

Exploration of Factors Influencing Early Marriage in Adolescents: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

A phenomenon that often occurs in lower middle economic circles is early marriage. Early marriage can threaten the health and well-being of the couples involved. Not only does it affect health aspects, but it also impacts psychological, social and spiritual aspects. Mental instability in running a household can lead to divorce and domestic violence. This research aimed to explore the factors that play a major role in early marriage, especially among adolescents. Using a systematic literature review with the keywords “Teenagers AND early marriage AND Factor Influencing” the search was limited to articles from 2019-2024, written in English and Bahasa Indonesia, with a qualitative research design, and full text available. There were 2079 articles identified from SAGE, Portal Garuda, Neliti, and Google Scholar databases. These were re-screened to obtain a total of seven journals based on inclusion and exclusion criteria following PRISMA Flow 2020 guidelines. Early marriage is caused by both external and internal factors. External factors include socio-economic conditions, cultural norms, low level of education, poor parenting, while internal factors include love, the desire to be accepted in society, and new opportunities in life.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Early marriage is a phenomenon that often occurs in lower middle economic circles. The total amount of daughters who is involved at early marriage reach to 12 million over a year, while the early marriage of boys reaches to 115 million (UNICEF, 2023). One of nine young women around age twenty to twenty four years old admitted they already married at such a young age (Kemenko PMK, 2023). There were 59.709 permitted cases of early marriage from the court (Komnas Perempuan, 2022). Recently, the number of early marriage cases in Indonesia has exceeded 1.2 million, placing the country in the eighth position globally for the highest incidence of early marriages.

Early marriage can be interpreted as a union among a man and woman in marriage bond whose age is below eighteen years old (UNICEF, 2023). Early marriage is accepted when both man and woman reach 19 years old. Marriage involving individuals who are still underage is referred as early marriage (Kementrian Sekretariat Negara RI, 2019).

The impact of early marriage can be associated with variety health issues, economic, also social impacts, which has been proved to occur in such situations (Malhotra & Elnakib, 2021). Early marriages are often associated with high maternal mortality rates due to pregnancies and child births occurring before the reproductive organs have matured yet. These young mothers are also prone to a high risk of complications during the birth process such as obstetric fistula, infection, hemorrhage, anemia, and eclampsia (Noor et al., 2018). Early marriage affects not only woman's reproductive health but also men. For men's health, early marriage can increase the risk of getting infected by *Human Immunodeficiency Virus* (HIV) compared to those who is maturely married due to limit of awareness and acknowledgement about safe sex practices, including the use of condoms and maintaining sexual relations with one partner (Misunas et al., 2019). Additionally, there is a prevalent misconception that individuals who appear healthy cannot be infected HIV (Misunas, et. al, 2019). Early marriage impacts not only physical health but also has profound psychological, social, and spiritual repercussions. The risk associated with early marriage can extend to an increased Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR), Domestic Violence (DV), higher divorce rates, and a surge in poverty due to economic factors (Komnas Perempuan, 2021).

The destructive effect of early marriage can be found in the education, health, economic, and gender equality for women, which all will contribute to poverty (Rahayu & Wahyuni, 2020). Decision to marry early is related to lower income. Women are also more inclined to poverty compared to their partners. Individuals who marry early will have inadequate possibilities to pursue higher education which affects their income (Khairina & Tridharma Putra, 2023). Economic dependence among early married couples places new responsibility on their parents to support them (Ernawati et al., 2022). Poverty also leads to social impacts such as domestic violence, unstable emotions, marital failure, fear in decision making, lack of harmony and autonomy, gender discrimination, and school dropout (Jureid et al., 2023)

Individual who attempts early marriage can be categorized as fragile and unstable due to lack of responsibility and independence, often resulting in divorce (Dini & Nurhelita, 2020). An immature mindset often affects couples in maintaining developmental tasks after marriage. Therefore, it is crucial to acknowledge the factors that insist an individual to marry at a young age.

This exploration emphasizes to broaden the existing perception about complexities of early marriage among adolescents. It is also expected to serve as a foundation for developing new

strategies for prevention and effective intervention. The purpose of this literature review is to explore the factors that play a significant role in the occurrence of early marriage 's among adolescents, to gain advanced insights into the phenomenon of early marriage, to delve into the roots of the problem, and to provide direction for future research and policy.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

Systematic review is the research design used in this study. The research had been done between December 2023 and January 2024 by using *Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses (PRISMA) Flow* 2020.

