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Inhibiting Factors of Early Women Marriage: An Empirical Study in South Sulawesi, Indonesia

Palmarudi Mappigau^{1*}, Idayanti Nursyamsi², Jusni Ambodalle² and Akmal Machmud³

Abstract

Despite early marriage in developing countries, mainly in Indonesia has been extensively studied, but study about factors that contribute to inhibit or prevent the women to marry at the early age has been lacking up till now. Therefore, this study purpose is to fill this research gap by providing empirical evident to identify and determine factors that have an important role to inhibit or prevent women to get married at early age This study was conducted in Soppeng and Selayar Regencies in South Sulawesi, Indonesia. From each of these regencies, 100 women who got into their first marriage at a young age as well as their parents were chosen randomly as respondent. Data was collected through questionnaires survey. The collected data was analyzed using binary logistic regression. The results show that women's education, economic independence, risk tolerance, parent's economic stability, parent's education, and government programs were most important factors to inhibit or women get married at early age. Policy makers may consider these finding to implement policies that can reduce early women marriages practices and the impact or negative consequence thereof.

Keywords

First marriage; Early age; Young girls; Inhibiting factors; Important role

Introduction

Population problems currently faced by many developing countries, mainly Indonesia with highest population in the world are rapid population growth rates. The rapid population growth results in the increase of case of the early marriages among women and ¹⁰n. According to the World's Population Data Sheet in 2012 [1], Indonesia is among the ¹⁰en countries with the highest absolute numbers of child b²es, every seven girls in Indonesia is married before the age of 18 Early marriage contributes to a series of negative consequences both for young girls and the society in which they live. It is a violation of human rights in general and of girl's rights in particular. For both girls and boys, early marriage has profound physical, intellectual, psychological and emotional impacts; cutting off educational and employment opportunities and chances of personal

growth. Besides having a negative impact on girls themselves, the practice of early marriage also has negative consequences on their children, families, and society as a whole [2]. According to Glenn et al. [3] women who married in their teens tended to be lower in impulse control and the ability to defer gratification than persons who married at older ages. Delay marriage at mature age also will help both parties to keep a stable relationship and reduced the divorce rate. From personal aspect, women who delay marriage at mature age will result in more freedom to pursue their own achievements, and accumulate economic power, it will provide a better environment and living standard to next generation. With respect to these issues, the government of Indonesia has conducted numerous policies to prevent early marriage of girls, and one of them is through the restrictions on the age of first marriage at least 21 years. However, the facts on the field show that the policy does not give much influence on reduction of the early women marriage practices, especially in rural areas.

Past research on early women marriages in Indonesia also in other developing countries, most of them focused on consequences of early married [4-6] or driver of early marriage [7-10]. However, research on the early women marriages and insight into the factors that contribute to inhibit or prevent the women to marry at the early age has ¹⁴ lacking up till now According to CHS (2009), early marriage involves human behavioral aspect, so it is quite complicated and needs a comprehensive understanding to uncover the inhibiting factors underlying the early marriage. Understanding the role of the inhibiting factors is critical for policy maker to design interventions and programs that reduce the early marriage practices in many developing countries (CHS, 2009). For this reason, this study has specifically sought to address this literature gap by identifying and determining factors which have an important role to inhibit or prevent women to get married at early age in Indonesia.

Methodology

Population and sample

This study carries out from April till July 2015 in South Sulawesi Province. The province was chosen because it has largest number of early girl's marriages in Indonesia (IDHS, 2012). The target population of the study was women (young girls) who had marriage for the first time before age 21 years in Soppeng and Selayar Regencies. From each of the regencies were chosen randomly as much as 100 women as the sample respondents based on a sampling frame, a list of the girls who are registered in 2014 at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) of the regencies as early marriage

Data sources

The data in this study was collected through a questioner survey. Two types of questionnaires' survey were developed: the first one for women respondent; and the second for her parent. The parents were involved as sample respondent due to they have important role in determining the time of the first marriages of their daughters. To measure validity and reliability of the questionnaire, a pre-survey was done using 20 women respondents and their parents. The secondary data was collected through several documents related to early marriage policy from The National Family Planning Coordinating Board (BKKBN) [11].

