

## Factor influencing child marriage In Tanjung Terdana Village 2020-2022

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Child marriage is a marriage that takes place at an age under 19 years that can threaten life and health. Indonesia's child marriage rate is ranked 7th globally and is ranked 2nd in ASEAN. Child marriage brings more harm than good, it tarnishes children rights in so many aspects including the health rights. It can affects children's growth and development, especially females under the age of 19 can experience such serious injuries considering the reproductive organ is still immature for them to have sex, let alone pregnant and give birth. Apparently, the child marriage can be influenced by many factors, such as culture, socio-economic and environment. Although the marriage age has been regulated in laws, the number of child marriage is still arising.

**Objectives:** This study aims to determine the factors that affecting child marriage in Tanjung Terdana Village, Pondok Kubang District, Central Bengkulu Regency.

**Methods:** The research method is analytic observational with a cross-sectional design. The population is a reproductive age women that married in KUA Pondok Kubang distric in 2020-2022. Samples were taken by a total sampling technique of 31 reproductive age women, and data was collected using a questionnaire. Data analysis used a chi square, fisher's exact and logistic regression.

**Results:** The results indicate that culture, environment and sosio-economic influence the child marriage with a value ( $p$ -value)  $<0,05$ , where the most dominant factor is culture.

**Conclusions:** The health workers can work and collaborate cross-sectorally with the local community leaders in order to develop counseling and education programs about reproductive health in the community, especially among adolescents.

**KEYWORD:** culture; environment; child marriage; socio-economic

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## INTRODUCTION

In the status quo, more than 650 million women are married before the age of 18. Around 19% of women aged 20-24 from all over the world engage in child marriage (1). Indonesia's child marriage rate is ranked 7th globally and is ranked 2nd in ASEAN after Cambodia (2). Approximately 1 in 9 girls is married before the age of 18 and it is estimated that there are 375 girls marrying every day in Indonesia(3).

More than 1 million women in Indonesia are married before they are 18 years old in 2020. South Kalimantan occupies the first position for the province with the most marriages of women aged 7-15 years with a percentage of 12.52%, followed by West Java province with 11.48% and East Java province with 10.85%. Bengkulu Province itself occupies the 7th position with a percentage of 8.81% of the total. Over the past 3 years, Central Bengkulu Regency has ranked first for the age of first marriage for women under 19 years in Bengkulu Province. In 2020 Central Bengkulu reached 48.95%, followed by Mukomuko at 46.21% and Lebong at 44.67%, then in 2021 Bengkulu Tengah reached 49.33%, followed by Seluma at 44.51% and Mukomuko at 43.65 and in 2022 Central Bengkulu still ranks 1st with a figure of 48.59%, followed by Kaur in 2nd place with 45.62% and in 3rd place followed by Seluma with 44.92%.

Law Number 16 of 2019 concerning amendments to Law Number 1 of 1974 states that marriage is only permitted if a man and a

woman have reached the age of 19. This considers that marriage at a young age will have a negative impact on the growth and development of children and lead to non-fulfillment of children's basic rights. Immature women have reproductive organs that are not yet strong enough to have sex and give birth, so underage women have a 4-fold risk of experiencing serious injuries and dying as a result of childbirth. In addition, other risks that will arise are anemia, bleeding, preeclampsia, miscarriage, cervical cancer and endometrial cancer. While the risks that will appear to the baby include premature birth, LBW, physical defects, and infant death(4).

In the categories of high-risk pregnancies and childbirths, child marriage can cause recurrent abortion, abnormal delivery, and postpartum hemorrhage. The girls can also experience physical illness namely high blood pressure, underweight, severe headaches, malnutrition, delayed physical growth, and a backache. Girls that got married during childhood had various physical problems after the marriage that could endanger their health and also lower their quality of life (5). On the other side, a study on behavioral control and spousal violence towards women in Pakistan found out that woman that were married as children experienced more behavioral control, and also experienced more domestic violence (6). From the data, we can see that child marriage can cause such harmful impacts, both from the physical and emotional side. Child marriage is influenced by various factors, as research by

(7) factors that cause early marriage include knowledge, socio-economic, cultural and social environment. The results of research by (8) show that there is a significant effect of knowledge on early marriage ( $p=0,001$ ), Other studies also state that there is a relationship between economic factors and young marriage( $p=0,001$ )(9).

According to (10) there is a relationship between cultural factors and early marriage( $p=0,008$ ). Women who live in rural areas have a tendency to marry early by 1.425 times compared to women who live in urban areas. In rural areas, there are generally still many early marriages due to their geographical location which is difficult to access (11). Although the marriage age has been regulated in laws, and causing countless poor impacts for children, the number of child marriage is still arising mainly because the society is still ignoring the laws due to the unavoildable factors that are mentioned.

