicate their learning outcomes. This vulnerability cannot be separated from the previous two vulnerabilities that were previously discussed. The pandemic is predicted to make the process and outcomes results of learning for children from child marriage families more complex. As a third research question, the study wanted to explore the following: ***"How has the learning process and learning outcomes of children in child marriage families been affected during the pandemic?"***

This section summarizes the relevant literature to illustrate the vulnerabilities of children from child marriage families, starting with the factors that potentially impact children's educational lives. With gender segregation is carried out in several variables to see the vulnerabilities that contribute to gender inequality, below is a summary of the research questions and variables analyzed in this study to illustrate the vulnerabilities of children from child marriage families.

| Research Questions  | Analysis Variables   |
|---|--|
| What are the characteristics of families who committed child marriages in East Lombok?  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Economic status of parents</li> <li>- Parents' level of education</li> <li>- Parents' jobs</li> </ul>                     |
| What are the vulnerabilities of children born to child marriage families in East Lombok?                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Child disability status</li> <li>- Child's residence</li> <li>- Prevalence of child dropouts</li> </ul>                   |
| How has the pandemic affected the learning processes and outcomes of children born to child marriage families in East Lombok? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learning facilities</li> <li>- Learning activities</li> <li>- Learning assistance</li> <li>- Learning outcomes</li> </ul> |



## 2. METHODOLOGY

The child marriage study is part of the situational analysis study on learning gaps and the impact of COVID-19 towards school participation in Indonesia for 2020/2021 academic year.<sup>4</sup> This part describes the data collection instruments and protocols used and some of the limitations of the applied methodology. In this study, quantitative data analysis involved information from various key actors such as children, parents, teachers, and principals. Different instruments were developed to collect specific data from each group of actors.

### Instruments

Instruments used in the study included student tests and surveys for teachers, principals, parents, and students.<sup>5</sup> Details of each survey instrument can be found in the table in the appendix. The data used in this child marriage study is tailored to its needs, and the data from the parent survey is used to describe only parents' vulnerabilities. Child surveys illustrate the vulnerabilities of children and their effects on learning processes during the pandemic, and student tests to describe students' learning outcomes during the pandemic on numeracy and literacy subjects<sup>6</sup>. This study defines children from child marriage families as children born to mother who married before 18.

### Survey Implementation

The data collection process involved an independent research institute, Regional Economic Development Institute (REDI)<sup>7</sup>, with supervision from the INOVASI team. Data collection was carried out from April to May 2021 with strict health protocols<sup>8</sup>. Survey implementation involved three stages: (1) sample determination, (2) enumerator training, and (3) data collection.

### Sample Determination

Nationally, school data collection in each district and student data in each school was conducted randomly. This study also used the Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) data collection method, in which we take a larger sample size for areas with more schools and students. For the purposes of the study of child marriage, this study focuses on analyzing data from the district of East Lombok. The selection of samples in East Lombok was carried out through two stages. First, the selection of subdistricts was determined deliberately (purposive sampling) based on information on the number of child marriages in the region. Second, the schools and students in the subdistrict were randomly selected. In total, 1,860 early grade students spread across 62 schools and 19 subdistricts were sampled in this study. After the data cleaning process, 1,612 of the 1,860 students and parent data were included in the analysis. In this case, some parents could not remember the date of their first marriage or were unwilling to provide this information. The number of girls and boys was evenly matched at 51% versus 49%.

---

<sup>4</sup> Together with the Research and Policy Center (Puslitjak) of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (MoEC), INOVASI conducted a learning gap study to determine the impact of COVID-19 on learning during the pandemic.

<sup>5</sup> The instrument was jointly developed by INOVASI and Puslitjak and reviewed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).

<sup>6</sup> The main references used to develop student learning outcome instruments are as follows: TIMSS instruments, PIRLS, EGRA, AKSI (Assessment of Indonesian Student Competencies), Electronic School Books, Curriculum 2006 and 2013, and the UIS Global Item Bank.

<sup>7</sup> This is an independent survey and research institution based in Surabaya.

<sup>8</sup> Studies have obtained an ethics eligibility permit from the Ethics Commission.

## Enumerator Training

The enumerator training was held online from April 1–6, 2021. This activity was attended by the entire enumerator team (who worked in 20 districts/cities) and a team from INOVASI. A total of 220 enumerators (62% were men and 38% were women) participated in the data collection and were divided into 56 field teams. On each team, one enumerator was appointed as supervisor. In East Lombok, 20 enumerators consisting of 10 women and ten men were deployed to collect data.

The training aimed to do the following: (1) provide information on the study's background and governance of data collection, including data collection objectives, respondents, instruments, time frames, and expected outputs, and (2) ensure each enumerator understood the protocol and operational standards of data collection procedures (SOPs) in pandemic conditions, including the process of data submission and validation, and also (3) ensure each enumerator had the same understanding of the instrument, the research questions, or their responsibilities. The training used a variety of techniques, including classical method training, paired interview exercises, round robin interviews, and interview exercises using dummy respondents.

## Data Collection

The data collection process occurred from April–May 2021. The data was collected through two methods, face-to-face interviews and via telephone/online application. Each respondent was required to fill out a consent form to be interviewed or have data taken from them, and they had the right to refuse to participate in the study. Every data collection in a face-to-face context was carried out using strict health protocols: enumerators being required to conduct regular swab tests, using personal protective equipment and masks, providing masks to respondents, and checking their and respondents' temperatures before collecting data.

## Research Limitations

The main analysis conducted in this study used a descriptive approach. The interrelationships between phenomena and critical findings in this study were interpreted qualitatively, linking them to the relevant literature. This approach is helpful in describing and interpreting sample conditions (per the study's primary purpose). However, it has limitations in understanding the causal relationship between child marriage and child susceptibility. The generalization of results needs to be done carefully, considering these limitations. To complete this study, INOVASI conducted qualitative data collection on several samples of children and parents, which were reported separately. Furthermore, the selection of research locations in East Lombok was purposively conducted because researchers chose areas with a high prevalence of child marriage.

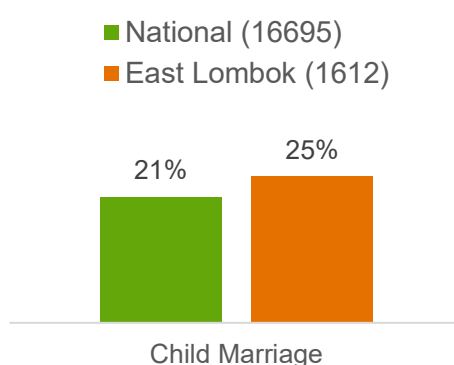


### 3. FINDINGS

#### Child Marriage Phenomenon in East Lombok

This section describes the prevalence of child marriage in East Lombok compared to national prevalence. Based on the table below, the prevalence of child marriage in East Lombok is slightly greater when compared to national prevalence<sup>9</sup>. In East Lombok, about 25% of a total sample of 1,612 respondents experience child marriage. It illustrates that one in four families participating in this study had experienced child marriage. Meanwhile, the national average prevalence is 21%.

**Figure 2: Prevalence of Child Marriage in East Lombok and National Prevalence**



The findings in this study show a higher prevalence than 2018 Susenas data collected by BPS et al. (2020), which showed that the prevalence of child marriage in West Nusa Tenggara was 15.5%. This prevalence indicates that the study location has a higher rate of child marriage than other districts in West Nusa Tenggara. Smith (2009) revealed that both polygamy and child marriage are phenomena that are commonly found in Lombok, even when compared to Sumbawa, even though both study locations are dominated by the Muslim population (Purba, 2012).

A study conducted by Marcoes et al. (2015) revealed that the massive labor migration out of Lombok in the late 1990s was one of the factors that played an important role in the high rate of child marriage in West Nusa Tenggara. This migration is inseparable from the poverty due to the implementation of the Green Revolution in West Nusa Tenggara during the New Order Era. The revolution changed the farming of agricultural land from a traditional approach to an industrial approach, causing many farmers to lose their land and some to work in a contract system that harmed farmers (Amigó, 2010). This condition was then aggravated by the economic crisis that occurred in 1998.

As the attempt to cope with the deteriorating economic situation, many families decided to become migrant workers, and others left the area to get decent jobs. This migration results in the number of children living without parental assistance. In such context, in order to protect children from promiscuity coupled with cultural and religious interpretations that tend to be misled, child marriage

<sup>9</sup> In addition to INOVASI provinces (East Java, East Nusa Tenggara, West Nusa Tenggara, and North Kalimantan, this study also covered non-INOVASI provinces, including Jambi, South Kalimantan, Southwest Sulawesi, and North Maluku

was often considered a solution for these children (Marcoes et al., 2015; Women's Refugee Commission, 2016).

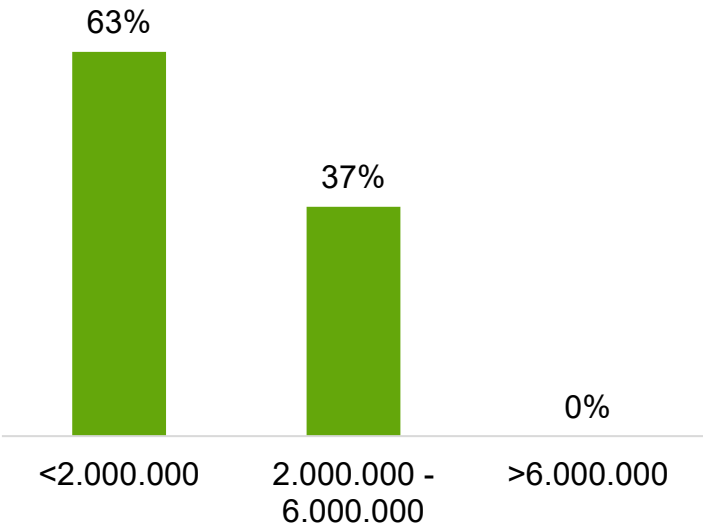
### Family Background of Child Marriage in East Lombok

Based on the literature, people who experience child marriage generally live in poverty and have relatively low levels of education. This study confirms these findings, which suggests that children from child marriage families tend to have parents who live in poverty, work in the informal employment sector, and have relatively low levels of education.

