

# Determinants Age of Marriage in Married Women 15-24 Years Old in Indonesia 2017

Khobir Abdul Karim<sup>1</sup>, Tris Eryando<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Faculty of Public Health, Universitas Indonesia, Kampus Baru UI Depok, Indonesia

**Abstract:** *Early marriage is always related to reproductive health in women. Complications of pregnancy and childbirth are the main causes of death in girls aged 15-19 years. This study aims to determine the determinant factors related to marriage age in married women aged 15-24 years in Indonesia in 2017. This research is a descriptive analytic type with cross-sectional design. The sample of this study were married women aged 15-24 years in Indonesia in 2017. The analysis used in this study was univariable and multivariable analysis using multiple logistic regression. The results of this study indicate that out of 1,321 married women aged 15-24 years, 64.4% had marriages under the age of 20. Education is the most dominant factor, while the most influential factors are employment status, media access, the role of decision making, education of the husband, area of residence, economic status, and education of the head of the household. Women who remain in school with a maturity program through marriage through peers play an important role in delaying the age of marriage, in addition to media exposure, especially social media, is the most effective media for providing information about the delay in the age of marriage in women.*

**Keywords:** age of marriage, early marriage, education, married women

## 1. Introduction

Early marriage can relate to reproductive health in girls, because they tend to marry older men. Thus, girls do not have the autonomy to have safe sex, for example using contraception, which increases the risk of transmission of HIV or other sexually transmitted infections, and the possibility of pregnancy at an early age. Complications from pregnancy and childbirth are the main causes of death in girls aged 15-19 years [13].

Death of women aged 15-19 years is caused by complications from pregnancy and childbirth. Of the 16 million teenage girls who give birth each year, an estimated 50,000 die, almost all of them from poorer and middle income countries. The death of newborns is 50% higher in risk for pregnant women younger than 20 years compared to women who are pregnant more than or equal to 20 years of age [14].

The median first marriage age of 25-49 years in Indonesia based on the Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey report from 2007 to 2017 is relatively the same. In 2007 the median age of first marriage was 19.8 years old, increasing in 2012 to 20.4 years old and increasing again in 2017 to 20.8 years old. This is caused by various factors that can affect the age of first marriage to women.

Marriage is caused by factors at the micro and macro level. Micro level factors are divided into three parts, namely individual characteristics (age, education, employment, birth order, decision making, and exposure to media); household characteristics (gender composition, age composition, family size, religion, and residence); and socio-economic status (economic status, standard of living, and land ownership). At the macro level related to demography, migration, economic situation, employment availability, gender equality, and policy [2].

## 2. Method

Data used came from Indonesian Demographic Health Survey (IDHS) in 2017 carried out in conjunction with the Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), Badan Kependudukan dan Keluarga Berencana Nasional (BKKBN), and the Ministry of Health. The IDHS aims to see an overview of population and maternal and child health in Indonesia. This data can be downloaded through the website [www.dhsprogram.com](http://www.dhsprogram.com). The definition of marriage in this study is in accordance with international definitions and for the age limit for early marriage in accordance with the definition of BKKBN so that the definition taken is women who are married or live together before the age of 20 years.

The IDHS is a national survey that does not carry out simple using sampling is multistage sampling. It is very important to do this type of analysis according to the way the sampling is done. Several stages that need to be prepared for complex sample analysis are weighting and making sample designs. After preparation for analyzing complex data is complete, the data is ready to be analyzed by complex data analysis. The analysis used in this study is univariable analysis, which is to see the characteristics of each variable and multivariable analysis using multiple logistic regression analysis to see the dominant factors that affect marriage age in married women aged 15-24 years. The sample in this study amounted to 1,321 respondents. The sample units in this study were married women or living together who were 15-24 years old and were family members as children in a household in Indonesia.

The independent variables in this study include education which is divided into less than equal to primary (no education and primary) and at least secondary (secondary and higher), employment (not employed and employed), exposure to media (newspapers, radio and television), decision making (no participation and participate), usual residence (in household and outside), husband's education (less than equal to primary and at least secondary), residence

(rural and urban), economic status which is divided into two categories, namely less than equal to poorer (poorest and poorer) and more than equal to middle (middle, richer, and richest), residence (urban and rural), sex head of household (male and female), and education head of household (less than equal to primary and at least secondary). Economic status has been calculated based on durable asset ownership at the household level and housing quality indicators (eg floors, walls and roof type, access to water and sanitation). The limitation in this study is the unobserved heterogeneity of provincial effects, for example, the diversity of cultures, religions and differences in the level of development between provinces.