2.2 Searching Method

There were 2079 articles from SAGE, Portal Garuda, Neliti, and Google Scholar databases. After screening the articles according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 7 articles were obtained for review in this study.

Table 1. Electronic Databases Used

Database	Keywords	Years	Number of Article Found	Number of Article Selected
EBSCO	Teenagers AND early marriage AND factor-influencing	2019-2024	14	0
SAGE	Teenagers AND early marriage AND factor-influencing	2019-2024	1765	3
Garuda	Teenagers AND early marriage AND factor-influencing	2019-2024	16	1
Google Scholar	Teenagers AND early marriage AND factor-influencing	2019-2024	14.100	2
Wiley	Teenagers AND early marriage AND factor-influencing	2019-2024	3.810	0
Scilit	Teenagers AND early marriage AND factor-influencing	2019-2024	205	0
Neliti	Teenagers AND early marriage AND factor-influencing	2019-2024	11	1

2.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The research inclusion criteria include: 1) Research article using qualitative methods. 2) The study results discuss the factor influencing early marriage with adolescent subjects. 3) Using

keywords “Teenagers AND early marriage AND factor-influencing”. 4) The publication year criteria are limited between 2019 and 2024. 5) Using full access or free full text article. 6) The language of the article should be either Bahasa Indonesia or English. Meanwhile the research exclusion criteria include: 1) Duplicate article. 2) Article in the form of the literature reviews. 3) Research article using quantitative methods.

2.4 Article Update

The articles selected were obtained through a search of the latest literature in academic databases such as SAGE, Portal Garuda, Neliti, and Google Scholar. Articles were selected based on topic relevance and full-text access. An initial screening involved reading abstracts to determine their suitability for the topic of early marriage among adolescents. Articles that matched in the inclusion criteria were then read thoroughly to ensure the relevance and validity of their content before further analysis

2.5 Data Extraction

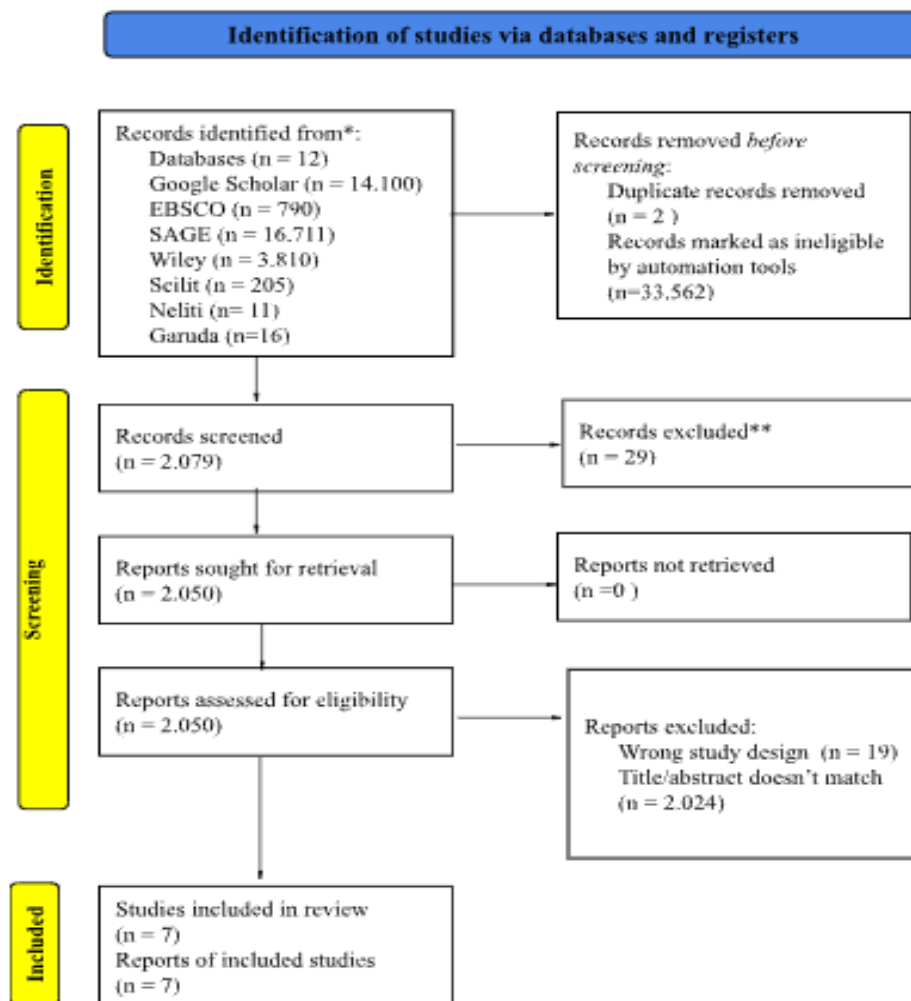


Figure 1. PRISMA flow 2020

2.6 Quality Research

The quality assessment of the studies in this review was conducted subjectively based on several basic criteria: topic relevance, clarity of methodology, and validity of results. Studies that did not clearly explain their research methods or had questionable results were excluded from this review.