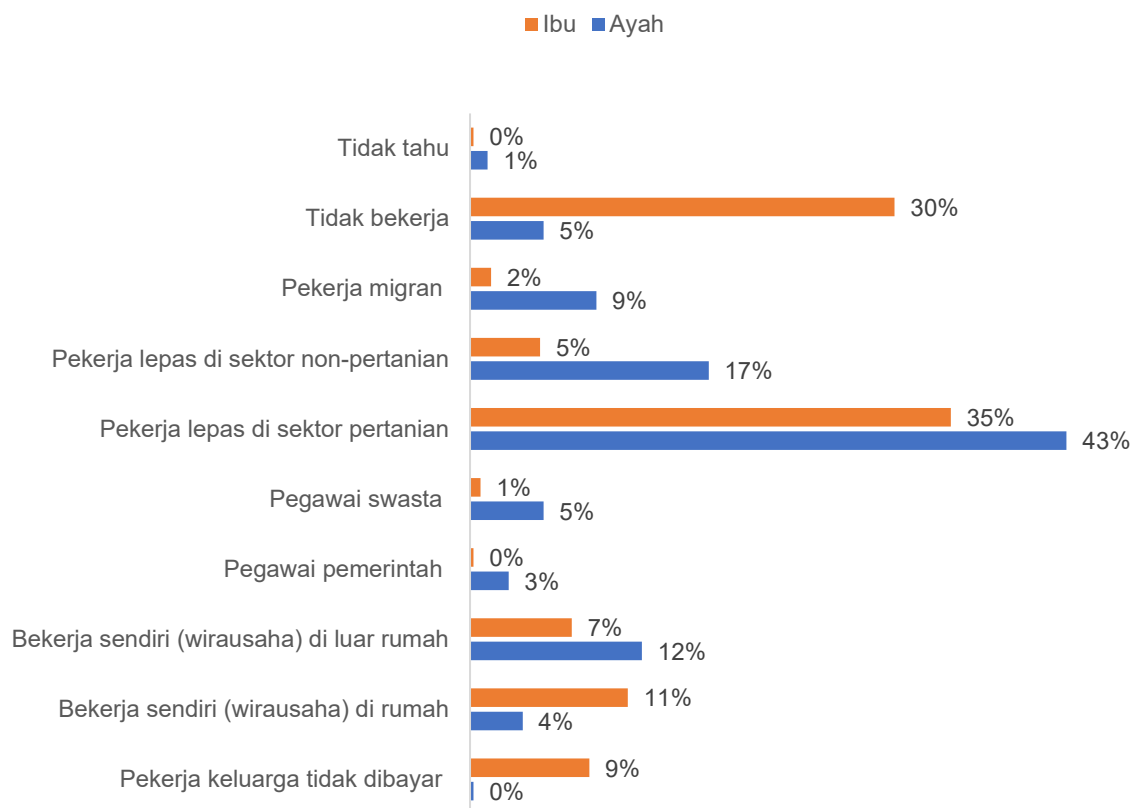
Figure 3 shows that most parents of child marriage families— 63% —have an average expenditure of under \$2 million. The rest, which is 37%, has an expenditure of more than 2 million. However, none of the families had an expenditure of more than 6 million. Furthermore, Figure 4 shows that parents of child marriage families tend to work in vulnerable employment sectors, namely as temporary workers in agricultural and nonagricultural sectors, with 40% and 60% respectively, for mothers and fathers. The percentage of those who work and earn a steady income (e.g., private and government employees) is lower than 10%.

Figure 4 also displays prominent job differences between mothers and fathers of child marriage families. Of all types of work, mothers dominate the statuses of being unemployed, self-employed, and unpaid family workers. It implies that almost 40% of mothers have no income. This percentage is much smaller when compared to the total fathers who do not earn, which is only about 5%.

**Figure 3: Child Marriage Family Expenses**



**Figure 4: The Professions of Child Marriage Family Parents**



**Legend in English**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Ibu                                       | : Mother   |
| Ayah                                      | : Father   |
| Tidak tahu                                | : Don't know                                     |
| Tidak bekerja                             | : Unemployed                                     |
| Pekerja migran                            | : Migrant worker                                 |
| Pekerja lepas di sektor nonpertanian      | : Temporary worker in the non-agriculture sector |
| Pekerja lepas di sektor pertanian         | : Temporary worker in the agriculture sector     |
| Pegawai swasta                            | : Private company employee                       |
| Pegawai pemerintah                        | : Civil servant                                  |
| Bekerja sendiri (wirausaha) di luar rumah | : Non-home-based enterprise                      |
| Bekerja sendiri (wirausaha) di rumah      | : Home-based enterprise                          |
| Pekerja keluarga tidak dibayar            | : Unpaid family worker                           |

Referring to the district minimum wage (*Upah Minimum Kabupaten*, or UMK)<sup>10</sup> in 2020 in East Lombok, which amounted to Rp2,184,197, we concluded that more than half of child marriage families in the district have expenses below the minimum standard. Furthermore, in March 2020, the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) determined that the national poverty line of households in Indonesia

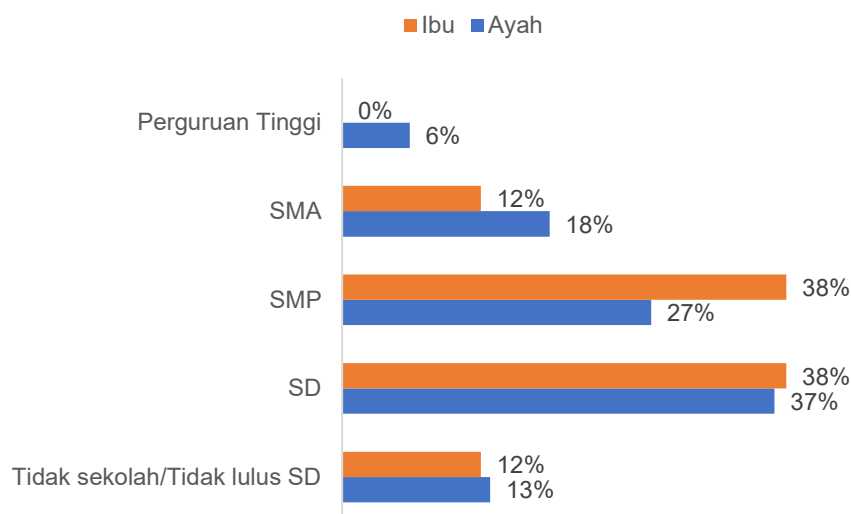
<sup>10</sup> <https://disnakertrans.lomboktimurkab.go.id/baca-berita-245-rapat-dewan-pengupahan-daerah-kabupaten-lombok-timur-tahun--2020-untuk-penetapan-upah-minimum-kabupa.html>

is Rp2,118,678<sup>11</sup>. Thus, it can be concluded that most child marriage families who participated in this study come from groups of poor households.

Concerning gender issues, data on parents' jobs showed unequal differences between maternal and paternal work. In families of child marriage, more mothers than fathers do not earn income. An analysis conducted by Wodon et al. (2017) showed that globally, child marriage could potentially lower the income of adult women married before 18 by up to 9%. This condition may be explained by the process of early labor as well as the new responsibility to care for children that puts women in a relatively challenging position to focus on their work.

Furthermore, Figure 5 shows that parents of child marriage families tend to have low education levels, with most having only elementary and junior high education. Some parents, representing 12–13%, did not even graduate from elementary school or have no education. By gender, the father's education levels are relatively higher when compared to the mother's. This difference stands out, especially at the junior high, senior high, and higher education levels. The proportion of mothers educated in junior high school is higher than fathers, which is 38% compared to 27%. In contrast, more fathers finish their education at least high school and college than mothers, 18% compared to 12% and 6%, respectively, compared to none.

**Figure 5: The Education Level of Parents of Child Marriage Families**



**Legend in English**

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Ibu                          | : Mother  |
| Ayah                         | : Father  |
| Perguruan Tinggi             | : Higher education/university                               |
| SMA                          | : Senior High School  |
| SMP                          | : Junior High School  |
| SD                           | : Elementary School   |
| Tidak sekolah/tidak lulus SD | : Did not attend school/not graduate from Elementary School |

The low education levels of child marriage people experience child marriage is consistent with the findings of previous studies showing that child marriage correlates with low levels of education. This

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.bps.go.id/pressrelease/2020/07/15/1744/persentase-penduduk-miskin-maret-2020-naik-menjadi-9-78-persen.html>

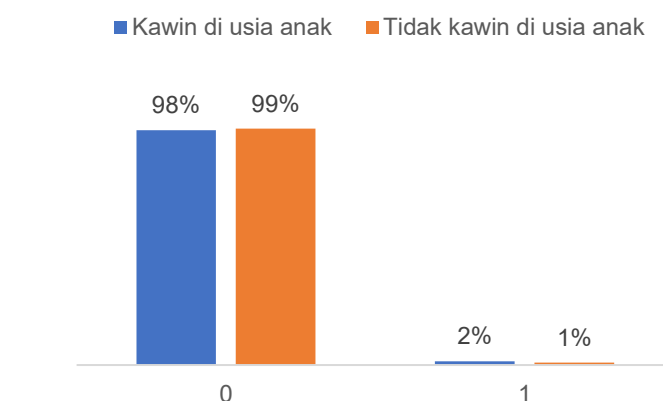
level is the likely result of two things. First, children who drop out of school tend to get married before adulthood. Second, another alternative explanation is that children who perform child marriages tend to drop out of school after marriage. Educational differences between men (fathers) and women (mothers) suggest that child marriage has unequal gender associations where women are more vulnerable.