According to the data, child marriage rate in Pondok Kubang District is 1.09%, and ranks 7th out of 12 Districts. Batu Raja, Paku Haji and Tanjung Terdana villages respectively contributed the highest number of child marriages in Pondok Kubang District with a percentage of 2.38% for Batu Raja Village, 2.11% for Paku Haji Village and 1.82% for Tanjung Terdana Village. Pondok Kubang District, especially Tanjung Terdana Village is geographically easy to access, close to cities and has a high child marriage rate. This study aims to determine the factors

that affecting child marriage in Tanjung Terdana Village, Pondok Kubang District, Central Bengkulu Regency.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This research method is an analytic observational with a cross sectional design. The population were 31 reproductive age women in Tanjung Terdana village who are married and registered at the KUA Pondok Kubang District in 2019-2022. Samples were taken using *total sampling technique*. Data analysis was performed using Chi-square test, Fisher's exact and logistic regression. This study aims to determine the factors that influence the incidence of child marriage, namely culture, environment, knowledge and socio-economic.

The questionnaire that used in this research were adopted from previous research, which will be filled in directly by the respondent after they agreed. The research was carried out after obtaining proper ethical approval from the Health Research Ethical Commission (KEPK) of Poltekkes Kemenkes Bengkulu (no.KEPK.BKL/212/05/2023).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **RESULTS**

Based on **Table 1**, it can be concluded that of the 31 women, almost half (41.9%) were married at a young age (<19 years), almost some (29%) had a bad culture, a small number (25.8%) were in a less supportive environment, almost some (48.4%) had less knowledge, almost all (80.6%) had low

**Table 1. Description of Variables**

Variable	Frequency (n = 31)	Percentage (100%)
Child Marriage		
Married at child age	13	41.9
Not married at child age	18	58.9
Culture		
Not good	9	29
Good	22	71
Environment		
Not very supportive	8	25.8
Supportive	23	74.2
Knowledge		
Less	16	51,6
Enough	15	48,4
Socioeconomic		
Low income	25	80,6
High income	6	19,4

**Table 2. Relationship between cultural, environmental, knowledge and socio-economic variables with the incidence of child marriage**

Variable	Child Marriage						p-value
	Yes		No		Total		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Culture							
Not good	8	88.8	1	11.2	9	100	0.001
Good	5	22.7	17	77.3	22	100	
Environment							
Not very supportive	7	87.5	1	12.5	8	100	0.004
Support	6	26	17	74	23	100	
Knowledge							
Less	7	43.8	9	56.2	16	100	0.833
Enough	6	40	9	60	15	100	
Socioeconomic							
Low income	13	52	12	48	25	100	0.028
High income	0	0	6	100	6	100	

income.

Based on **Table 2**, the relationship test using Chi-square and fisher's exact gives the result that cultural, environmental and socio-

economic variables have a significant relationship with the incidence of child marriage with a p-value  $< \alpha = 0.05$ .

Based on **Table 3**, using logistic

**Table 3. The most dominant factors in child marriage**

Variable	B	S.E	Wald	df	P	Exp(B)
Socioeconomic	0.525	1.088	0.233	1	0.629	1.69
Culture	3.303	1.176	7.885	1	0.005	27.2
Environment	1.378	1.506	0.837	1	0.36	3.967

regression with a limit of  $p < 0.25$ , the analysis shows that the relationships between the independent variables and child marriage, the most dominant variable is culture (Exp B = 27.200).

## DISCUSSION

### Culture

Based on *Fisher's Exact test results* on **Table 2**, it is known that there is a significant relationship between culture and the incidence of child marriage, with  $p\text{-value}=0,001$ . According to data on **Table 3**, culture is the most dominant independent variable (B=27.200), which means that women with a bad culture have 27 times the risk of marrying at a young age, compared to women with a good culture. As research by (12) about the factors that influence early marriage in Baru Village, Kerinci Regency, the results show that there is a relationship between culture and the incidence of early marriage.

The respons to the questionnaire showed that almost half of the respondents agreed that getting their children married early was a habit that was carried out by parents. A small number of respondents answered that marrying over the age of 25 were old virgins, most of the respondents answered that

marrying off children sooner could prevent children from promiscuity and said that marrying off children after graduating from school was a good thing.

Almost half of the respondents agree that girls are not required to continue their higher education because later they will only take care of the family. Most of the respondents answered that getting married quickly would reduce immoral acts among teenagers. Almost half of the respondents also believed that getting married early would increase the family's income and standard of living, almost half of the respondents believed that arranged marriages by parents had a significant influence on the occurrence of marriage at a young age, and that getting married at a young age has become a habit in their surroundings, based on **Table 1** with a total 29% respondents categorized having a not good culture.

Parents tend to marry off their children early to prevent children from promiscuity, the parents tend to marry off their children as early as possible because they see that their children are grown up and have lovers (13) In addition, parents also tend to be afraid if their children are said to be spinsters if they are married at more than 20 years of age –"(10). Another thing that makes parents tend to

marry their children at a young age is the notion that children can marry even if they have not finished high school(14). Women are considered not required to have a higher education because later they will only take care of the family –"(10). In another opinion, it is shown that getting married at a young age will improve the standard of living so that families eventually tend to marry off their children (15). The beliefs and customs prevailing in the family have an impact on the decision to marry at a young age, in the end the phenomenon of early marriage cannot be abandoned(16).