2.7 Data Analysis

The data analysis in this review was conducted using a descriptive approach. The screened articles were analyzed to identify and describe the key factors contributing to early marriage among adolescents. Each article was thoroughly read, and important information was noted and organized into categories that describe the various factors influencing early marriage. The results of this analysis were then summarized to provide an overall view of the most significant factors.

3. RESULTS

After screening from 12 databases, 7 articles that suitable within the inclusion criteria were identified. This study was conducted in three countries with varying sample sizes. Four studies were conducted in Indonesia, spread across several provinces such as Bali (Horii, 2020), West Kalimantan (Devi et al., 2021), Central Sulawesi (Mangerang, 2021), West Nusa Tenggara (Khaerani, 2019), and South Sumatera (Alviola et al., 2023), one study was conducted in Jordan (Mrayan & Obeisat, 2021), and the other was conducted in East Africa (Madut, 2020).

Table 2. Literature Search Results

No.	Title, Author, Year	Purpose	Research Method	Outcome
1	The Lived Experience of Early Marriage in Jordan: The Perspective of Adolescent Girls and Young Women (Mrayan & Obeisat, 2021)	Exploring women's experiences of early marriage, factors influencing early marriage, and the information sources and support systems before and after marriage	A qualitative design with a population of 40 women. Using the snowball sampling technique, 36 participants were ultimately included in the study	Many women in Jordan perceive marriage as a potential solution to poverty, prompting numerous families to arrange early marriages for their daughters. Additionally, early marriage is seen as a family tradition once a girl reaches puberty and is deemed ready for marriage. In some cases, early marriage is also believed to cultivate better personality traits and manners
2	Determinants of Early Marriage and Construction of	Identifying sosio-economic factor	A qualitative design involved a sample of 91 participants,	Social and economic condition influence early marriage. Parents often arrange early marriages for

	Gender Role in South Sudan (Madut, 2020)	influencing early marriage and gender relation in post-independence South Sudan	with overall population size not specifically delineated	their daughters due to social pressures and financial issues, with the desire of accomplishing a better quality life and higher social status. Adolescents who don't have father figures often face social problems such as abandonment, underage employee, early marriage, and pregnancy. Role gender, inequality gender, economic circumstances, and limited education access are factors that influence early marriage
3	Walking a Thin Line: Taking Children's Decision to Marry Seriously (Horii, 2020)	Providing empirical evidence regarding children's rights and capacity in determining to marry	A qualitative design involved a population of girls, boys, parents, and family members identified 16 cases of early marriage among Hindu Balinese residents spanning diverse socioeconomic strata	Children were granted the autonomy to decide on marriage without external pressure, grounded in their deeply held cultural norms. The main reasons behind the decision include factors such as love, a desire to be socially accepted within their community, and aspirations for new opportunities in life
4	Analysis of Factors Causing Early Marriage among Adolescents in Mentajoi Village, Serawai District, Sintang Regency (Devi et al., 2021)	Exploring factors that influence early marriage in Mentajoi Village, Serawai District, Sintang Regency	A qualitative design method involved a population of early married adolescents in Mentajoi Village resulted in a total of 4 participants	Parents and children perceived education unimportant due to low levels of education among parents and children, low motivation to learn, and apathetic parental attitudes. Adolescents in Mentajoi Village who marry early say that one reason they do so is to preserve family honor because they have engaged in premarital sexual relations, thus they must