## Vulnerability of Children from Child Marriage in East Lombok

Children born to child marriage partners tend to have health-related problems, face the possibility of not living with parents because of divorce, and have a relatively high risk of dropping out of school (Benedicta et al., 2017; Card, 1981; Marcoes et al., 2015; Wodon et al., 2017). This section shows that the findings do not always correspond to field data, at least based on the limited data we found in East Lombok. This section also compares those children's data with children who are not from child marriage families to examine the vulnerability of children from child marriage families.

Based on the child's disability status, Figure 6 shows that most families sampled in this study, both those who were and who were not in child marriages, did not have children with disabilities<sup>12</sup>. Only 1-2% of families have children with disabilities. This data showed no significant differences in the disability status of children, both children of child marriage families and non-child marriage families.

**Figure 6: Number of Children with Disabilities in a Child Marriage Family**



### Legend in English

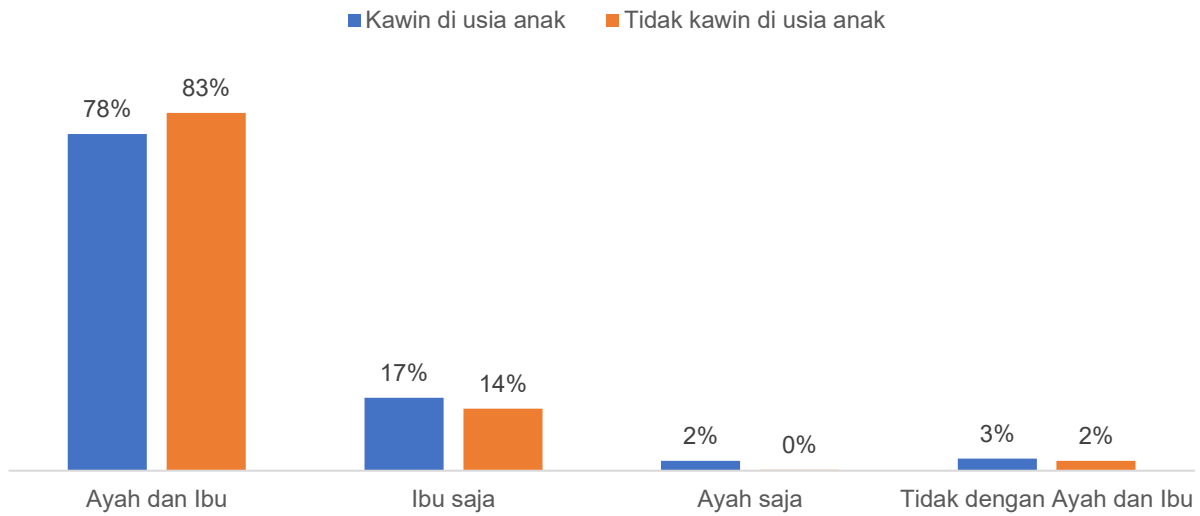
Kawin di usia anak : Married at child age  
 Tidak kawin di usia anak : Not married at child age

Furthermore, Figure 7 indicates that most children in East Lombok still live with fathers and mothers. This situation could be because most families, whether child marriage or not, are still in marital status, as seen in Figure 8. However, the percentage of children from child marriage families living with a full family is less than that of children from non-child marriage families, which is 78% compared to 83%. The same data also showed that children who did not live with a full family tended to live with

<sup>12</sup> In this study, children with disabilities were described as children with functional difficulties that included difficulty seeing, hearing, moving, remembering, and communicating.

only mothers rather than only fathers; the figure is more pronounced in children of child marriage families.

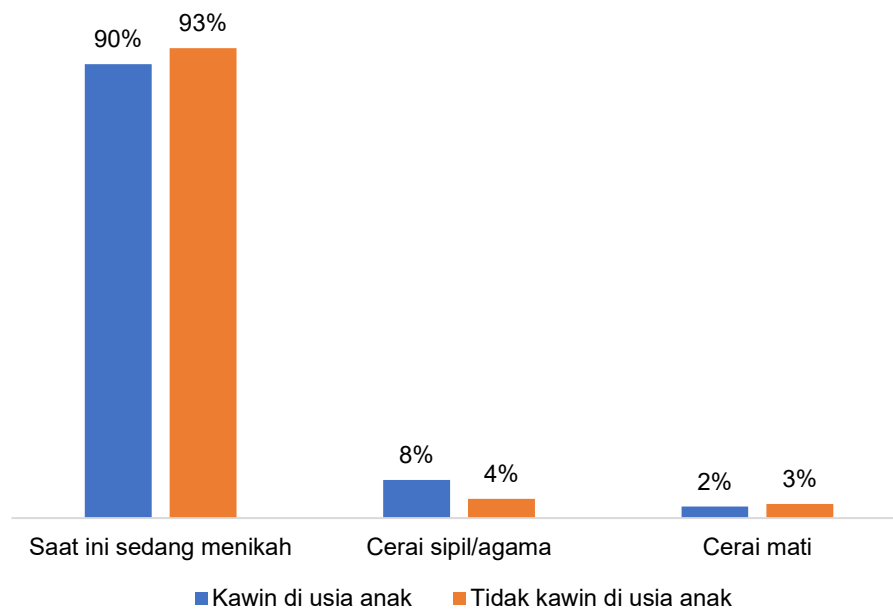
**Figure 7: A Companion Living with a Child from a Child Marriage Family**



**Legend in English**

|                           |                                  |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Kawin di usia anak        | : Married at child age           |
| Tidak kawin di usia anak  | : Not married at child age       |
| Ayah dan ibu              | : Father and mother              |
| Ibu saja                  | : Mother only                    |
| Ayah saja                 | : Father only                    |
| Tidak dengan ayah dan ibu | : Neither with father nor mother |

**Figure 8: Marital Status of Child Marriage Family Parents**



**Legend in English**

|                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Saat ini sedang menikah | : Now married             |
| Cerai sipil/agama       | : Divorce—civil/religious |

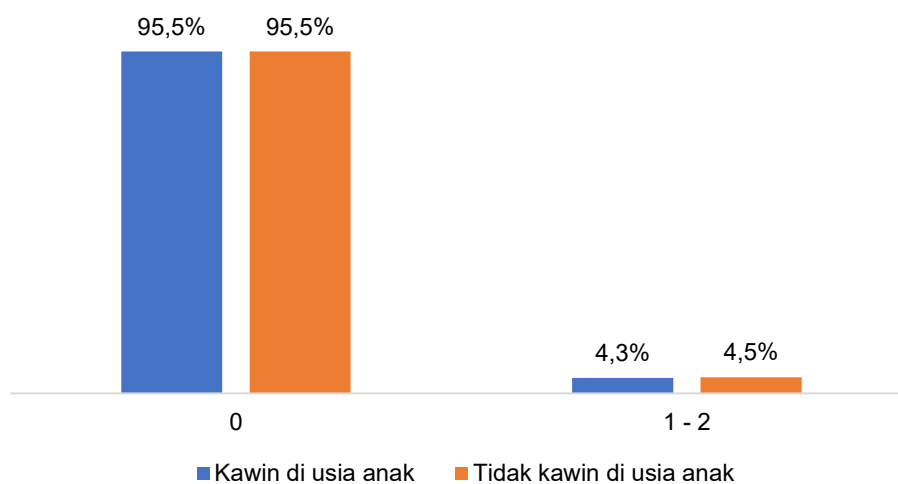
|                          |   |                          |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Cerai mati               | : | Divorce by death         |
| Kawin di usia anak       | : | Married at child age     |
| Tidak kawin di usia anak | : | Not married at child age |

The low divorce rate in this study differs from the findings of a previous study in West Nusa Tenggara conducted by Benedicta et al. (2017), which showed that child marriage is prone to cause divorce. Many children are still living with complete families—including their fathers and mothers—which is also different from the findings of Marcoes et al. (2015), which revealed that many children from child marriages live with grandparents or other relatives. However, the study could not confirm that the children who participated in the study were still living with their biological families.

Another important finding that this study cannot ignore is that about 14–17% of children live with only their mothers. The rate was slightly higher in children of child marriage families than in those who are not from child marriage families. This finding is interesting because the actual divorce rate, both religious and divorce because the spouse passed away, is below 10%, indicating that some children are left behind by their parents, either because of work or other reasons. Under these conditions, mothers bear more burdens in raising children than fathers.

Finally, the variable that describes a child's vulnerability is their potential to drop out of school. Figure 9 illustrates that 4.3–4.5% of the families sampled in the study had school-age children who did not attend school in their households. This finding is consistent in families with child marriage and families without child marriage.

