

Early Marriage in Babat District, Lamongan Regency

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Abstract: A problem frequently occurring in society is the prevalence of early marriage. Early marriage is a marriage performed by women and men who are not yet of legal age to marry. Marrying with an immature age cannot take place optimally both financially, mentally, and psychologically, and may be easier to experience problems after marriage. This research aimed to determine the factors causing early marriage in Babat district, Lamongan regency. This research was an analytical correlation using a cross sectional approach on 37 families who married at the age of <19. A questionnaire instrument was used to determine the factors causing early marriage in families who married at <19 years of age. The data were analyzed by using SPSS. The Spearman's rho test was used to test the relationship between factors causing early marriage. The incidence of early marriage in Babat district had a high level of education of 57%, low family economic status of 51%, parental encouragement of 62.1%, and culture of 62%. These factors were related to the incidence of early marriage. It is hoped that adolescents who received good information, knowledge, and understanding regarding early marriage will avoid committing this act.

Keywords: early marriage, education, economics, parental encouragement, culture

INTRODUCTION

Early marriage is currently one of the most interesting demographic issues to research (Yuniar, 2021). In modern times, the phenomenon of getting married at a young age is still common in society. One of the most frequently problems in the society is the prevalence of early marriage, but it is not followed by adequate mental preparation. A successful marriage is usually characterized by readiness to assume responsibility. When they decide to get married, they are ready to bear all kinds of burdens of marriage, whether related to providing a living, children's education, protection, and good relationships (Suyanto et al., 2023). Early marriage is a marriage between a woman and a man who are not old enough to get married or under the age of the policy set out in the Marriage Law. Marriage with an immature age cannot take place optimally both financially, mentally, and psychologically, and may be easier to experience problems after marriage. Characteristics and family structure contribute to early marriage on interpersonal level, whereas environmental and economy factors contribute to community level, social, and norm culture too. In addition, the lack of laws and regulations is a contributing factor at the community level (Pourtaheri et al., 2024).

The occurrence of early marriage can impact young women health which also contributing to their babies such as anemia and low birth weight (LBW). Biologically, the female reproductive organs are still in the process of becoming mature so they are not ready to face it, even though they are physically healthy. This is very

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dangerous for the mother and baby. Pregnancy under the age of 19 is at risk of death, bleeding, miscarriage, molar pregnancy, and premature pregnancy. Meanwhile, the baby will experience LBW, disabled, and 5-30 times greater chance of death (Sezgin & Punamäki, 2020) .

Indonesia is ranked eighth in cases of early marriage in the world, in which one in nine women are married before turning eighteen (United Nations Children's Fund, 2020). According to data released by UNICEF, around 21% of women and 4% of men in the world are married before 18 years. From this data, it was found that around 650 million women married when they were still children, with 12 million under 18 getting married each year (UNICEF, 2018). Meanwhile, the prevalence of early marriage in Indonesia has reached 16.36 % (Wahyuni, 2020). Based on data from the National Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN), East Java Province is the region with the largest number of early marriages in Indonesia, reaching 39.43%. In Lamongan Regency in 2019, 89% of early marriage applications was granted. In 2020, the percentage granted was 95%, and in 2021, it was 97% of the applications. At the end of 2022, the number of marriage dispensations in Lamongan reached 50% (Annur, 2023) . To reduce the occurrence of marriage, the government created an early marriage prevention program made for teenagers named Genre (Generasi Berencana) or Planned Generations program. The program was initiated by the BKKBN in 2009 as a form of concern for the current generation of Indonesian youth whose development is worryingly negative and not familiar with the Family Planning (KB) program (Meiandayati et al., 2018) .

Determining factors for early marriage frequently found in the community are family welfare especially in terms of the economy condition, education, parents, mass media and internet, customs, and married by accident. (Raj et al., 2019). Based on the results of a preliminary study conducted by researchers on December 1, 2023 in Patihan Village, Babat District, Lamongan Regency on teenagers who had early marriage, of 7 teenagers, 1 teenager (14%) married at the age of 17, 4 teenagers (59%) were married at the age of 18, and 2 teenagers (28%) were married at the age of 19. This research aimed to determine factors contributing to early marriage in Babat district, Lamongan regency.

METHOD

The research design was analytic correlation using a cross-sectional approach. The population was all families who married at the age of <19 of 37 people. The sample was obtained by total sampling, meaning that all families who married at the age of <19 years were sampled in this study. The data was collected by distributing questionnaires door to door. The research variables included educational factor (the last education ever taken by the respondent), economic factor (Income generated by the family within one month), parental encouragement factor, cultural factor, and early marriage. Data analysis was carried out using SPSS 22 version software which includes descriptive analysis, namely frequency and percentage. The data were analyzed to determine the relationship between educational, economic, parental encouragement, and cultural factors with the incidence of early marriage using the Spearman Test (Rho).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teenagers are challenged about organizing the future, where adolescents must have life principles to achieve goals and hopes for their lives. One of the challenging social phenomena for adolescents is early marriage (Schaffnit et al., 2019). Law No. 16 of 2019 states that marriage is only permitted if the man and woman attain the age of 19 years. Marriage is not an easy thing to go through. There needs to be mental and physical readiness for a man and a woman in realizing a *sakinah mawaddah warahmah* family. For people who lived in the 20th century or earlier, it was customary that a woman at the age of 13-14 years and a man at the age of 17-18 years to get married, however, in today's society, it is an oddity and becomes unusual or too early. (Rosramadhana & Taufan, 2016) .