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Analysis method

Logistic regression analysis was used to identify and determine inhibiting factors of women to marry early age. In this analysis, the ages of women at their first marriage was used as the dependent variable which was dichotomized by assigning the value of 1 for ages less than 20 years and a value of 0 for ages 20years or older. The explanatory variables were women's education, economic independence, risk tolerance, geographical mobility, involvement in organizations, husband' education, husband' occupation, access to health care, isolation, marriage partner unavailability, parent' economic stability, social strata, migration status of parents, parent' education , panai tradition, and government program. The variables explanatory variables were measured using 5-point Likert scale items that ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly) because most of the data were ordinal data, so this data transferred into intervals data used Successive Interval Method.

Results and Discussion

The results of the logistic regression analysis are presented in Table 1. From Table 1, there are 17 variables that potential as an inhibiting factors (negative value of regression coefficient, B), but only 10 variables as determinant or significant variables ($P < 0.05$), namely: women's education, economic independence, risk tolerance, husband's education, access to health care, parent's economic stability, social strata, parent's education, "panai" tradition, and government program. The results of the regression and odds ratio for every variable are explained as follows:

Women's education

The regression shows that the women' education variable has a negative (inhibiting) and significant impact on the early women marriages ($P < 0.5$). The odds ratio is 3.866, implying that women's with higher level of formal education (high school and university level) have more three times change to postpone or delay of their first time marriage than those who lower level of formal education (elementary and junior high school level). Marriage postponement among highly educated women may be explained by the fact that they tend to attach greater value to their careers and independence rather than to get married. Goswami gave two explanations of why a woman with higher education is always more likely to remain unmarried at

a given point of time. First, the continuation of education delays the entry of a woman into the marriage market. Second, education is often related to greater autonomy and opening up of new control over household resources and personal behaviour so that they can achieve better bargaining power in deciding the timing of their marriage as well as the selection of their spouses. Tomás mentioned that there are numerous indirect effects of education which may impinge on the timing of marriage and parenthoods. Higher education enhances the position of individuals on the labour market and increases the 'opportunity costs' of childbearing, and women with higher education have values and preferences distinct from individuals with lower education, although not necessarily due to the effects of education itself, as (self-) selection to higher education plays a role in value orientation as well. This finding is supported by Wong [12] who found that rising educational would lead women to postpone, but not abandon, marriage in order to complete more human capital investment early in the life course. Bruderer and Diekmann also argue that the proportion of delay married women should increase with education.

Economic independence

The regression shows that the women's economic independence variable has a negative (inhibiting) and significant impact on the early women marriages ($P < 0.5$). The odds ratio of 4.074 indicates that working women have a more four times chance to postpone or delay of their first time marriage than those who not working. This is because women who have own income (as entrepreneur or workers) will delay marriage because they want to prepare financially to improve the stability of the family when they married. In particular, they do not need to rely too heavily on men for economic support. The other reason is employment provide economic resources for women to postpone marriage and an economic incentive for parents to encourage their daughters to remain single until she accumulated sufficient resources to establish own household and employment tend to expand women's horizons and provide them with previously unavailable opportunities and lifestyles that compete with marriage. This finding is supported by Wong [12] who found that economic opportunity would lead women to postpone, but not abandon, marriage in order to complete more human capital investment early in the life course. Preston and Richards also found that economic independence in women are responsible for any marriage delays.

Risk tolerance

The regression shows that the risk tolerance variable has a negative (inhibiting) and significant impact on the early women marriages ($P < 0.5$). The odds ratio is 3.412, meaning that women who avoid risk against negative consequences of early marriage have a more three time chance to postpone or delay of their first time marriage than those who tolerant of the risks. This because women who perceived avoid early marriages risk (e.g. risk of infants deaths and maternal morbidity), it might expected they will delay marriages to minimize those risk effects. This finding is supported by Schmidt's [13] who found that women who deny risks effect of early marriages will delay marriage longer than those who tolerant to the risk.