**Figure 9: Number of School-Age Children Who Do Not Attend School in Child Marriage Families**



**Legend in English**

|                          |   |                          |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Kawin di usia anak       | : | Married at child age     |
| Tidak kawin di usia anak | : | Not married at child age |

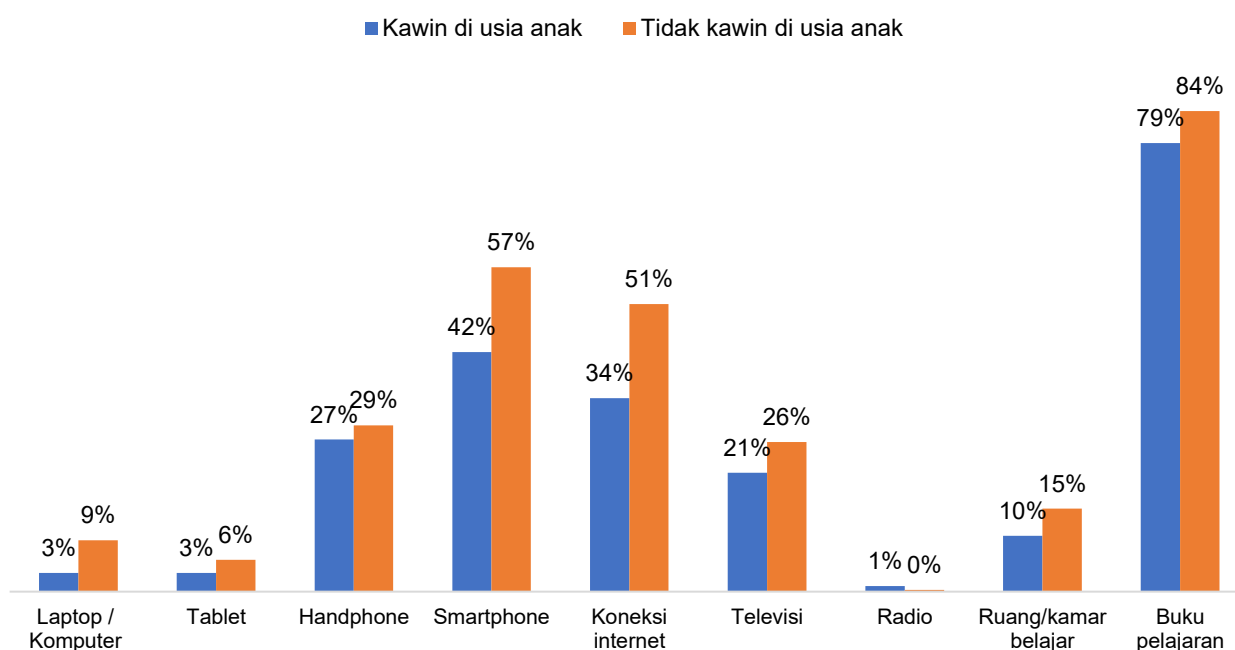
## Children's Learning Processes and Outcomes from Child Marriage

Child marriage puts children born in these families in vulnerable conditions; living in a limited economic state makes children's learning processes more challenging. This section describes the child's learning process during the pandemic and its consequences on student learning outcomes.

### Ownership of Learning Facilities

Figure 10 illustrates the ownership of child learning facilities from child marriage families and those who are not. Data shows that children in East Lombok, whether they are from child marriage families or not, there are still many who do not have learning facilities. However, children from child marriage families tend to have much more limited facilities than children from non-child marriage families. This difference stands out in terms of essential learning facilities to support online learning during the pandemic, such as laptops/computers, smartphones, and the internet. This finding suggests that distance learning, particularly online, cannot be fully engaged by children from child marriage families.

**Figure 10: Ownership of Child Learning Facilities from Child Marriage Families**



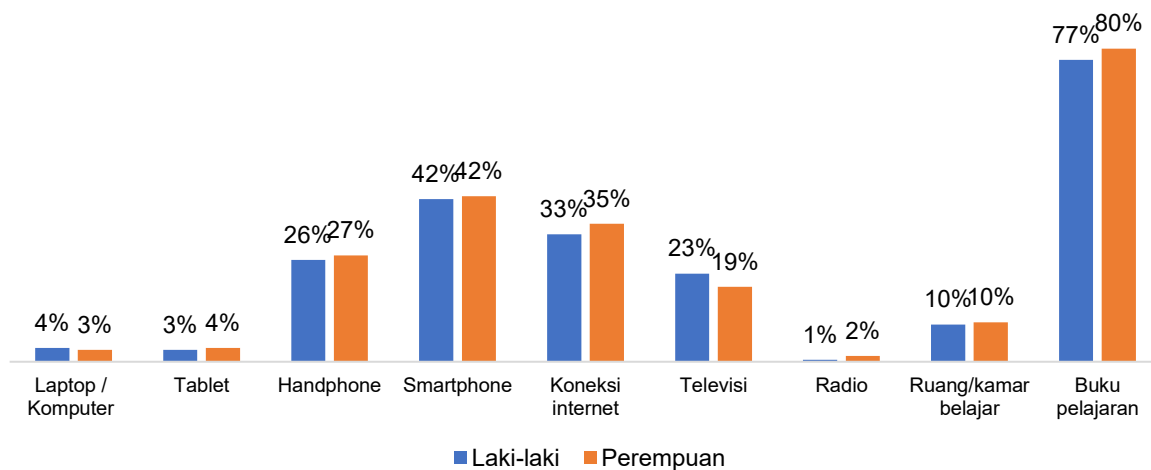
#### Legend in English

|                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Kawin di usia anak       | : Married at child age     |
| Tidak kawin di usia anak | : Not married at child age |
| Laptop/komputer          | : Laptop/computer          |
| Tablet                   | : Tablet                   |
| Telepon seluler          | : Handphone                |
| Telepon pintar           | : Smartphone               |
| Koneksi internet         | : Internet connection      |
| Televisi                 | : Television               |
| Radio                    | : Radio                    |
| Ruang/kamar belajar      | : Study room               |
| Buku pelajaran           | : Textbook                 |



Based on gender, Figure 11 shows no significant gender differences in the ownership of learning facilities. Generally, the percentage of girls with learning facilities tends to be higher than boys. However, the difference only ranges from 1–3%.

**Figure 11: Ownership of Learning Facilities by Gender**



**Legend in English**

|                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Laptop/komputer     | : Laptop/computer     |
| Tablet              | : Tablet              |
| Telepon seluler     | : Handphone           |
| Telepon pintar      | : Smartphone          |
| Koneksi internet    | : Internet connection |
| Televisi            | : Television          |
| Radio               | : Radio               |
| Ruang/kamar belajar | : Study room          |
| Buku pelajaran      | : Textbook            |
| Laki-laki           | : Male                |
| Perempuan           | : Female              |

The INOVASI Learning from Home survey conducted at the beginning of the pandemic showed that there were indeed differences in learning modes between partner provinces in INOVASI (Arsendy et al., 2020). In East Java and North Kalimantan, online learning was used up to nearly 40%, while in East Nusa Tenggara and West Nusa Tenggara, online learning was only below 5% and 10%, respectively. This study found one reason namely: the ownership of online learning facilities that was relatively limited, particularly for students from child marriage families in East Lombok. This condition indicates that the transition to online learning without considering the availability of facilities and students' readiness will place vulnerable groups in increasingly vulnerable conditions (UNICEF, 2021).

Furthermore, the findings that girls' access to learning facilities tended to be the same as boys differs from other research findings. An analysis by Rowntree & Shanahan (2020) shows that inequality in technology access between men and women is common in poor and developing countries. Many factors may contribute to this phenomenon, such as lower economic capabilities, limited technological literacy, security issues that are considered threatening to women, and no permission

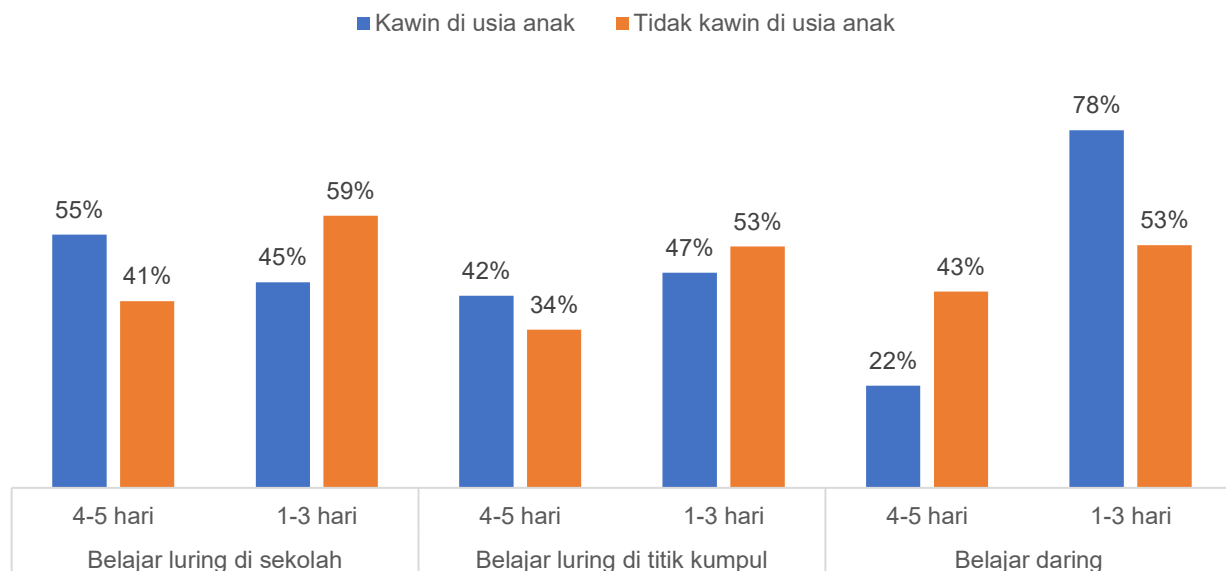
from parents for children to use technology. This difference in findings could be because the study focused on children from low classes in which gender inequality tends to be more minimal.