### 3. Result

Table 1. Shows the characteristics of the respondents studied. Based on data from the 2017 IDHS, it was seen that the majority of respondents conducted early marriages (64.4%). Nearly all respondents had at least graduated from high school (83.0%), respondents who exposure to media (newspapers, radio and television) at least once a week (89.8%), respondents who lived in households (92.6 %) and the head of the household who is male (86.6%). In addition, respondents who did not work were slightly larger than respondents who worked (53.3%), some respondents had a role in decision making, education of husbands was mostly at least graduating from high school (75.6%), respondents who were in rural areas were slightly greater than urban (59.5%), the majority of respondents with a minimum intermediate economic status (56.8%), and education of household heads mostly graduated from junior high school or lower (73.7%).

**Table 1:** Sample Characteristic, Married Women 15-24 Years Old, 2017 Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey

	n	%
<b>Age of First Married</b>		
Less than 20 Years	850	64.4
At least 20 Years	471	35.6
<b>Education</b>		
Less than equal to primary	225	17.0
At least secondary	1096	83.0
<b>Employment status</b>		
Not employed	704	53.3
Employed	617	46.7
<b>Exposure to media</b>		
Less than once a week	134	10.2
At least once a week	1,187	89.8
<b>Decision making</b>		
Not participate	309	23.4
Participate	1,012	76.6
<b>Usual resident</b>		
In household	1,223	92.6
Outside	98	7.4
<b>Husband's Education</b>		
Less than equal to primary	323	24.4
At least secondary	998	75.6
<b>Residence</b>		
Rural	786	59.5
Urban	535	40.5
<b>Economic Status</b>		
Less than equal to Poorer	571	43.2

More than equal to Middle	750	56.8
<b>Sex head of household</b>		
Male	1,144	86.6
Female	177	13.4
<b>Education head of household</b>		
Less than equal to primary	972	73.7
At least secondary	347	26.3

Table 2. shows the results of multiple logistic regression. the most dominant determinant factor for early marriage is education. The influential determinant factors are employment, media access, the role of decision making, education of the husband, area of residence, economic status, and education of the head of the household. The determinant factors that do not have an effect are the respondent's residence and the sex of the head of the household. Besides that protective determinant factors are exposure to media and decision making.

**Table 2:** Multiple Logistic Regression of Marriage Age in Married Women 15-24 Years Old, 2017 Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey

	OR	95% CI
<b>Education</b>		
Less than equal to primary	2.72	1.60 - 4.62
At least secondary		
<b>Employment</b>		
Not employed	1.53	1.15 - 2.03
Employed		
<b>Exposure to media</b>		
Less than once a week	0.62	0.38 - 1.00
At least once a week		
<b>Decision making</b>		
Not participate	0.69	0.48 - 0.98
Participate		
<b>Usual resident</b>		
In household	1.42	0.86 - 2.34
Outside		
<b>Husband's Education</b>		
Less than equal to primary	1.45	1.00 - 2.12
At least secondary		
<b>Residence</b>		
Rural	1.36	1.00 - 1.84
Urban		
<b>Economic Status</b>		
Less than equal to Poorer	1.70	1.25 - 2.31
More than equal to Middle		
<b>Sex head of household</b>		
Male	0.96	0.63 - 1.46
Female		
<b>Education head of household</b>		
Less than equal to primary	1.57	1.13 - 2.19
At least secondary		

### 4. Discussion

This study adds new evidence that married women aged 15-24 many years in Indonesia mostly do early marriage. The findings in this study indicate that education is the most dominant determinant of the occurrence of early marriage. These results are in accordance with studies that show that with increasing levels of education can reduce the risk of early marriage [4] [13]. Women who do not go to school have a tendency to make early marriages compared to women who go to school. Further studies found that women who did not have exposure to peer educators had a higher

risk of early marriage [6]. Educated women can increase autonomy in choosing partners and marriage time [16]. Studies show a strong relationship between early marriage and termination of education between brides and men [21].

Women who obtain skills and get employed in the service sector or garment industry are less likely to marry underage compared to girls who lack education and work in their family households [17]. Education can contribute more to household finance than the economic benefits of early marriage [18] [19]. Where opportunities for education and employment in women are limited, for example due to economic status and area of residence, early marriage is still possible [22] [23]. For example, the lack of infrastructure and education services is associated with an increase in the number of underage marriages, especially when the distance to school [15] [20] [24].

Based on the existing literature states that women's empowerment is an effort to reduce early marriage [5]. The results of this study indicate a difference in the influence of work status on the age of first marriage. One of the same studies with this study is according to Kamal et. al. (2015) in Bangladesh. Women with unskilled jobs and professional jobs can delay marriage compared to women who do not have jobs.

