

Factors Causing Early Marriage

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ABSTRACT

Early marriage is a social phenomenon that still occurs in many countries, including Indonesia. Marriage is a ceremony carried out by two people to formalize a marriage bond based on religious, legal, and social norms. However, early marriage is often triggered by various factors such as cultural norms, poverty, and pregnancy out of wedlock. Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 16 of 2019 concerning Marriage regulates the minimum age limit for marriage, which is 19 years for men and women, although early marriage is still taking place in some regions. This study uses a qualitative approach by examining various literature and statistical data related to early marriage. The results of the study show that early marriage can be at high risk to the reproductive, psychological, and quality of life of young couples. Negative impacts that often arise include pregnancy complications, divorce risks, and emotional disturbances for adolescents who are not ready to take on the role of husband or wife. On the other hand, some of the positive impacts found are the reduction of the family's economic burden and the learning of responsibility. To reduce the rate of early marriage, there needs to be increased education, socialization about its negative impacts, and stricter law enforcement. Therefore, there needs to be collaboration between the government, the community, and educational institutions to prevent early marriage in Indonesia.

Keywords: early marriage, negative impact, education, socialization

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INTRODUCTION

In Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 16 of 2019, it is stated that there is an amendment to Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning marriage which reads Article 7 (1) Marriage is only allowed if the man has reached the age of 19 (nineteen) years and the woman has reached the age of 16 (sixteen) years (Nasution, 2019). As for the amendment, Article 7 (1) Marriage is only allowed if the man and woman have reached the age of 19 (nineteen) years. According to the National Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN), the ideal age for marriage is 21 years for women and 25 years for men (Shiddiq, 2019). These things explain the age criteria that are considered to meet the standards of being able to build a new family. This age is chosen to avoid early marriage which is high-risk and can cause various adverse effects.

Early marriage is a vow-making activity involving two people with the aim of formalizing a relationship in a normative manner agam, legal, and social (Hamidah et al., 2023). Many factors affect early marriage can occur, for example avoiding slander, avoiding sex outside of marriage, economic factors, and socio-cultural factors (Nofitasari, 2017). In practice, early marriage involving early children who have not reached adult age mentally and physically also causes several problems in Indonesia (Indawati et al., 2024). In some regions in Indonesia, early marriage is considered a common thing. As a result, many children are exploited to serve as a shield for parents who want to let go in terms of parenting. Thus, many cases that occur result in girls being married to people with a large difference (Fawwaz, 2023).

The urgency of this research lies in the high rate of early marriage which contributes to various social, economic, and health problems, such as school dropouts, poverty, domestic violence, and increasing maternal and child mortality rates. Although Law Number 16 of 2019 has raised the

minimum age limit for marriage to 19 years, implementation in the field still faces various challenges. This shows the need for a more in-depth and comprehensive study to explore the causal factors and impacts of early marriage, taking into account various different socio-cultural backgrounds in each region.

Previous relevant research includes studies by Pramono et al., (2019) which examines economic and cultural factors as the main drivers of early marriage in rural Indonesia, as well as research by Minarni et al., (2014) which focuses on the description of the biological and psychological impact of adolescents who marry early in Munding Village, Bergas District, Semarang Regency. Both studies make important contributions in understanding certain aspects of early marriage, but tend to discuss partially. Therefore, this study is here to fill the gap with a more holistic approach and examine early marriage from various perspectives, covering economic, social, cultural, and health factors simultaneously.

The novelty of this study lies in the multidimensional approach used to analyze early marriage, which does not only focus on one aspect of cause or impact, but relates various factors synergistically. Thus, this research is expected to provide a more comprehensive picture of early marriage, including practical solutions that can be implemented at the local and national levels.

The benefits of this research include contributing to the development of more effective policies to prevent early marriage as well as providing recommendations to various stakeholders, such as governments, educational institutions, and civil society organizations, in designing education and community empowerment programs. In addition, this research is also expected to increase public awareness about the dangers of early marriage and the importance of protecting children's rights, so as to create an environment that supports optimal and sustainable child growth and development

METHOD

This study uses a literature review method to study the phenomenon of early marriage in Indonesia, by tracing various relevant sources. This method was chosen because it provides a broad and in-depth picture of the causes and consequences of early marriage, as well as how this phenomenon has been discussed in previous studies.

Type of Research

The type of research used is qualitative descriptive research. Descriptive research aims to provide a detailed and systematic picture (Ramdhan, 2021), about the factors behind the occurrence of early marriage and its impact on individuals and society. The qualitative approach was chosen because the main focus is to explore social and cultural phenomena related to early marriage through the analysis of the available literature.