## Forms of Learning Activities During the Pandemic

During the pandemic, the learning process was hybrid, conducted via online and offline. For the offline mode, learning can happen at school or home, for example, by gathering at an agreed-upon point. This section seeks to explain the learning modes that children commonly use in East Lombok during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 12 shows the differences among the dominant learning modes accessed by children from child marriage families and those who are not from child marriage families. For example, the percentage of children from child marriage families who intensively (4-5 days) participated in offline learning at school and a gathering point, the rate was found to be higher than children who were not from child marriage families, respectively 55% versus 41% and 42% versus 34%. In contrast, the percentage of children from child marriage families who intensively engaged in online learning is lower than those who do not, 22% versus 43%. In other words, it showed ~~can be concluded~~ that children from child marriage families dominated offline learning. In contrast, online learning was dominated by children not from child marriage families.

**Figure 12: Learning Mode during the Pandemic**



### Legend in English

Hari : Day  
 Belajar luring di sekolah : Offline learning at school  
 Belajar luring di titik kumpul : Offline learning at a meeting point  
 Belajar daring : Online learning

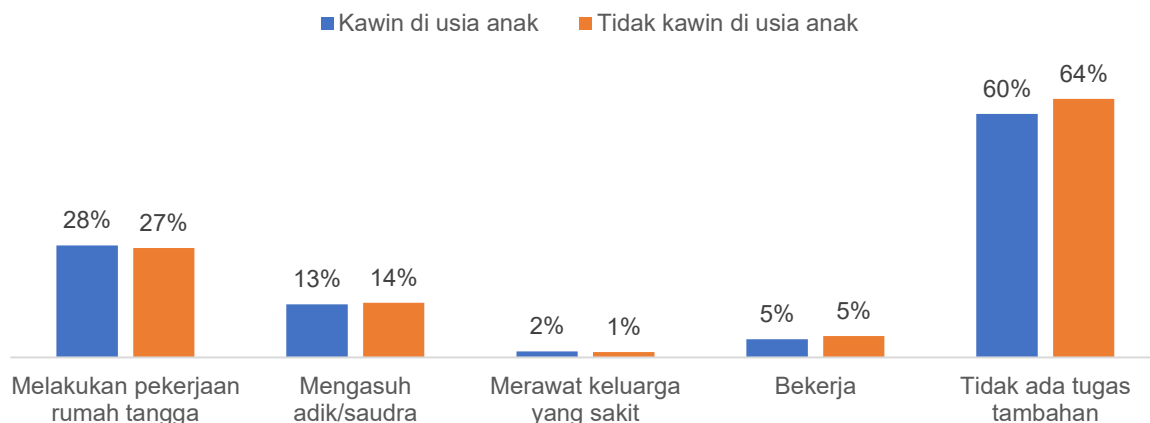
This finding cannot be separated from the reality that children from child marriage families have more limited online learning facilities. In addition, considering that people who experience child marriage

live mostly in the countryside (BPS et al., 2020), the limited online learning in the family can also be caused by inadequate infrastructure. Nevertheless, this data can describe only the mode of learning, not their quality. This study cannot be sure that those who study online receive better quality learning and vice versa.

### Additional Tasks at Home during the Pandemic

Furthermore, Figure 13 shows that about 40% of children, whether from child marriage families or not, had additional tasks to do at home during the pandemic. There was no clear difference between the two groups of children. The most dominant tasks performed were doing household chores that included cooking, washing, and other tasks related to life skills. These tasks could have been due to an appeal from the government that learning during the pandemic can be focused on improving skills/life skills<sup>13</sup>.

**Figure 13: Additional Tasks of Children at Home**

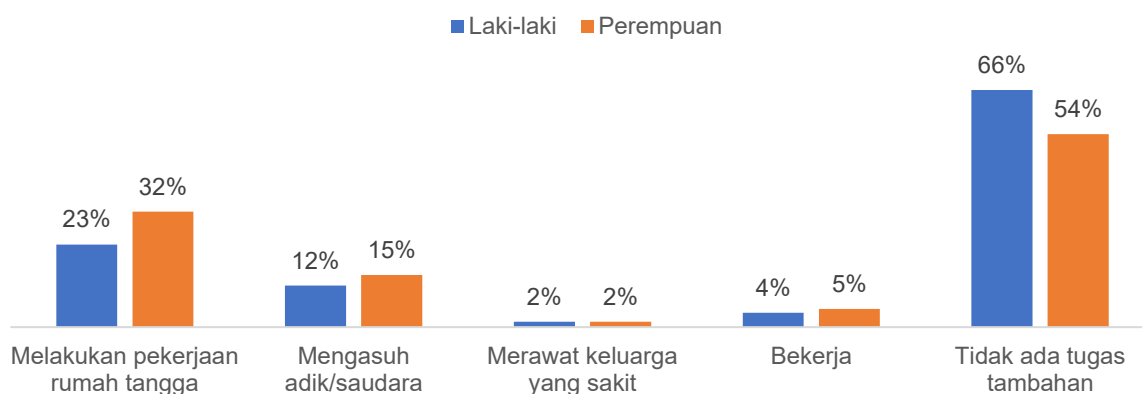


#### Legend in English

|                                  |   |                                   |
|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Kawin di usia anak               | : | Married at child age              |
| Tidak kawin di usia anak         | : | Not married at child age          |
| Melakukan pekerjaan rumah tangga | : | Do household chores               |
| Mengasuh adik/saudara            | : | Attend to brother/sister/relative |
| Merawat keluarga yang sakit      | : | Care for an ill family member     |
| Bekerja                          | : | Work                              |
| Tidak ada tugas tambahan         | : | No additional chores              |

<sup>13</sup> Source: <http://pgdikdas.kemdikbud.go.id/read-news/pembelajaran-jarak-jauh-selama-masa-pandemi>

**Figure 14: Additional Tasks of Children at Home by Gender**



**Legend in English**

|                                  |   |                                   |
|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Laki-laki                        | : | Male                              |
| Perempuan                        | : | Female                            |
| Melakukan pekerjaan rumah tangga | : | Do household chores               |
| Mengasuh adik/saudara            | : | Attend to brother/sister/relative |
| Merawat keluarga yang sakit      | : | Care for an ill family member     |
| Bekerja                          | : | Work                              |
| Tidak ada tugas tambahan         | : | No additional chores              |

**SWX**

However, as Figure 14 reveals, the assignment of additional tasks in child marriage families' homes shows significant gender inequality. The percentage of girls responsible for additional tasks tended to be higher than boys. Differences appear to be more significant in the household chores and caring for family members. This additional unequal burden poses greater challenges for girls to participate fully in distance learning (UNFPA & UNICEF, 2020). In addition, the magnitude of the tasks that girls must do can reduce their play time at home (Save the Children, 2020) and affect their psychological condition.

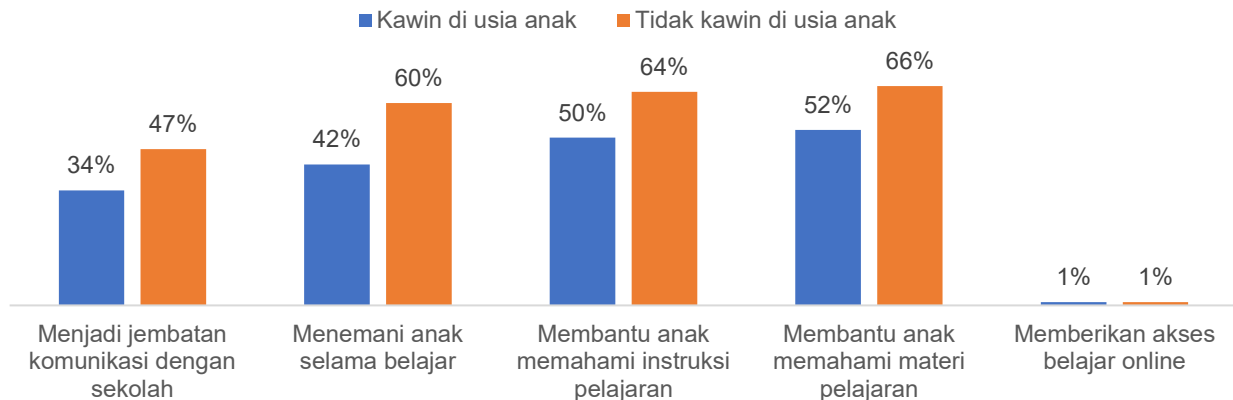
## Learning Assistance by Parents

The shift of learning from schools to homes during the pandemic demanded that parents be responsible for additional roles to ensure the learning process can occur even if the children are not attending school. This section describes findings relevant to the assistance parents provided, the allocation of time, and the role of fathers and mothers in the child's learning process during the pandemic.

First, Figure 15 shows that parents in East Lombok tended to be involved in the child's learning process. The highest engagement level stands out in helping children understand instructions and learning materials. Meanwhile, parents who provided online learning access to their children represent only 1% of the total sample. This low percentage shows that implementing online learning in East Lombok was challenging and very limited.

Another important fact revealed in Figure 14 is the difference in involvement between child marriage families and non-child marriage families. Child marriage families had a lower percentage of engagement than the second group.

