

# **Challenging Norms and Perceptions on Child Marriage among Adolescent Girls in Indonesia: A Randomized Experiment**

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## **Abstract**

Despite improved access to education and socioeconomic conditions, child marriage remains high in several countries. Part of the problems are norms and perceptions that continue to enable justification of the practice in society. We test the effectiveness of an entertainment-education short movie program targeted toward main child marriage actors, adolescents, and parents to address norms and perceptions regarding the costs and benefits of child marriage. We conducted a randomized control trial in two provinces in Indonesia using two different versions of the movie. The first version focuses on the cost of child marriage, including health and education impact. Given the role of religion in child marriage decisions, we also create another version of the movie to include additional religious messages that encourage the completion of education vis-a-vis child marriage. We find consistent improvements in perceptions about child marriage in the child marriage perception scale on the costs of child marriage-only intervention. The intervention results with additional religious messages have mixed evidence. The intervention improves the overall perception and risks of child marriage rather than the perceptions of the benefits and benefits of delaying it. These results are consistent for both girls and their parents.

**Keywords:** child marriage, perceptions, edutainment, randomized evaluations