Research Design

The research design used is an exploratory design. This design aims to explore various perspectives regarding early marriage, both from economic, religious, psychological, and socio-cultural perspectives. With this design, the research seeks to present comprehensive and structured information, which covers various causal factors and impacts of early marriage.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection techniques are carried out through documentation studies and literature searches. The steps taken include:

1. Source Identification: Collecting data from various scientific journals, books, articles, reports from government agencies (such as BKKBN), and academic publications discussing early marriage.
2. Selection Criteria: Select relevant literature, published in the last 10 years (2014-2024) to ensure suitability with the latest developments in the issue of early marriage.
3. Search Keywords: Using keywords such as *"early marriage," "early marriage," "child marriage factors," "impact of early marriage,"* and *"child marriage in Indonesia."*
4. Literature Evaluation: Selected literature will be analyzed and selected to ensure the relevance and quality of the information presented.

Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data is analyzed using the content analysis method. This analysis was carried out by reviewing the contents of various literature that had been collected, identifying the main themes related to the causes and effects of early marriage, and drawing connections between various factors that influenced this phenomenon.

Through a literature study approach, this research is expected to be able to contribute to expanding the understanding of early marriage in Indonesia, as well as offering a broader and detailed perspective on the causes and impacts, so that it can be the basis for policy formulation and efforts to prevent early marriage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Early marriage is a marriage that is carried out but does not meet the minimum age standard set by the government. This is also supported by Mubasyaroh, (2016) that early marriage is a marriage that occurs between a man and a woman who are immature and mature based on the law or from a psychological perspective.

On October 14, 2019, the government promulgated Law 16 of 2019 concerning Amendments to Law 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage. The changes made by the Marriage Law are the provisions of the age limit in Article 7. The provisions on the age limit of marriage state:

- (1) Marriage is only allowed when the man and woman have reached the age of 19 years (nineteen years).
- (2) In the event of a deviation from the age provisions as referred to in paragraph (1), the male parents and/or the female parents can request a dispensation to the court on very urgent grounds accompanied by sufficient supporting evidence.
- (3) The granting of dispensation by the court as referred to in paragraph (2) is obliged to listen to the opinions of both prospective brides who will get married.

According to Indriani et al., (2023) In 20 provinces, early marriage to children is still above the national average. The provinces with the highest number of early marriages are West Sulawesi, Central Sulawesi and Southeast Sulawesi. There are more than 1 million girls who marry at an early age. According to the data, the incidence of early marriage, in West Java, East Java, and Central Java into 3 provinces has reached the highest rate. The emergence of a tendency to normalize early marriage in the lives of Indonesian people certainly has many effects. However, before that, it is necessary to discuss the factors that cause early marriage.

Causes of Early Marriage

- 1) Abuse of Technology. The existence of technology does make human life very easy, but it can also have a negative effect on people who do not use it properly. In this day and age, information can be accessed quickly. This effect causes adolescents to filter and filter less information and culture that comes in. This caused a lot of consumption of western films and videos to normalize early marriage and *bridegrooming culture* in American culture.
- 2) Economics. Using the alibi that getting married is the best way to help ease the financial burden of parents, especially for girls who do not receive the same financial support as their brothers. Economic causes are the strongest reason and are most often the basis for early marriage. Several studies conducted by UNICEF & UNFPA (2018) say that poverty is the main cause that drives early marriage in developing countries such as Indonesia. In some areas with high poverty rates, releasing their daughters to marry is considered to reduce the economic burden on their families. Parents who use poverty backgrounds as a way to improve their family's economic well-being by marrying their children even though they are minors.
- 3) The Practice of Patrialism. A strong culture of patrialism carries the ideology that women should not receive education and equal rights with boys. Generally, patrialism occurs between generations and goes down and down. This practice then increasingly occurs due to bad economic factors, so that girls tend to be sacrificed by marrying even though they are still at an early age.
- 4) Education. The low access and level of education obtained also narrows the understanding of the importance of maturity and readiness regarding marriage. With access to more education
- 5) early marriage can be prevented by providing an understanding of the dangers of early marriage. Especially the impact on mothers and children.
- 6) Free Association. Promiscuity usually affects the curiosity of teenagers who are still looking for validation of their identity. On the basis of mutual love and affection for each other from the male and female sides. If this couple is already blinded by love, they can do whatever they want including marriage regardless of age and what problems they will face after married life. This then causes pregnancy out of wedlock or commonly called MBA (Marriged By Accident). According to Fitriani

et al., (2024) Early marriage occurs a lot when children go through puberty, this is because teenagers are very vulnerable to sexual behavior that they do before marriage (Octaviani & Nurwati, 2020).