**Figure 15: The Role of Parents during the Pandemic**

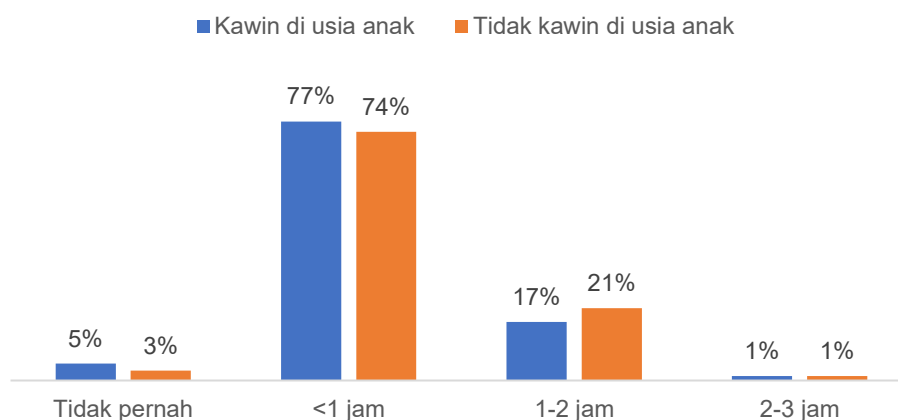


**Legend in English**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Kawin di usia anak                         | : Married at child age                           |
| Tidak kawin di usia anak                   | : Not married at child age                       |
| Menjadi jembatan komunikasi dengan sekolah | : Bridges communication with school              |
| Menemani anak selama belajar               | : Accompany children during learning             |
| Membantu anak memahami instruksi belajar   | : Help children understand learning instruction  |
| Membantu anak memahami materi pelajaran    | : Help children understand the learning material |
| Memberikan akses belajar online            | : Provide online learning access                 |

Unlike the previous data, Figure 16 does not show a significant difference between child marriage families and non-child marriage families regarding the allocation of child learning assistance time. Furthermore, Figure 16 illustrates in more detail the allocation of time parents spend per day to accompany the child's learning process. The data shows that most parents allocated less than an hour, but there are also some parents allocated 1-2 hours. This allocation suggests that although child marriage families and non-child marriage families have differences in the domain of learning assistance, their commitments in terms of the time they allocated were not meaningfully different.

**Figure 16: Allocation of Learning Assistance Time by Parents**

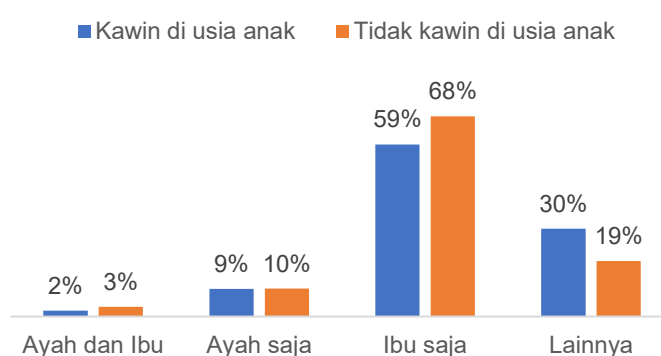


**Legend in English**

|                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Kawin di usia anak       | : Married at child age     |
| Tidak kawin di usia anak | : Not married at child age |
| Tidak pernah             | : Never                    |
| Jam                      | : Hour                     |

When viewed in terms of the main companion of children's learning, Figure 17 shows the mother most often accompanied their children to learn. The findings were consistent in both child marriage and non-child marriage families at 59% and 68%, respectively. Meanwhile, in the two families, the number of children who said they were accompanied by their father when studying was much smaller at less than 10%. This figure is smaller than the number of children who were accompanied by relatives such as brothers, uncles, aunts, and other family members outside the father and mother.

**Figure 17: Child Learning Companion**



#### Legend in English

|                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Kawin di usia anak       | : Married at child age     |
| Tidak kawin di usia anak | : Not married at child age |
| Ayah dan ibu             | : Father and mother        |
| Ayah saja                | : Father only              |
| Ibu saja                 | : Mother only              |
| Lainnya                  | : Other                    |

The findings for assistance by parents were slightly different from the findings of a study conducted by INOVASI in March 2020 with a national focus. At the beginning of the pandemic, when almost all schools in Indonesia were closed about 30% of parents (both fathers and mothers) allocated 1-2 hours to accompany their children when they were studying (Arsendy et al., 2020). In addition to differences in research locations, differences in parents' allocation of learning assistance time can also be attributed to the fact that, currently, more schools have been opened. Learning is fully underway in schools, especially in more remote areas where COVID-19 cases are limited. However, in terms of gender differences for child learning assistance, these findings complement previous INOVASI findings that show that in the INOVASI partner areas, mothers allocate more time for children's learning than fathers (Arsendy et al., 2020).

In addition to these two studies, studies conducted by Rakhmah (2020) at the national level and Sahadewo & Irhamni (2020) in Jakarta also showed that home learning does strengthen gender-based inequality between fathers and mothers in terms of child learning assistance. Thus, it can be concluded that the shift in learning from home to school tends to make mothers increasingly

vulnerable. This vulnerability could potentially cause fatigue and stress and negatively affect maternal health. An analysis conducted by Sevilla et al. (2020) shows that inequality in the division of household roles tends to make mothers stop working, which reduces their income. Parents' engagement programs in children's education, especially during the pandemic should consider this analysis.

### Child Learning Outcomes

This final section describes students' learning outcomes based on their performances on numeracy and basic literacy tests. Figure 18 compares children's learning outcomes using the Item Response Theory (IRT) method. This method is commonly used in international tests, such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). It is considered more objective in predicting a student's ability levels by considering the difficulty levels of problems (Baker, 2001). For example, two students who both answer a question correctly can have different grades if one of the students can answer a more difficult question.

The value contained in the IRT is a value that has been distributed normally and, in this study, has been converted to a standard value (z-score). In summary, the higher the score it will represent the higher the average ability of students to answer numeracy and literacy questions with a higher level of difficulty. The difference between two z-scores can be expressed in normally distributed data as standard deviations.

Figure 18: Children's Numeracy and Literacy Learning Outcomes

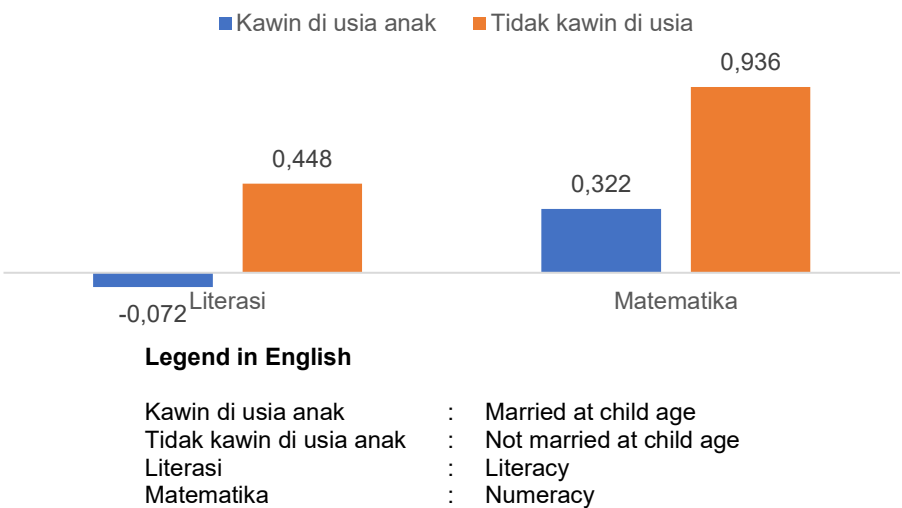
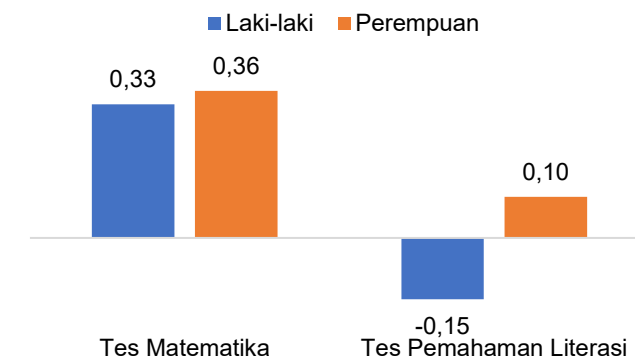


Figure 18 shows a notable difference between the learning outcomes of children from child marriage families and those who were not. This difference can be seen in the literacy test (difference of 0.52 standard deviation) and the numeracy test (difference of 0.61 standard deviations). Based on the calculations made by the Education Endowment Foundation (2021)<sup>14</sup>, the difference of 0.52 and 0.61

<sup>14</sup> The conversion of the difference between standard deviation/z-score and months of learning progress is projected using the Education Endowment Foundation study (2021).  
<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/about-the-toolkits/attainment>

is equivalent to a difference of seven months of learning. Furthermore, in terms of gender, Figure 19 shows that girls consistently have better learning abilities than boys.

**Figure 19: Numeracy and Literacy Outcomes by Gender**



**Legend in English**

|                        |                               |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Laki-laki              | : Male                        |
| Perempuan              | : Female                      |
| Tes matematika         | : Numeracy test               |
| Tes pemahaman literasi | : Literacy comprehension test |

This learning outcome confirms previous findings suggesting that children from child marriage families tend to have relatively low learning outcomes (Aizer et al., 2020; Burgess, 2005; Card, 1981; Wall-Wieler et al., 2019). Unlike previous measurements that focused on intelligence skills and school readiness, the INOVASI study measured children's numeracy and basic literacy abilities in school.

In addition, the difference in the abilities of boys and girls identified in this study is also a common phenomenon that occurs a lot, both in Indonesia and at the global level (Jha & Pouezevara, 2016). In INOVASI, the results of an evaluation of INOVASI pilot programs in various regions in Indonesia also showed that girls have better student learning outcomes than boys (Arsendy & Sukoco, 2020). In addition to performance, access to education for citizens aged 7-18 years, commonly measured through School Participation Rate (*Angka Partisipasi Sekolah*, or APS), also shows that female students have higher access than male students (BPS, 2020).



## 4. CLOSING

### Discussion

At the global level, Wodon et al. (2017) documented the negative impact of child marriage on the children born into those families, especially regarding the decline in children's opportunities for education and employment in the future. Nevertheless, examinations of the vulnerability of children from child marriage families during the pandemic tend to be limited. Discussions about child marriage in Indonesia during the pandemic were dominated by predictions that the number of child marriages would increase. It is vital to create awareness and strategies to prevent child marriage. However, such discussions do not adequately represent the vulnerabilities of children from families who have been in child marriages before the pandemic. Whereas, some studies have shown that children from vulnerable groups became increasingly vulnerable because of the pandemic (Alifia et al., 2020; Arsendy et al., 2020; UNICEF, 2020).

