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# Exploring Determinants of Early Marriage Among Adolescent Girls in Banama Tingang, Indonesia

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### Abstract

The number of early marriages in Central Kalimantan Province, Indonesia, has increased yearly. According to data from the Indonesian Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) and Office of Population and Civil Registration (Dukcapil), 14,540 couples married early between 2017 and 2021. This problem is caused by several factors, including teenagers' knowledge, parents' education, parents' income, parents' perceptions, and support from parents and peers. This research analyzes factors related to early marriage in Banama Tingang District, Pulang Pisau Regency. This quantitative study used a case-control design conducted in Banama Tingang District, Pulang Pisau Regency, in November 2022. The sample was determined using convenience or accidental sampling methods with 200 teenagers. The results of the Chi-Square analysis showed significant associations between early marriage and parental education ( $p=0.000$ ) and parental income ( $p=0.022$ ) but not with adolescent knowledge ( $p=1.000$ ), parental perception ( $p=0.173$ ), or parental and peer support ( $p=0.252$ ). Logistic regression analysis revealed that parental education was the most dominant variable significantly associated with early marriage ( $p=0.000$ , Exp B=3.169). There was no significant relationship between adolescent knowledge, parental perception, or support from parents and peers with early marriage among adolescent girls in Banama Tingang District, Pulang Pisau Regency. In conclusion, parental education and income were found to be associated with the incidence of early marriage among young women in Banama Tingang District, Pulang Pisau Regency, with parental education being the most dominant factor.



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## 1. Introduction

Early marriage, defined as marriage to teenagers aged under 19 years, is a significant issue in Indonesia, as addressed by the country's Constitution on Marriage Number 16 of 2019, which sets the minimum age limit for marriage at 19 years for both men and women [1]. This practice is recognized as a health problem and is one of

the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). According to UNICEF data, 650 million girls are married before the age of 18 [2–4]. As of 2023, an estimated 640 million girls and women alive were married in childhood.

Indonesia has the 37th largest number of young marriages in the world out of 158 countries, placing Indonesia in the second highest ranking. Southeast Asia

after Cambodia [5, 6]. The high number of cases of early marriage in Indonesia tends to occur in rural areas; from the statistical number of early marriages with prospective brides under 19 years old reaching more than a quarter nationally, one-third of the marriages that occur are in East Java Province 39.43%, Central Java Province 36%, South Kalimantan Province 35.5%, while Central Kalimantan 20% [7, 8].

According to data from the Directorate General of Religious Justice throughout Indonesia, 23,700 couples applied for marriage dispensation in 2019, which increased to 34,000 couples in 2020. Of the total applications, 97% were granted, and 60% of those submitted were by teenage girls aged under 18 years. Including marriage age in the law has led to a paradigm shift and different views in resolving marriage dispensation problems. The difference in paradigms between the marriage age policy aimed at achieving an ideal marriage and the marriage age policy in the context of child protection has varying legal bases.

Reasons for dispensation, such as romantic relationships between children and their partners, pregnancies outside of marriage, economic problems, and customs demands often conflict with issues that arise in the child protection paradigm. These issues include children's rights to education, gender equality, and reproductive health, which ultimately lead to concerns about the best interests of the child. This conflict hinders efforts to eradicate early marriage [9].

In Central Kalimantan Province and Pulang Pisau Regency, the marital status trend for young women under 19 years remains consistent and even tends to increase yearly. According to data from the Indonesian Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) and the Office of Population and Civil Registration (Dukcapil), there were 14,540 married couples from the beginning of 2017 to 2021. The highest number of marriages was in Kapuas Regency, with 2,275 couples; the lowest was in Sukamara Regency, with 623 couples. Pulang Pisau Regency had 1,018 couples, with the highest number in Kahayan Hilir District (218 pairs) and the lowest in Jabiren District (70 pairs).