The Impact of Early Marriage

The Impact of Early Marriage on Reproductive Health If early marriage is carried out not only because of the desire of both parties, but there are several other driving factors, namely low levels of education, economic needs, young marriage culture, regulated marriage, free sex in adolescents that cause pregnancies before marriage. The educational factor tends to be low and the family's economic income makes children forced to drop out of school and not continue their education to the next level. In the education factor, it will greatly affect the economic factor. Poverty is one of the factors that has a great influence on encouraging early marriage because in some regions in Indonesia, women are still often labeled as a burden on the family economy. Therefore, marriage at a young age is considered to be the fastest way out for the family to reduce its economic burden. Other factors that affect early marriage are also closely related to the cultural factor of young marriage. In remote and rural areas, there are still many assumptions about the assumption that a woman will only end up being a housekeeper, so that people in remote areas think that women will be better married when they have passed puberty. From the factors that have been described, it can be concluded that early marriage is due to cultural factors that have been passed down from generation to generation (Tarigan, 2023).

The consequences of young marriage and giving birth in adolescence are the risk of premature birth and low birth weight. Women who marry at an early age have a longer risk of pregnancy and a higher birth rate. Adolescent marriage also has an impact on the low quality of the family, both in terms of psychological unpreparedness in facing social and economic problems in the household, the risk of not being mentally prepared to foster marriage and become responsible parents, marriage failure, early pregnancy is at risk of maternal death due to the unpreparedness of prospective teenage mothers in conceiving and giving birth to their babies (Adam, 2020).

Then the impact that usually occurs due to early marriage is a higher risk divorce. When an early marriage occurs, one or both of them, either a woman or a man, are less than 19 years old. That means his thought process and emotional maturity are still unstable. Still not used to facing household problems, or even confused and stressed about the problems faced in fostering a household. This condition can cause domestic violence and early divorce. From the data obtained by the researcher, it was found that 6 cases of young divorce due to early marriage. This reinforces that early marriage has many negative impacts both for the couple, family, environment, and even children.

There are so many impacts caused by early marriage, not the least of which makes people aware of the dangers of these problems. Then as a person who knows and understands the dangers of early marriage, must be able to invite the entire community to stop doing early marriage again. We can make various efforts to embrace all elements of society so that they always care about the future of Indonesian teenagers. Examples of efforts that must be made include clarifying the law prohibiting marriage at a young age, providing counseling and socialization so as not to engage in early marriage, providing directions and appeals regarding the impact that occurs if early marriage is still carried out, making formal education a place to educate children about the dangers of getting married at an early age as well as education on reproductive health and its dangers, providing an overview of cases related to the impact that occurs due to early marriage (Dini & Nurhelita, 2020).

The impact of early marriage The various impacts of early marriage can be stated as follows:

1) The Negative Impact of Early Marriage

- a. **Biological Impact**, biologically the reproductive organs are still in the process of growing towards maturity so that they are not ready to have sexual intercourse, especially until pregnancy and childbirth occur. If forced, trauma will occur.
- b. **Psychological Impact**, psychologically not understanding sexual relations, so it will cause prolonged trauma in the psyche and is difficult to heal. The child will be depressed and regret his life which ends in marriage which he himself does not understand for his life decision, so that he has difficulty becoming a quality family.
- c. **Social Impact**, marriage reduces the freedom of self-development, feeling lost as an asset for teenagers who should be together to serve and move in society. But because they have a family, their activity in the community has decreased.

- d. Economic impact, causing difficulties in increasing family income, so that family failure in overcoming various kinds of problems, especially economic problems and increasing the risk of divorce.
2. The Positive Impact of Early Marriage
 - a. In terms of economy, getting married at an early age can ease the economic burden of the family to be more economical. If an early marriage has indeed been planned and approved by both sides of the family.
 - b. Responsible, they can learn to take responsibility at an early age. Many young people in the pre-marriage period still lacked responsibility because there were parents who took care of their lives. After marriage they must manage their affairs without depending on people (Arifin et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussions, this study shows that early marriage is still a social phenomenon that is rampant in Indonesia, even though there are regulations that regulate the minimum age limit for marriage through Law No. 16 of 2019. Early marriage is often influenced by cultural, economic, educational, and even out-of-wedlock factors. Although there are some positive impacts, such as reduced family economic burden and learning responsibility, early marriage poses more negative impacts, such as reproductive health risks, severe psychological impacts, increased risk of divorce, and social disturbances. Many adolescents are not physically and emotionally mature, so they are not ready to take on the role of a married couple and parents. Reducing the rate of early marriage requires a comprehensive approach, including increased education, socialization about the impact of early marriage, and stricter law enforcement. Collaboration between the government, the community, and educational institutions is urgently needed to prevent early marriage and protect the future of Indonesian adolescents.

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