

## *The Relationship between Early Marriage and Mental Health in Adolescent Girls in the KUA Ngemplak Yogyakarta*

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Early marriage occurs at the age of less than 19 years. The incidence of early marriage is caused by cultural factors of early marriage, married by accident, education, and low economic conditions all affect early marriage. The mental health impact of early marriage can lead to anxiety, stress, and depression. **Aims:** The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between early marriage and mental health in adolescent girls. **Methods:** This study uses quantitative research methods using a cross-sectional research design. The total population is 49 people, and the sampling method used is total sampling. The study was conducted for 1 month. The research instrument used the DASS-21 questionnaire and data collection sheets. The data analysis of this research was univariate and bivariate analysis. **Results:** The results showed that the frequency of adolescents experiencing severe stress was 40.8%, very severe anxiety reached 42.9%, and very severe depression reached 53.1%. There is a relationship between early marriage and severe stress with a p-value of 0.001, there is a relationship between early marriage and very severe anxiety with a p-value of 0.001, and there is a relationship between early marriage and very severe depression with a p-value of 0.004. **Conclusion:** It can be concluded that early marriage has a relationship with mental health in adolescent girls in the Ngemplak Region and future research should involve husbands in in-depth qualitative research exploring in depth the causes of the mental health of young women who took early marriages.

**Keywords:** Adolescent girl, Early marriage, Mental health.

### INTRODUCTION

Early marriage is globally highest in Sahara Africa, with 4 out of 10 women under the age of 18. Indonesia is ranked 7th in the world for the highest early marriage category around 1,220,900 Indonesian children experiencing early marriage, based on UNICEF data (UNICEF, 2019). The number of child marriages in Indonesia ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> and among ASEAN countries after Cambodia (Rahmawati 2020). Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), there was a decrease in marriage before the age of 18 in adolescent girls in 2018 by 11.21% down to 10.82% and in 2019-2020 there was a significant increase during the pandemic to reach 24 thousand (The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, 2021). Adolescent girls married at the age of <18 years as much as 63.08%, meaning that 1.95% first

experienced pregnancy at the age of <15 years. For young women who get married at the age of <15 years old in their pregnancy is as much as 46.84% (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020).

The Head of the Office of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection and Population Control said that in the Special Region of Yogyakarta in 2021, the incidence of early marriage increased drastically due to a revision to the marriage age limit, that is the age of 19 years. Early marriage in the Special Region of Yogyakarta occurred at vulnerable ages 18-19 years (Agus Dwi, 2021). The analysis of the Office of Women's Empowerment Child Protection and Population Control showed that the number of children who married younger than 18 increased from 271 to 494 due to pregnancy and childbirth before marriage. In Sleman Regency, there are 343 applications for dispensation (Agus Dwi, 2021).

The cause of adolescent girls marrying early is due to accidental marriage or the occurrence of pregnancies out of wedlock in young women, caused by lack of knowledge, curiosity, wanting to try and wrong associations. The low economic status in the families that are unable to meet the living expenses of their children and low education factors also contribute to make adolescent girls marry at an early age, such as elementary or junior high school graduates. The mental health impacts of early marriage can lead to anxiety, stress, and depression. It can happen because mental maturity is not optimal and stable yet. This situation can trigger the emergence of various problems in domestic life caused by unstable emotions (Minarni, Andayani and Haryani, 2014).

According to Riskesdas data in 2018, the prevalence of mental health disorders is increasing from year to year by 9.8% (The Ministry of Health 2018). Indonesians aged 15-24 years old experience mental disorders in the form of stress, anxiety, and depression (Data and Information Center of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia 2019). There is a prevalence of mental disorders in D.I Yogyakarta which includes depression, anxiety and stress, in the adolescent population aged 15 years and over by 8.1 (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia (2018). The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between early marriage and mental health in adolescent girls.

## METHODS

This research uses quantitative research methods, with a cross-sectional time approach. The population in this study was 49 young women who married early. The sampling technique used was total sampling, and the research instruments used DASS-21 questionnaires and data collection sheets. The data analysis of this study used univariate and bivariate analysis. The bivariate test in this study uses the Spearman Rank Analysis Technique. This research also pays attention to the code of ethics, included informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality and conducting ethical feasibility. The location of data collection was the religious Affairs Office in

Ngemplak area, Sleman district. Before conducting the research, the researcher had conducted an ethical test with the number 2026/KEP-UNISA/IV/2022.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Respondent Characteristics**

Characteristics of Respondents	Category	F	%
Wife's work	Self-Employed	4	8.2
	Entrepreneur	14	28.6
	Unemployed	25	51.0
	Do other job	6	12.2
Respondent's knowledge of the marriage law	Correct	3	6.1
	Incorrect	3	6.1
	Don't know	43	87.8
Marriage history of parents	Divorce	5	10.2
	Not divorce	44	89.8
Parents' married age	<19 years old	11	22.4
	≥19 years old	38	77.6

In Table 1 it can be seen that most of the respondents are unemployed (51%), most of respondents do not know about marriage law (87.8%), and most of the respondents have a marital history of parents who are not divorced (89.8%), and most of the respondents' parents' marriage age was >19 years (77.6%).

**Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Research Variables.**

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max
Early marriage <19 years	16.78	0.941	15	18

The average age of adolescents married was at the age of 16.78 years with the youngest age of 15 years and the oldest age of 18 years. The standard deviation is 0.941.

**Table 3. Dependent Variable Frequency Distributions.**

Variable	Category	N	F	%
Stress	Usual	4	1	30.
	Mild	9	5	6
	Moderate	0	0	

	Severe	1	28.
	Extremel	4	6
	y severe	2	40.
		0	8
		0	0
Anxiety	Usual	4	2 4.1
	Mild	9	4 8.2
	Moderate	8	16.
	Severe	1	3
	Extremel	4	28.
	y severe	2	6
		1	42.
			9
Depressio	Usual	4	2 4.1
n	Mild	9	0 0
	Moderate	1	24.
	Severe	2	5
	Extremel	9	18.
	y severe	2	4
		6	53.
			1

The highest frequency of adolescents who experienced stress was in the category of severe stress at 40.8%, young women who experienced very severe anxiety reached 42.9% and the frequency of depression was in the category of very severe depression reaching 53.1%.

**Table 4. Relationship between Early Marriage and Stress in Adolescent Girls.**

Stress level	Score	P-Value	Correlation coefficient
Normal	30.6%	0.001	0.484
Mild	0%		
Moderate	28.6%		
Severe	40.8%		

Based on bivariate results on stress, the relationship between early marriage and stress has a significance value of  $0.001 < 0.05$ . This means that there is a relationship between early marriage and severe stress in young women. Based on the cross-tabulation table, it was found that adolescents who married early experienced severe stress as many as 20 people. The result of the correlation coefficient is 0.484 which means that there is a significant relationship between early marriage and stress. The results of the study showed that 20 adolescents experienced severe stress due to early marriage (40.8%). Severe stress can last from several hours to several days. The inability of adolescents to adapt well to surrounding conditions (stressors)

can be a trigger for other disorders such as biological, social and spiritual. Thus, a person who has a stressor needs individual maturity in any case and vigilance in everyday life. Immature age can affect the mentality of young women as young mothers who have assumed the responsibility of being parents and wives who are not supposed to be parents at the age of  $<19$  years (Jamil, 2019). This is in accordance with research by Fatmawaty (2017) where the development of late adolescence means emotions that tend to be higher than childhood, this is because it exists under social pressure and faces new conditions. Meanwhile, during childhood, they are not prepared enough to face people's lives so that, with age, they learn to adapt to the situation and have a good tolerance for stressors. Destia (2016) also states that women who marry early have mental health disorders, cannot control emotions and manage stress, so that if they cannot adjust to the environment and with a new status, it can lead to stress.

According to Sarwono and Sarlito (2016), the occurrence of early marriage is due to the existence of a free environment between the sexes in adolescence which as seen in daily life is increasingly unnatural and has no limits. Marriage at an early age ultimately creates problems, and in no case does early marriage in adolescence ever benefit, adolescence should be a transitional period to adulthood. Solutions to solve stress problems experienced by young women are by providing support for their mental health as a whole through increasing psychological well-being, creating supportive living conditions and environments and early detection of mental health to reduce mental health disorders (Haines, 2019).

**Table 5. Relationship between Early Marriage and Anxiety in Adolescent Girls.**

Anxiety level	Score	P-Value	Correlation coefficient
Normal	4.1%	0.001	0.465
Mild	8.2%		
Moderate	16.3%		
Severe	28.6%		

The results of anxiety obtained that the relationship between early marriage and anxiety had a significance value of  $0.001 < 0.05$ . This illustrates that there is a relationship between early marriage and extreme anxiety in young women. Based on

the results of the analysis, it was found that the majority of adolescents who married early experienced very severe anxiety, as many as 21 people. The result of the correlation coefficient is 0.465, which means that there is a significant relationship between early marriage and adolescent anxiety. From the results of the study, it is known that 21 adolescents aged <19 years (42.9%) experienced very severe anxiety. This can happen because young women do not earn income, the existence of early marriage culture, an early marriage environment, last education and pre-marital education. This anxiety disorder causes feelings of excessive fear to damage the ability of adolescents to participate in daily activities (Livia Prajogo and Yudiarso, 2021).