Husband's education

The regression shows that the husband' education variable has a negative (inhibiting) and significant impact on the early women

Table 1: Results of logistic regression analysis: inhibiting factors of early women marriage.

Inhibiting Factors	B	P-value	Exp (B)
Women's Education (X1)	-0.271	0.027*	3.860
Economic Independence (X2)	-0.603	0.034*	3.074
Risk Tolerance (X3)	-0.218	0.041*	3.412
Geographical Mobility (X4)	-1.878	0.215	0.531
Involvement in Organizations (X5)	-2.48	0.134	0.909
Husband's Education (X6)	-0.214	0.041*	2.807
Husband's Occupation (X7)	-0.287	0.196	0.940
Access to Health Care (X8)	-0.288	0.033*	1.061
Isolation (X9)	-2.217	0.255	0.999
Marriage Partner Unavailability (X10)	-2.265	0.488	1.000
Parent's Economic Stability (X11)	-0.353	0.043*	2.423
Social Strata (X12)	-1.231	0.041*	1.373
Migration Status of Parents (X13)	-0.429	0.544	0.936
Parent's Education (X14)	-0.354	0.038*	2.702
"Panai" Tradition (X15)	-0.22	0.028*	1.278
Government Program (X17)	-1.23	0.039*	2.389

marriages ($P < 0.5$). The odds ratio of 2.807 indicates that women whose husbands are highly educated level (high school and university level) have a more two times chance to postpone or delay of their first time marriage than those whose husband' lower educated level (primary school). That illustrates the husband's education have larger impact to delay or prevent women get married at early age. This because mans who had a better education can influence their attitudes and norms regarding expectation of a marriage and in the choice of partners. Thereby, educated man tends to marry women at mature age. In general, women at mature age have more physical and psychological of maturity, and they are able to care for their children well. This finding is supported by Haloj and Limbu [14] found that the occurrence of early marriage is higher in women whose husbands are less educated than in those who are more educated.

Access to health care

The regression show that access to health care has a negative (inhibiting) and significant impact on the early women marriages ($P < 0.5$). The odds ratio of 1.061 indicates that with women access to health care programs have a more one time chance to postpone or delay of their first time marriage than those who limited or no access to such programs. This is because access to health care programs exposes women to information about reproductive health and pregnancy that discourage early marriage. This result is supported by Agampodi et al. [15] who mentioned that many early marriages in women because they lack of knowledge regarding the reproduction process, especially in cases where they do not have access to health care programs

Parent's economic stability

The regression shows that parent' economic stability has a negative (inhibiting) and significant impact on the early women marriages ($P < 0.5$). The odds ratio is 2.432, meaning that women whose parents with economically stable have more two time chance to postpone or delay of their first time marriage than those who have not. This because women whose parents with economically stable, their parents will not seek financial security by marriage them at early age. Moreover, women whose parents are economically stable are more likely to more financial resources leading to higher educational attainment or becoming an entrepreneur. This finding is supported by Sah et al. [16] who found that the economic status of the parents is a crucial variable in determining the marital age of their daughters

Social strata

The regression shows that the social strata variable has has a negative (inhibiting) and significant impact on the early women marriages ($P < 0.5$). The odds ratio of 1.373 means that women whose parents from the nobility family have a more one time chance to postpone or delay of their first time marriage than those whose parent from ordinary people family. This because most ethnic in Indonesia, including ethnic in South Sulawesi (e.g. Buginese, Makassarese, Torajanese and Mandarese), strict social stratification of the past is still clearly evident today, especially in marriage. The nobility people are a very useful couple of degrees. The rule is a man may marry a woman who is common people, but not the same as a woman. Therefore, woman from noble family may have limited the opportunity to find a partner, because their family is selective in finding their spouse. This result is consistent with the previous research; Idrus [17] found that the Bugis-Makassar hierarchical marriage system is associated with

a woman's function as the symbol of family *siri* (honor) and as the preserver of the purity of blood.