### **Environment**

Based on *Fisher's Exact* test results on **Table 2**, it is known that there is a significant relationship between the environment and the incidence of child marriage with value  $p=0,004$ . As research conducted by (7) about the relationship between knowledge, culture, living environment and socio-economic conditions with early marriage for women, the results show that there is a significant relationship between environment and early marriage ( $p=0,001$ ). According to the research results, almost half of the respondents claimed to live close to entertainment venues that were easily accessible. A small number of respondents admitted that they had an uncomfortable living atmosphere, and almost half said that staying at a friend's house at night was commonplace in the local environment. A small number of respondents agree that there are very few

community activities (youth activities) in the local environment and almost some of them have difficulty accessing these activities.

Most of the respondents said that they rarely/not at all get information about reproductive health in the local environment. There are a small number of respondents who agree that there are very few jobs in the surrounding environment. Most of the respondents said educational institutions in the local environment were far away and difficult to access, these responses to the questionnaire were categorized as not very supportive environment with a total 25,8% respondents, based on **Table 1**.

Research by (17), suggests that the majority of respondents who live close to entertainment venues marry at an early age. It is also known that respondents who often stay at friends' houses have a tendency to marry at an early age. The lack of positive activities for teenagers tends to make teenagers spend time on less positive activities such as dating or watching porn videos.

The results of (18) found that 90% of respondents rarely access reproductive health information, even though access to health information greatly influences a person's behavior in the practice of early marriage. Apart from that, education is also a place for youth to get reproductive health education, but there are still a small number of respondents who have difficulty accessing educational institutions. This is in line with research conducted by (19) that education has an influence on early marriage. None of

the research respondents were university graduates and 77% of them were junior high school graduates. In addition, geographical conditions that are isolated and far from the hustle and bustle of the economy make local residents tend to marry off their children in order to improve the family economy.

### **Knowledge**

Based on Chi-square test results on **Table 2**, it is known that there is no significant relationship between knowledge and the incidence of child marriage with value  $p=0,833$ . This is in line with research by (20) concerning the relationship between adolescent knowledge about the risks of early marriage and the desire to engage in early marriage at Kanisius Ungaran Vocational School, Semarang Regency. The results showed that there was no significant relationship between knowledge and early marriage ( $p=0,392$ ).

Knowledge is one of the factors that influence a person in making decisions. Women's knowledge about early marriage includes its definition, the factors that cause it and its impact on reproductive health. The uneven and low level of education for women causes limited knowledge and information regarding reproductive health to be received, in other words, proper education provides a better understanding for such individual to make a choice (21). The results showed that almost all of the respondents already knew the definition of child marriage, the purpose of marriage, indicators of the success of a

marriage, and most of them already knew the right age limit for women to marry, and the good reproductive age for women. However, there are still a large proportion of respondents who do not know the factors that influence child marriage, as well as the health impacts arising from child marriage.

The results of the study also showed that there were no women with good knowledge. The researcher believes that there are limitations to the research questionnaire, in this case foreign terms are still used which affect the respondent's ability to answer questions. In addition, the lack of knowledge of respondents is also due to the lack of information on reproductive health in the local environment and the lack of public interest in finding out about this information on reproductive health. With the results, we can conclude that the respondents are still incapable to recognize what child marriage is, let alone to understand the impact it could bring, aggravated by the limit for the respondents to get educated, due to the lack information and lack of interest that were mentioned, with the number of 51,6% respondents having a less knowledge based on **Table 1**.

### **Socio-economic**

Based on Fisher's Exact test results on **Table 2**, it is known that there is a significant relationship between socio-economic and the incidence of child marriage with value  $p=0,028$ . This is in line with research by (14) on factors related to early marriage in



Semidang Alas Maras District, Seluma Regency, the results of the study showed that there was a significant socio-economic relationship with the incidence of early marriage ( $p=0,003$ ).

From the data on **Table 1**, we can see that 80,6% respondents are having a low income, and 52% of them were married as a child. In line with research by (22) that there are still many respondents with a low economy who marry at an early age, parents who cannot afford to have a high income so they cannot meet their daily expenses, so parents send their children to marry. Parents are only able to meet primary needs for family consumption, while secondary needs such as schooling are still an obstacle (7). Children who do not go to school and only live at home are an economic burden on the family, so one of the considerations for reducing this burden is to marry off children(23).

The income of a family greatly influences the decision-making process. Early marriage is seen as a way out to escape various difficulties, including economic difficulties (5). Researchers argue that the majority of respondents who married at the age of children because of the economic conditions of the family. Many parents think that by marrying off their children the economic burden will be slightly reduced and their standard of living will increase, because married children will be the responsibility of the husband. This is due to the perception of the position of women in a family which is still often seen as the umpteenth number.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Marriage at a young age can have many negative impacts on children's health and limit children's basic rights, therefore they should be able to grow their interest and improve their knowledge of reproductive health, so that in the future they will be able to make good decisions when it comes to their reproductive rights and health. It is suggested to health workers to work and collaborate cross-sectorally with local community leaders in order to develop counseling and education programs about reproductive health in the community, especially among adolescents. In addition, useful youth activities should be developed, such as mosque youth or sports activities that youth can use to fill their free time.

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