Among some of the crucial findings of this study, the most prominent vulnerabilities experienced by children from child marriage families were living together with poor and less-educated parents, having minimal learning facilities, limited opportunities for online learning, and low numeracy and literacy learning outcomes. These findings suggest that the vulnerability of child marriage families is strongly associated with poverty. The Women's Refugee Commission (2016) states that child marriage exacerbates the cycle of poverty. Therefore, poverty can cause a person to become married as a child. At the same time, child marriage can also exacerbate the poverty of those in child marriage families, adversely affecting the next generation of families.

Previous studies have also shown that it is difficult to separate the poverty factor from the child marriage issue, given that child marriage, people who experience child marriage are dominated by those who are poor (Aizer et al., 2020; BPS et al., 2020; Hotz et al., 1999). In this INOVASI study, nearly 65% of child marriage families were poor households with expenditures below the poverty line. Although studies have successfully documented some of the vulnerabilities of children from child marriage families, understanding the causes of such vulnerabilities (whether due to poverty or child marriage) is beyond the scope of this study~~their scope~~.

Apart from poverty, another critical issue associated with child marriage is gender inequality. In some aspects of the findings, groups of women from child marriage families tended to be more vulnerable than men. This finding is consistent in both female parents (mothers) and girls. For example, mothers are more vulnerable and have more burdens; mothers who marry at child age tend to have lower education levels and more limited employment than fathers. In addition, mothers are also more responsible for assisting with children's learning than fathers. In conditions where children do not live with their father and mother, more children live with only their mother than their father.

The findings about girls are similar to other studies. Compared to boys, girls tend to be more vulnerable. For example, during the pandemic, girls performed more additional household tasks than boys. However, measurements of girls' learning outcomes show that girls tend to have better results than boys. Nonetheless, this condition does not necessarily put women in a condition that is not vulnerable but shows that even in vulnerable conditions, girls tend to have better academic ability than boys. Exploration to understand how such phenomena can occur can be the focus of further research because they have not been explored in this study.

Furthermore, although child marriage families have negative stigmas attached to them (Astuti et al., 2020; Cense & Ruard Ganzevoort, 2019; Clarke, 2015), this study found that mothers tend to be involved in their children's learning processes. Half of the families who participated in the study admitted to being involved in helping their children learn by accompanying and helping them understand teaching materials and task instructions. However, their involvement in communicating with schools was more limited. Although they care about their children's education, Lareau (2003) points out that families of vulnerable groups tend to face constraints when communicating with schools because of their limited educational experience and the unequal power relations between schools and poor parents.

The involvement of mothers of child marriage families is also evident from the allocation of time they spend assisting them to learn. Most mothers spend an hour a day helping their children learn; some spend up to two hours a day. This allocation tends to be no different for mothers from not child marriage families. In addition to parents, learning assistance for children from child marriage families is also widely done by other family members, such as older siblings, uncles, aunts, and other relatives who live around children. This finding is in line with studies conducted by Yulianti et al. (2019) in Indonesia and Horvat et al. (2003) in the United States, which showed that economically vulnerable families tend to seek support from surrounding networks or relatives (social capital) to help children's learning processes in school. This tendency contrasts with economically privileged groups' reliance on help from professionals such as paid tutors.

This study illustrates the vulnerabilities of children born to child marriage parents, including during the pandemic. This documentation of children's vulnerabilities complements previous findings that show child marriage makes child marriage families and children born into these families, especially girls, increasingly vulnerable. In the future, efforts to prevent child marriage should also consider the vulnerabilities of children born to married families under 18 and assess the vulnerabilities in their learning processes.

## Conclusion

The study aimed to explore the vulnerability of children from parents who married at child age, including during the pandemic. The study explored three main research questions that included (1) the vulnerability of parents of child marriage families, (2) the potential vulnerability of children, and (3) the potential effects of this vulnerability on the children's learning processes during the pandemic—including their learning outcomes. This section summarizes each of the findings in response to the research questions.

First, parents of child marriage families are a vulnerable group. Most live below the poverty line and work in vulnerable employment sectors. Regarding education, parents who perform child marriage also tend to have low levels of education and have completed only elementary and junior high school. Compared to fathers, the education levels of mothers who marry at childhood age tend to be lower.

Second, regarding the vulnerability of children and their families, our findings showed no notable difference between the two groups of children regarding the risk of developing a disability or having functional problems. In addition, most children from child marriage families lived with their complete families. However, this study cannot verify that the complete family involves the father and biological mother. Third, children from child marriage families and non-child marriages are equally vulnerable to dropping out of school. However, children of child marriage families experienced more vulnerabilities.

This study ~~story~~ analyzed several variables to answer the final research questions about the learning processes and outcomes of children: (1) ownership of learning facilities, (2) learning assistance, and (3) student learning outcomes.

First, children from child marriage families have more limited learning facilities. These limitations are more pronounced for girls than boys. Second, regarding time allocation, learning assistance from parents of child marriage families and those from non-child marriage families tended to be the same. However, there were differences in the level of assistance provided by families in which mothers more often helped children when learning than fathers. Finally, children from child marriage families had consistently lower learning outcomes than children who were not from child marriage families. These findings were found for both numeracy and literacy tests.

The table below summarizes the vulnerability of children from child marriage families in this study. The white indicates that the study did not found vulnerabilities for the intended aspect. Yellow indicates this vulnerability was experienced by all children, from families whose parents married at the child's age and those who did not. Finally, red indicates the unique vulnerability of children of child marriage families.

| Vulnerability Aspects                | Vulnerability Form   | Gender Issues  |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| The Condition of the Parents         | Children from child marriage families have parents who work in vulnerable employment sectors and have low levels of education.                                     | The mother's employment background and education level tend to be lower than the father's.   |
| Functional Difficulties              | Few children from child marriage families have functional difficulties.  | There were no gender differences related to functional difficulties.   |
| Residence                            | Most children from child marriage families still live with their parents.  | Although most children still live with their parents, the composition of children who live with only the mother has a greater percentage than those who live with only the father. |
| Dropouts                             | Children from child marriage families tend to be vulnerable to dropping out of school, and the same vulnerability was also found in other children in East Lombok. | There were no gender differences related to the dropout vulnerability.   |
| Learning Facilities                  | Children from child marriage families have more limited learning facilities.   | Girls have slightly more access to learning facilities.  |
| Learning Mode                        | Children from child marriage families do engage in less online learning.   | There were no gender differences related to learning modes.  |
| Additional Tasks during the Pandemic | Children of child marriage families had many household chores to complete. However, these findings were also found in children from non-child marriage families.   | Girls have more household chores than boys.  |

| Vulnerability Aspects | Vulnerability Form  | Gender Issues  |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Parental Assistance   | There is a difference between parents of child marriage families and those who are not, but those differences are not prominent. However, the lower education level of parents of child marriage families may contribute to the quality of mentoring. | Assistance from mothers is more dominant than assistance from fathers. This condition adds a double burden for the mother, potentially making her more vulnerable. |
| Learning Outcomes     | Children from child marriage families tend to have lower learning outcomes.   | Boys have lower learning outcomes than girls.  |

## Policy Response

This section summarizes some of the issues and corresponding policy recommendations. Given that INOVASI focuses on interventions in education, particularly in schools, the recommendations below focus more on creating inclusive educational processes and environments for vulnerable children, including those from child marriage families. Recommendations related to the prevention of child marriage can be found in the INOVASI I study on child marriage, contained in a separate report.

| Issues   | Recommendations   |
|--|---|
| Children from child marriage families come from low-income families. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure children from child marriage families are grouped into the vulnerable category entitled to receive social assistance from the government through schools, such as by being recipients of the Smart Indonesia Card (KIP).</li> <li>In terms of children from child marriage families who do not have official identity cards, schools need to accommodate and advocate for the needs of children so they can receive an official identity and social assistance.</li> </ul>              |
| Limited learning facilities and minimal online learning modes.       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct safe, convenient offline learning and can be followed by all students.</li> <li>Suppose schools still have to be closed because of the pandemic. In that case, schools must implement an inclusive blended learning mode (accommodating the needs of students from a wide variety of backgrounds) to ensure that students with limited learning facilities can continue learning.</li> <li>Ensure that children, including girls, have equal access to learning facilities.</li> </ul> |
| Additional tasks during the pandemic are relatively numerous.        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimize tasks related to household skills because most children perform these tasks without direction from school.</li> <li>Remind families that children, especially girls, should be allowed to play and learn.</li> </ul>  |

| Issues   | Recommendations   |
|--|---|
| <p>Learning assistance by parents tends to be provided by mothers and relatives rather than fathers.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School's parental involvement programs should pay attention to gender aspects. Schools need to encourage fathers to be actively involved in children's educational processes..</li> <li>• If parents find it difficult to get involved because of work issues and limited educational experience, schools need to work closely with communities and volunteers to help children's learning processes.</li> <li>• Improve the quality of interactions between schools and parents through regular meetings or other communication platforms. Teachers must inform parents or families of children about school policies during the pandemic and strategies to support children's learning processes. This strategy needs to be adjusted to the abilities and backgrounds of diverse parents.</li> </ul> |
| <p>Lower learning outcomes.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare learning strategies as needed, especially for boys.</li> <li>• Encourage the implementation of gender-responsive learning that allows teachers to implement strategies that sensitively consider gender-related differences and other gendered issues in schools. This practice needs to start with increased knowledge of inclusive perspectives and consider gendered aspects of the learning process. This process needs to be followed by strengthening it at the implementation level to encourage teachers to prepare gender-sensitive learning strategies to recognize and address other gender issues in schools.</li> </ul>   |