Parent' education

The regression shows that the parent' education variable has a negative (inhibiting) and significant impact on early women marriages ($P < 0.5$). The odds ratio of 2.702 indicates that women with educated parents have a more two time chance to postpone or delay of their first time marriage than those whose uneducated parents. This because parents with higher level education are likely to adopt modern values such as autonomy of daughters and have more knowledge about consequences of early marriage. Therefore, parents with higher education level will prevent their daughters from marrying at a young age. According to Mooyaart and Liefbroer [18], there are several arguments about why higher parental education leads to postponement of first union and first marriage. Children with educated parents are likely to have higher education and career aspirations. Higher educational attainment and prolonged enrollment in the educational system leads to postpone of marriages. Thus, children with highly educated parents are more likely to be raised in a wealthy home environment than children with low-educated parents. Individuals who were raised in a household with high consumption levels may develop the same consumption aspirations for their own household and may not want to start a household before they are able to afford a similar lifestyle themselves, which will delay their timing of marriage. Highly educated parents are also likely to socialize their children with these more liberal values, implying that their children are more likely to opt for unmarried cohabitation. This result is supported by Kumchelsi et al. (2011) who found that there is a significant correlation between the educational levels of parents and the age of their daughters when they first got married.

Panai tradition

Panai is the one of local tradition in South Sulawesi Province. Panai is money given by the groom to the bride on deal both sides. Panai different from the dowry money, Panai is spending money for the wedding such as foodstuffs, tents/ buildings, clothing, and various kinds of equipment to get married. Men bring such payments to marriage, and the amount depends on an agreement being reached between the respective families of the bride and groom. The panai tradition is a forms of accountability and commitment in a marriage relationship, so very rarely heard cases of divorce on spouses who adopted the panai tradition due to their appreciation of marriage is very high [19].

The regression shows that the panai tradition variable has a negative (inhibiting) and significant impact on the early women marriages ($P < 0.5$). The odds ratio of 1.278 means that women whose families still adopt the panai tradition have a more one time change to postpone or delay of their first time marriage than those whose their families do not adhere to the tradition anymore. This is because the panai tradition could be delaying marriage on women if no consensus reached between the respective families of the bride and groom about how much the groom should pay and/or if the absence of a lot of money possessed by the groom's family. This finding is supported by Rahman [19] who suggested that panai tradition will be positive effects on maturation of age marriage at young generations in Indonesia because it will be difficult for young men and women to get married at early age.

Government programs

One of the population programs of the Indonesian government that can control the number of people and directly targeted to the first marriage in women is the program Maturation Age Marriage (PUP). This PUP program is an attempt to increase the age of first marriage, thus reaching the minimum age at the age of marriage of 20 years for women and 25 years for men [11]. The regression shows that The PUP program has a negative (inhibiting) and significant impact on the early women marriages ($P < 0.5$). The odds ratio of 2.389 indicates that women who have received socialization/counseling about PUP are more two time chance time change to postpone or delay of their first time marriage than those who have not. This is because women who have received socialization/counseling about PUP will have more information and knowledge about risk of child marriage and early child-bearing. Thereby, they will avoid getting married at a young age. This finding is supported by The National Family Planning Coordinating Board which evaluated the PUP program and reported that women who married age before reaching the age of 20 years had less knowledge about the program and the impacts of early marriage.

Conclusion

This study found that women's education, economic independence, risk tolerance, husband's education, access to health care, parent's economic stability, social strata, parent education, "panai" tradition, and government program are important factors to prevent the practice of early marriage on women in Indonesia. Among these factors, the most important factors include woman's education, economic independence, risk tolerance, husband's education, parent's economic stability, parent's education and government program. Therefore, policy makers may consider these finding to implement policies that can reduce early women marriages practices and the impact or negative consequence thereof. Even though this study contributes to the development of the population theory, this study has several limitations that need to be addressed by future research.

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