This is also stated by Syalis and Nurwati (2020) that the anxiety experienced by early marriage families can be interpreted as mixed feelings containing fears and worries in dealing with problems that arise in their family. Anxiety in adolescents who marry early is due to adolescents experiencing a faster process of physical maturity compared to their mentality. Young women are more prone to experience anxiety when facing problems. So that teenagers who marry early tend to experience anxiety (Rahayu, 2018). This is in line with the research of Efevbera et al. (2017) which explains that early marriage makes women experience pain, sadness, anxiety, and despair. This is in accordance with research of Mangande and Lahade (2021) in that the severe anxiety experienced by a woman as a wife in an early marriage can be interpreted as a feeling that describes the fear and worry of facing problems that will occur in her marriage. Mental health disorders in adolescents who marry younger than 18 years old are caused because adolescents cannot manage emotions properly, selfishness is still high, and there is unpreparedness in marriage (Alfina, Akhyar and Matnuh, 2016; Dwi Rahmawati, 2020; Nafikadini, Insani and Luthviatin, 2021).

**Table 6. Relationship between Early Marriage and Depression in Adolescent Girls.**

Depression level	Score	P-Value	Correlation coefficient
Normal	4.1%	0.004	0.406
Mild	0%		

Moderate	24.5%
Severe	18.4%

Based on bivariate results in depression, the relationship between early marriage and depression has a significance value of  $0.004 < 0.05$ . This illustrates that there is a relationship between early marriage and severe depression in young women. Teenagers who married early mostly experienced very severe depression in the very severe category, which is 26 people. The result of the correlation coefficient is 0.406, which means that there is a low but certain relationship between early marriage and depression in young women. Based on the results of the study, it was found that 26 adolescents aged <19 years (53.1%) experienced very severe depression.

According to Walgito and Bimo (2015), getting married at an early age has two quite severe impacts, namely in terms of physical and mental aspects. If teenagers marry at a fairly young age, their emotions are not yet stable. Emotional stability generally occurs at the age of over 20 years, because at this time a person begins to enter adulthood. Adolescence can be said to just stop at the age of 19 and where a person gets married at the age of 20-24 years, at that age they can be called a young adult or lead adolescent. In those times, the transition from adolescent turmoil to stable adulthood usually begins. In this case women are almost twice as likely as men to experience very severe depression. So, it can be concluded that women with early marriage have a heavy burden at their young age ranging from emotional adjustment, environmental pressures, lack of education, economy, and raising children. Handling mental health problems, especially severe depression, requires treatment with psychological therapy (interpersonal therapy, group counseling and social support, humor therapy, cognitive therapy) and changes in healthy lifestyles, such as exercising, thinking positively, managing diet, praying, recreation and having the courage to change yourself for the better at a young age as a mother and wife (Dirgayunita, 2016). In addition, depression can be prevented from continuing or not coming back by being realistic about what we hope for and what can be done, not blaming ourselves or others, not comparing ourselves with other people or other

people's lives, the need of family support, social needs and not being alone, staying away from relationships, socializing more, and doing activities with the surrounding environment (Dirgayunita, 2016).

## CONCLUSION

From this research it would be concluded that, first, young women who had early marriages in Ngemplak District, Sleman Regency, had mental health disorders as many as 20 people (40.8%) and experienced severe stress with a p-value of 0.001. Among stress, anxiety and depression, stress has the highest correlation coefficient. So that early marriage greatly affects stress in young women. Second, young women who had early marriages in Ngemplak District, Sleman Regency, had mental health disorders as many as 21 people (42.9%) and experienced very severe anxiety with a p = value of 0.001. Third, young women who had early marriages in Ngemplak District, Sleman Regency, had mental health disorders as many as 26 people (53.1%) and experienced very severe depression with a p = value of 0.004. Fourth, subsequent research using a larger sample size should be wider in scope. Fifth, subsequent research will emerge the data on husband's characteristics, age, occupation and marriage. Last, religious offices can work together and collaborate with midwives and psychologists at the health service of the Ngemplak Community Health Center. They can conduct socialization and counseling with video media for early marriage education for young women to prevent early marriage, mental health disorders in young women, the impact of early marriage and is expected to improve cross-sectoral collaboration with PIK-R to conduct counseling as well as socialization regarding early marriage and mental health.

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