Media access is generally associated with access to knowledge and information, which can theoretically help inform young people about the risk of early marriage so that it can increase the desire to delay marriage [2]. Changes in the pattern of influence between media and the age of marriage may lack exposure to information about early marriage. The increase in the use of social media, television, cellphones, and the internet is associated with changes in the pattern of marriage because it can provide poor information and knowledge to children and parents. Some studies have found that it leads to marriages on their own, which are called 'marriage by love', among adolescents, because this provides a tool for girls and boys to communicate (quietly) and mingle. As a consequence, most younger people, especially in urban areas, decide to marry because of love and sexual desire in the context of countries in Nepal, Bangladesh and India [2].

Women with better economic status can reduce early marriage because it indicates that they are able to delay marriage more easily [17]. In addition, it can improve women's decision-making in households that is associated with delays in marriage [2]. Some studies recommend promoting women's empowerment to reduce child marriages [5].

The results of this study indicate that there is greater prevalence of women's roles to determine the time of marriage. However, the influence of the role of women from these results has protective additives. This is presumed from the increasing percentage of media access from the three years IDHS. Where, the amount of information and knowledge received as well as interactions with the opposite sex more often for example through social media so that it can change the pattern of marriage.

This study shows women who live in households are at risk for early marriage. This can be explained by migration. In regions with high levels of migration, early marriage is very low [16]. However, early marriage also depends on beliefs and culture. The study conducted by Naved, et al. states that migrated workers marry their own chosen spouse. Overall, migration is associated with a reduction in poverty and increased awareness about the possible negative effects of early marriage [2].

This study shows the lower the husband's education level, the higher the risk of marriage early between partners. The same study with this study is a study conducted [8]. In the study it was found that the effect of the husband's education level on early marriage in women was lower than the education level of their partners. This is because a woman with a higher level of education will spend more time in school. In addition, women with higher education attainments will usually have a strong desire to get higher jobs and have suitable jobs compared to getting married at an early age [4].

Some studies suggest the influence of economic status on early marriage [9] [10]. Economic vulnerability is one of the most common reasons for early marriage. A study states that household economic well-being, especially those headed by women, is very important in dealing with early marriage [7]. In addition, the measurement of the economic situation reveals useful insights about changing wealth conditions in three South Asian contexts. Aligned factor scores from the DHS wealth index (based on the scale of assets, services, and facilities, where more positive scores indicate better wealth are recorded for all households), allow us to comparatively examine evolution in household wealth across time and context. Wealth values show an overall increase in household living standards in Bangladesh and Nepal over time.

This study is in accordance with a study conducted by BPS in 2016, BPS stated that early marriage is closely related to rural housing, worse housing conditions, and households with lower expenditure levels. However, the study did not pay attention to geographical conditions such as cities or districts and provinces [12].

Men have more control and power and are thus considered family decision makers. Parents regard their daughters as 'belonging to' other people (husbands) whom they must guard and care for until they are married [2]. The belief that wives must be several years younger than their husbands is a strong contributing factor to early marriage. Because of this, parents prefer to fulfill the responsibility of giving up their daughter in a marriage relationship as soon as possible. However, the results of this study show no influence from parental involvement to determine the time of marriage. This is because, it is assumed, the role of the child is more dominant in deciding the time of marriage than the role of parents [2].

The higher education of the head of the household makes a child get a better job, has broader knowledge and insight, and provides education to his child, where these factors can delay early marriage [2]. This is consistent with the results



of this study where the increase in the influence of the education level of household heads is directly proportional to the level of education of their daughters despite having a lower effect.

This study shows that the level of education of women is the most dominant factor in the age of first marriage in women aged 15-24 years. The influence of education even experienced an increasing trend based on three years of IDHS data. The highest increase occurred between the 2012 IDHS and the 2017 IDHS. On the other hand, the percentage of media use also increased.

Increasingly the role of girls in making decisions is not accompanied by a higher level of female education so that it can lead to the occurrence of early marriage. This is exacerbated by changing patterns in exposure to media. Where, women do not only access the media through newspapers, radio and television but through social media. The existence of social media results in interactions with the opposite sex more often so that marriage occurs because of love.

## 5. Conclusion

Most married women aged 15-24 have practiced early marriage. The most dominant factor in the practice of early marriage is women's education. the most influential factors were employment, exposure to media, decision making, husband's education, residence, economic status, and education head of household. Women who attend school with interventions through marriage maturity programs play an important role in delaying the age of marriage. In addition, exposure to media such as print, radio, television, and social media about information on the maturity of marriage age can increase the delay in marriage age for women aged 15-24 years.

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### **Author Profile**

**Khobir Abdul Karim S.K.M.**, MPH student of Universitas  
Indonesia, khobir.abdul86@gmail.com.

**Dr. Tris Eryando M. A.**, Lecturer of Faculty of Public Health  
Universitas Indonesia.