The results of the structured questionnaire are presented in the frequency distribution table and descriptive analysis below.

Table 1. Variables and distribution frequency

No	Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Education	Not attending school	0	0
		Elementary school	0	0
		Junior High School	16	43
		Senior High School	21	57
2	Economy	Low	19	51
		High	18	49
3	Parental encouragement	No	16	43
		Yes	21	43
4	Culture	Not believe	14	47.8
		Believe	23	62.1
5	Age at marriage	Married <19 years old	23	62
		Not married <19 years old	14	38

From table 1 above, it can be perceived that the majority of respondents was junior high school graduates (43%), and senior high school graduates (57%). Most of their socio-economic background was classified as low income (51%). Furthermore, early marriage was based on parental encouragement (57%) and without parental encouragement (43%). In terms of cultural factors, the majority (62.1%) believed in early marriage and the rest (47.8%) did not believe in it.

Based on research conducted by Hermambang et al., (2021), women with junior high school education had a tendency to marry early 10,561 times compared to women with at least senior high school education. Meanwhile, women with elementary school education are 50.105 times more likely to marry early than high school graduates. Women who have never attended school are 94.418 times more likely to marry early than women who have at least a high school education. Muntamah et al., (2019) stated that low education is a factor which greatly influences a society's thinking patterns, both from the education of parents and the children themselves. Highly educated women tend to be involved in the job market and choose to pursue a career, thereby reducing the chances of early marriage. For women who do not work but decide to get married, the age

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at marriage has exceeded the marriage age limit set by the Marriage Law in Indonesia. Meanwhile, people with low education are usually classified as people with a low economic level, so marrying off their daughters is considered to reduce the family's economic burden.

Besides, it can be perceived that 19 (51%) out of 37 respondents were low-income family. Meanwhile, 18 respondents (49%) were in the high-income category. In general, household income does not merely come from one source, but is obtained from two or more sources. This income level is also affected by fulfilling basic household needs. Low income levels require household members to work or try harder to meet their living needs (Jackson et al., 2017; Rahayu & Wahyuni, 2020). A family with a low economic status is more likely to marry early than a family with a high economic status. This is because one of the factors causing early marriage is economic factors, in which the perpetrators of early marriage have an economy below the average or classified as low. A family with low economy status does not guarantee the continuation of children's education so that a child who has completed basic education and does not continue to higher education only lives at home. Early marriage is considered to ease the burden on parents, and due to economic limitations, they cannot continue their education (Widyawati & Pierewan, 2017) .

The findings also indicated that 21 respondents (57 %) had encouragement from their parents, and 16 respondents (43%) without encouragement from parents. One of the factors that influences the occurrence of young marriage is attitude and relationship with parents. This marriage can take place because of obedience or opposition from teenagers to their parents.

In addition, 23 respondents (62.1%) believed in the culture, while 14 respondents (37.1%) did not believe. A child who is raised in an educated and religious family environment will create a self-character who prioritizes religious values, and then forms a similar socio-cultural system in the wider community with individuals who have a similar mindset.

Judging from the existence of child marriage, awareness of the existing phenomenon and solutions to reduce child marriage must be designed comprehensively, holistically, and systematically (Pacheco Montoya, 2020). The government must be seriously committed to enforcing the applicable laws regarding underage marriage so that parties who wish to marry underage children think twice before doing so (Abera et al., 2020 ; Abubakar, 2019; Kertati et al., 2023) .

Table 2. Cross tabulation education and the incidence of early marriage

No	Variable	Early Marriage Incident						Results Test Spearman's rho'
		Not Early Marriage		Early Marriage		Total		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	Education							$p=0.037$
	Not attending School	0	0 %	0	0 %	27	100%	
	Elementary School/	0	0 %	0	0 %	9	100%	
	Junior high school	3	19 %	13	81 %	16	100%	
	Senior high school	11	52 %	10	48 %	21	100%	
2	Economy Family							$p = 0.000$
	Low (< Rp. 2,828,323.00)	14	74 %	5	26 %	19	100%	
	High (>Rp. 2,828,323.00)	0	0 %	18	100%	18	100%	
3	Parental Encouragement							$p= 0.045$
	Yes	5	24%	16	76%	16	100%	
	No	9	56%	7	44%	21	100%	
4	Culture							$p=0.029$
	Not Believe	8	57%	6	43%	14	100%	
	Believe	6	26%	17	74%	23	100%	

Based on the results of calculations using the Spearman's rho test, it indicated that there was a relationship between educational factors and the incidence of early marriage in Babat District. Education is one of the aspects which must be possessed in navigating the household. Education is a support and source for earning a living to meet all needs in the household. The younger the age at marriage, the lower the level of education a child will achieve. Early marriage often causes children to no longer continue their education, because of their responsibilities in the family (Chavula et al., 2022) . This research is also in line with research conducted by Kasiati & Isfentiani (2020) regarding factors related to marriage in couples of childbearing age, indicating that there was a relationship between respondent education and the incidence of early marriage. Respondents with elementary, middle, and high school education had a greater chance of early marriage than respondents who had higher education.