				marry. Custom and culture also promote early marriage
5	Early Marriage of the Bajo Tribe in Jayabakti Village, Pagimana District, Banggai Regency (Mangerang, 2021)	Understanding the causes of early marriages occurring in Jayabakti Village	A qualitative design method with unspecified population and sample and its sampling technique	Early marriage is often triggered by several factors, including promiscuity, educational attainment, and parental styles. Promiscuity can lead to out-of-wedlock pregnancies, thus driving early marriage. Low educational attainment may lead parents and children to view education not as a top priority, but merely as a means of survival. On the other hand, parenting styles that tend to spoil children, as commonly observed in Bajo ethnic families, often result in adolescents not carefully considering the negative consequences of early marriage
6	Economic Factors in Marriage in the Sasak Lombok Community (Khaerani, 2019)	Exploring the economic factor towards early marriage in Lombok and efforts made to reduce early marriage	A qualitative design method involved populations of early marriage perpetrators and their families. Sample and sampling techniques are not specified	The concerning economic conditions prompt individuals to opt for early marriage. Besides economic factors, social and environmental factors, and educational factors also play a role
7	The Phenomenon of Child Marriage in Urban Areas (Alviola et al., 2023)	Examining in depth the factors causing and the resulting impact	A qualitative design method with unspecified population, samples collected from data of <i>Badan Keluarga Berencana dan Perlindungan Perempuan</i>	Based on data obtained, it can be concluded early marriage in Gantimulyo Village is caused by several factors, such as low parental education, out-of-wedlock pregnancy, promiscuity, and certainly lack of parental supervision

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4. DISCUSSIONS

Based on the findings from the analysis of seven articles, four of them identified education as a significant factor contributing to early marriage (Alviola et al., 2023; Devi et al., 2021; Khaerani, 2019; Mangerang, 2021). Adolescents in the village of Mentajoi have low educational accomplishment due to dropping out during junior high school years (Devi et al., 2021). The situation usually occurs because of parents' backgrounds who typically have only completed elementary school education and ignorance to the importance of education thus it reduces the spirits and motivations resulting in early decision to marry rather than continuing the education. Parents' background can influence children's mindset in attaining knowledge (Alviola et al., 2023; Mangerang, 2021). Low level of education always fails to recognize and acknowledge the purpose of being married. The incidence of dropping out in adolescent is a strong force for them to marry early due to none activities and a reason to make themselves busy (Khaerani, 2019).

Backgrounds and culture' parents also influence parenting on children. Bajo tribe's parenting culture which provides excessive amount of affection towards children is not recommended. Complying all the children's request including decision making and actions without contemplating the impacts is unwise (Mangerang, 2021). It will produce consequences for parents when their children request to marry early. Neglectful and indulgent parenting are one of parenting kinds that can influence children to marry early. Teen promiscuity and unwed pregnancy is one of many factors that lead to early marriage (Alviola et al., 2023; Devi et al., 2021; Mangerang, 2021).

Economic status has a significant influence in increased cases of early marriage. Research conducted in Lombok highlighted there is a local societal norm regarding girls as economic assets to the family, where girls are expected to elevate the family's economic status (Khaerani, 2019). Therefore, parents are not hesitant to matchmaking their daughters during adolescence. Similar situation also reported in another research where parents use their daughter as a solution to overcome poverty. Economic problems often walk on the same line with social conflict which also cause early marriage to happen (Mrayan & Obeisat, 2021). Social conflict as well with poverty in family can encourage parents to pair their children at young age hoping it will enhance their life's quality and social status (Madut, 2020).

Norms and cultural traditions preserved by the community also become the constitute factors influencing the prevalence of early marriage. Early marriage is a part of family tradition when girls hit their puberty phase which considerably mature enough to get married (Mrayan & Obeisat, 2021). Meanwhile, norms in community also impact the decision making of early marriage such as norms of sexual activity hence compels them to marry to preserve family's honor (Devi et al., 2021; Horii, 2020).

Early marriage is commonly derived upon deprived father's figure towards daughters that persuade them to do social deviation such as abandonment, begin a career young, unwanted pregnancy, or even early marriage (Madut, 2020). Early marriage can also occur due to inequality gender, where woman is perceived inferior and have no right to voice out their opinions or even can't refuse the arranged marriage (Madut, 2020).

5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on various journals, it can be summarized that early marriage is affected by multiple factors. Major factors include social conditions, dismaying economic situations, norms, and cultural traditions which influence the mindset towards early marriage, as well as low levels of education among both parents and children, promiscuity, and parenting. Although most of these factors are influenced by external conditions, it cannot be denied that internal factors also contribute to the occurrence of early marriage. These internal factors include love, the desire to be accepted in one's community, and the hope of obtaining new opportunities in life. Living in poverty, early marriage is often considered a solution, even though its impacts on education and welfare need to be considered holistically.

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