## REFERENCES

- Aizer, A., Devereux, P. J., & Salvanes, K. G. (2020). *Grandparents, Moms, or Dads? Why Children of Teen Mothers Do Worse in Life*. 70.
- Alifia, U., Barasa, A. R., Bima, L., Pramana, R. P., Revina, S., & Tresnatri, F. A. (2020). *Learning from Home: Portraits of Inequality* (p. 8). SMERU Research Institute. [https://smeru.or.id/sites/default/files/publication/cp01\\_covidpjj\\_in\\_0.pdf](https://smeru.or.id/sites/default/files/publication/cp01_covidpjj_in_0.pdf)
- Amigó, M. F. (2010). Small Bodies, Large Contribution: Children's Work in the Tobacco Plantations of Lombok, Indonesia. *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, 11(1), 34–51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14442210903540393>
- Arsendy, S., & Sukoco, G. A. (2020). *Girls do better than boys at school in Indonesia – if they get the chance*. Indonesia at Melbourne. <https://indonesiaatmelbourne.unimelb.edu.au/girls-do-better-than-boys-at-school-in-indonesia-if-they-get-the-chance/>
- Arsendy, S., Sukoco, G. A., & Purba, R. E. (2020). *COVID-19 impact research: Portrait of the "Learning from Home" online access gap from 4 provinces*. The Conversation. <http://theconversation.com/riset-dampak-covid-19-potret-gap-akses-online-belajar-dari-rumah-dari-4-provinsi-136534>
- Astuti, A. W., Hirst, J., & Bharj, K. K. (2020). Indonesian adolescents' experiences during pregnancy and early parenthood: A qualitative study. *Journal of Psychosomatic Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 41(4), 317–326. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0167482X.2019.1693538>
- Baker, F.B. (2001). *Item Response Theory the Basics of Item Response Theory the*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation.
- Bappenas. (2020). *National Strategy for the Prevention of Child Marriage*. National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas).
- Benedicta, G. D., Wahyuadi, D., Susanti, L. R., Noor, I. R., Kartikawati, R., Ramadhan, F. R., Az Zahro, F., & Natih, N. N. S. (2017). *A Qualitative Study on the Causes and Consequences of Divorce after Child Marriage in Sukabumi, Rembang and West Lombok Regencies* (p. 89). Puska Gender and Sexuality Faculty of Social and Political Sciences University of Indonesia.
- BPS. (2020). *School Participation Rate of Population Aged 7-18 Years*. <https://www.bps.go.id/statictable/2012/04/25/1613/angka-partisipasi-sekolah-aps-penduduk-usia-7-18-tahun-menurut-tipe-daerah-jenis-kelamin-dan-kelompok-umur-2009-2019.html>
- BPS, UNICEF, & Center for the Study and Advocacy of Child Protection and Quality of Life (PUSKAPA). (2020). *Prevention of Child Marriage: An Acceleration That Cannot Be Delayed*. National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas).
- Burgess, S. (2005). The preschool home literacy environment provided by teenage mothers. *Early Child Development and Care*, 175(3), 249–258. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0300443042000266303>



- Cameron, L., Suarez, D.C., & Wieczkiewicz, S. (2020). *Consequences of Child Marriage in Indonesia* (p. 60). CAN.
- Card, J. J. (1981). Long-term consequences for children of teenage parents. *Demography*, 18(2). <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2061089>
- Cense, M., & Ruud Ganzevoort, R. (2019). The storyscapes of teenage pregnancy. On morality, embodiment, and narrative agency. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 22(4), 568–583. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2018.1526373>
- Clarke, J. (2015). It's not all doom and gloom for teenage mothers – exploring the factors that contribute to positive outcomes. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 20(4), 470–484. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2013.804424>
- Gunawan, R., Hilmi, A., & Mohammad, J. (2019). *Why does Islam prohibit child marriage?* The Common Book House.
- Horvat, E.M., Weininger, E.B., & Lareau, A. (2003). From Social Ties to Social Capital: Class Differences in the Relations between Schools and Parent Networks. *American Educational Research Journal*, 40(2), 319–351.
- Hotz, V. J., Sanders, S., & McElroy, S. W. (1999). *Teenage Childbearing and Its Life Cycle Consequences: Exploiting a Natural Experiment* (No. w7397; p. w7397). National Bureau of Economic Research. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w7397>
- Irhamni, M., & Sahadewo, G. (2020). *Preliminary Findings of Distance Learning Study (PJJ) elementary school level in DKI Jakarta*. J-PAL Southeast Asia. <https://www.povertyactionlab.org/project/learning-home-during-pandemic-experiences-parents-and-teachers>
- Jha, J., & Pouezevara, S. (2016). *Boys' Underachievement in Education* (p. 61). RTI International. <https://shared.rti.org/content/boys-underachievement-education-review-literature-focus-reading-early-years>
- Lareau, A. (2003). *Unequal childhoods: Class, race, and family life*. University of California Press.
- Marcoes, L., Princess, F. D., Harahap, J., Lockley, A., & Beladro, M. (2015). *Child Marriage and The Phenomenon of Social Orphans in Lombok* (p. 32). The Common Book House.
- Marshan, J. N., Rakhmadi, M. F., & Rizky, M. (2013). *Prevalence of Child Marriage and Its Determinant Factors among Young Indonesian Women*. 26.
- Rakhmah, D. N. (2020). *Survey: The burden of child learning assistance during the pandemic is more on mothers than fathers*. The Conversation. <http://theconversation.com/survei-beban-pendampingan-belajar-anak-selama-pandemi-lebih-banyak-ke-ibu-ketimbang-ayah-143538>
- Rowntree, O., & Shanahan, M. (2020). *The mobile gender gap report 2020*. GSMA Intelligence. <https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/GSMA-The-Mobile-Gender-Gap-Report-2020.pdf>
- Save the Children. (2020). *The Global Girlhood Report*.

- Sevilla, A., Phimister, A., Krutikova, S., Kraftman, L., Farquharson, C., Costa Dias, M., Cattan, S., & Andrew, A. (2020). *How are mothers and fathers balancing work and family under lockdown?* <https://doi.org/10.1920/BN.IFS.2020.BN0290>
- Smith, B. (2009). Stealing women, stealing men: Co-creating cultures of polygamy in a pesantren community in Eastern Indonesia. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 11(1).
- UNFPA, & UNICEF. (2020). *Pivoting the UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage to Respond to the Pandemic*.
- UNICEF. (2020). *COVID-19 and Children in Indonesia*.
- UNICEF. (2021). *Situational analysis on digital learning landscape in Indonesia*. UNICEF. <https://www.unicef.org/indonesia/media/8766/file/Digital%20Learning%20Landscape%20in%20Indonesia.pdf>
- Wall-Wieler, E., Lee, J.B., Nickel, N., & Roos, L. L. (2019). The multigenerational effects of adolescent motherhood on school readiness: A population-based retrospective cohort study. *PLOS ONE*, 14(2), e0211284. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0211284>
- Wodon, Q., Savadogo, A., Yedan, A., Edmeades, J., Kes, A., John, N., Murithi, L., Steinhaus, M., & Petroni, S. (2017). *Economic Impacts of Child Marriage: Global Synthesis Report*. 99. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/530891498511398503/pdf/116829-WP-P151842-PUBLIC-EICM-Global-Conference-Edition-June-27.pdf>
- Women's Refugee Commission. (2016). *A Girl No More: The Changing Norms of Child Marriage in Conflict*.
- Yulianti, K., Denessen, E., & Droop, M. (2019). *Indonesian Parents' Involvement in Their Children's Education: A Study in Elementary Schools in Urban and Rural Java, Indonesia*. 26.



## ANNEX

### Survey Instrument Details


| Instruments      | Respondent Targets                    | Instrument Item Details  | Average Data Collection Time |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Principal Survey | One person per school                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School characteristics data</li> <li>School detail policy during the pandemic</li> <li>Student participation rate</li> <li>The level of coordination between schools and various parties</li> </ul>   | 35 minutes                   |
| Teacher Survey   | Three early class teachers per school | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher characteristic data</li> <li>How to teach and curriculum that teachers used during the pandemic</li> <li>Teachers' perceptions of vulnerable students' dropouts</li> <li>Strategies to help students from vulnerable groups</li> <li>Teacher's perceptions of student learning outcomes</li> </ul>  | 40 minutes                   |
| Parent Survey    | One parent per child                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Characteristics of parents and children</li> <li>Household characteristics</li> <li>Support provided by parents in terms of children's learning during the pandemic</li> <li>Facilities available at home to learn from home (BDR)</li> <li>Children's attitudes when studying at home</li> <li>How parents discipline their children</li> <li>Parents' perception of learning participation rates</li> </ul> | 40 minutes                   |
| Student Survey   | 30 early class students               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to access instructions during BDR</li> <li>Students' perceptions of learning assistance provided by the family</li> <li>Students' perceptions of learning from home and returning to study at school</li> </ul>   | 10 minutes                   |
| Student Test     | 30 early class students               | Numeracy tests and Indonesian tests  | 30 minutes                   |





Ratu Plaza Office Tower – 19th Floor  
Jl. Jend. Sudirman Kav 9  
Central Jakarta, 10270  
Indonesia  
Phone : (+6221) 720 6616  
Fax : (+6221) 720 6616

 [info@inovasi.or.id](mailto:info@inovasi.or.id)

 Inovasi untuk Anak Sekolah Indonesia

 Inovasi Pendidikan

 [www.inovasi.or.id](http://www.inovasi.or.id)

INOVASI is managed by Palladium  
on behalf of the Australian Government