Parents are role models for their children as well as teachers who are very important for children's development. Responding to their worry about adolescent development, parents in the Babat district participate in finding a mate for their children. They are afraid that if their child does not have a boyfriend or girlfriend, the neighbors will ridicule them as an old maid. Even though the age limit for marriage has been determined, in reality we still often encounter people who marry off their children at a young age. By dropping out of school for children who no longer continue their studies at a higher level, children will feel bored and lonely because of the lack of their peers (Agtikasari et al., 2019) ; Acharya, 2015) .

Regarding economic status, among 37 respondents, 19 respondents (51%) were in the low-income category. Meanwhile, 18 respondents (49%) were in the high-income category. In general, household income does not come from one source, but is obtained from two or more sources of income. This income level is also thought to be influenced by fulfilling basic household needs. Low income levels require household members to work or try harder to meet their living needs (Jackson et al., 2017; Rahayu & Wahyuni, 2020) .

Based on the results of calculations using the Spearman's rho test, it indicated that there was a relationship between economic factors and the incidence of early marriage in Babat District. Most of the 23 respondents had early marriages, in which a total of 18 respondents (100%) were in high economic status and 5 respondents (26%) in low economic status. Then, 14 respondents (38%) did not perform early marriage, 14 respondents (74%) did not perform early marriage with low family economic status, and none (0%) performed early marriage with high family economic status education.

Economic status is the level of power and authority a person has based on the position a person holds in society based on work to fulfill their needs (Berliana et al., 2021) . Low economic conditions make early marriage perpetrators decide to marry. No school fees are the reason for them to drop out of school. Some informants said that they got married because they did not have anything to keep them busy. Some people who married early mentioned that they did not go to school because of no money to continue their education. In some cases, the children actually wanted to stay in school, however their parents could not afford the tuition fee. Thus, the parents would be happier if their children worked in the fields rather than going to school, and instead of living with the condition of not going to school, living happily or not, finally decided to get married (Windiarti & Besral, 2018) .

Based on the results of calculations using the Spearman's rho test, it indicated a relationship between parental encouragement factors and the incidence of early marriage in Babat District. A total of 23 respondents (62%) performed early marriage, in which 16 respondents (76%) performed early marriage with encouragement from their parents, 7 respondents (44%) without being encouraged by their parents. Then, 14 respondents (38%) did not perform early marriage, in which 9 respondents (56%) did not perform early marriage without getting encouragement from their parents, and 5 respondents (24%) did not perform early marriage without getting encouragement from their parents.

The encouragement for children to marry is possibly based on their parents' past experiences who married in their twenties. The age at which parents married could previously be a personal reference for children getting married. Parents try to equate the maturity of their age with the child's current age. Therefore, parents try to encourage their children to get married (Susilo et al., 2021). Parents as communicators who actively convey messages to children try to encourage marriage when chatting lightly about various things. For example, when discussing a child's work or education, at the end of the conversation, parents hope that the child will get married soon especially if there is someone who wants to propose. Interpersonal communication in this incident usually occurs between two people, that is mother and child or father and child (Idawati et al., 2023) .

Based on the results of calculations using the Spearman's rho test, it showed that there was a relationship between cultural factors and the incidence of early marriage in Babat District. A total of 23 respondents (62%) performed early marriage, in which 17 respondents (74%) performed early marriage believed in culture and 6 respondents (43%) without believing in culture. Then, 14 respondents (38%) did not perform early marriage, in which 8 respondents (57%) did not perform early marriage because they did not believe in culture and 6 respondents (26%) believed in culture.

Culture is a complex unity, including knowledge, belief, art, morals, customary law, and the abilities and habits that humans acquire as members of society. Cultural background has an important influence on aspects of human life, namely beliefs, responses, emotions, language, religion, family form, diet, clothing, and body language. Cultural factors play a significant role, as they are passed down and entrenched as beliefs. In the local culture, it is believed that if their daughters do not get married immediately, they will become old maids, or if there are people who are considered financially capable to marry their children, regardless of age or marital status, most parents accept the proposal because they think the child's future will be brighter, and of course it is expected to reduce the burden on parents. (Agtikasari et al., 2019; Lowe et al., 2020) .

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the education level of most of the respondents was at an upper-class level, in which 21 people (57%) of them were high school graduates. Most of the families' economic status in Babat District, Lamongan Regency is classified low, in which 19 people (51%) have incomes below the regional minimum wage for Lamongan Regency. Most of the incidents of early marriage, 23 people or 62.1%, were encouraged by parents. In addition, most of the respondents, 23 people or 62%, still believe in an early marriage culture.

It is suggested that schools can increase knowledge and explore information about health education for teenagers about marriage as well as providing motivation and useful activities for the development of teenagers since early age.

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