Early marriage can have significant impacts on adolescent reproductive health, which is defined as a state of complete physical, spiritual, and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or defects related to the reproductive system, function, and process in adolescents. This includes freedom from problems such as premarital sex and pregnancy [10]. One of the factors that causes early marriage is rural life and poverty. Teenage pregnancy and teenage motherhood

have a 1.5 times greater risk in rural areas than in urban areas [7, 11]. Pregnancy at an early age is also a problem for public health. It has an impact on the social environment, such as social isolation, disruption in school, limited opportunities to get the desired career, and the risk of domestic violence, both physical and sexual violence. In addition, marriage before the age of 18 will increase depression and suicidal thoughts in women [12-16]. Apart from that, early marriage will also have an impact on physical health, such as risky pregnancies. This can be seen based on the results of Noor's research that of the seven respondents who had early marriages, 6 of them experienced risky pregnancies [17].

Previous research has identified several factors associated with early marriage in various regions of Indonesia. Meylsa's study in Wonogiri Regency, Central Java, found that the risk of early marriage increases with age at menarche <12 years, gender gap, and the culture of early marriage [18]. Wulanuari's research showed that adolescent education, income, and biological relationships were related to early marriage, while parental education, income, and religiosity were not [19]. Indanah's study revealed relationships between education, knowledge, premarital sexual behavior, parental education, socio-economics, parenting patterns, religious education, and family cultural factors with early marriage, with family socio-economic factors being the most dominant [20]. Redjeki's research found associations between knowledge, educational and cultural support, and early marriage, but not with parental income [21]. Pohan's study showed no relationship between the role of parents and early marriage but found connections with knowledge, education, employment, economic status, culture, promiscuity, and mass media, with knowledge being the most dominant factor [22]. Aristya noted that sources of social support can come from parents, teachers, and friends [23].

Building upon these findings, the present study aims to investigate the factors associated with early marriage among young women in Banama Tingang District, Pulang Pisau Regency, Central Kalimantan, Indonesia. Specifically, the research objectives are to examine the relationship between adolescent knowledge, parents' education, parents' income, parental perceptions, and support from parents and peers with early marriage and to identify the most dominant factors influencing early marriage in this population. By understanding the complex interplay of individual, familial, and social determinants of early marriage, this study seeks to inform targeted interventions and policies to reduce the

prevalence of this practice, which poses serious risks to the reproductive health, well-being, and life opportunities of adolescent girls. Addressing early marriage requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders to promote girls' education, challenge harmful gender norms, and support families and communities in delaying marriage until adulthood.

## 2. Materials and Methods

This research uses quantitative methods with a case-control design. This research was conducted in Banama Tingang District, Pulang Pisau Regency, in October – November 2022. Data was collected in January 2022 at the KUA of Banama Tingang District. The population in this study was 200 young women in Banama Tingang District. Sampling in this study used the convenience sampling method. Based on the hypothesis in this study, the sample size was calculated using the hypothesis test formula for the difference between two proportions, according to Lemeshow [24]. The sampling method is carried out using the Convenience sampling or Accidental sampling method to take samples that comply with the provisions or requirements for case samples from certain populations that are easiest to reach or obtain, for example, those closest to where the researcher lives. In convenience sampling, the convenience factor is seen from affordability (place and relationship), so if you find something that fits the criteria, you can take it as a sample. The sample size was calculated using the sample size formula for hypothesis testing of the difference between two proportions. The results obtained were a sample size of 100 people with a sample size comparison between cases: control = 1; 1, so the total number of samples is 200.

The research instrument utilized a closed questionnaire with predefined answers, allowing teenage respondents to select responses aligned with their knowledge. The instrument's validity was tested using the product moment correlation formula, which involved comparing the calculated  $r$  value with the  $r$  table value. An instrument's validity was determined based on the following criteria: (1) if  $r$  count  $>$   $r$  table, the instrument was considered valid; and (2) if  $r$  count  $<$   $r$  table, the instrument was deemed invalid.

Conducting a validity test in this research involving 62 teenage respondents in Sepang District, Gunung Mas Regency, with a questionnaire totaling 14 questions. The question is declared valid if the calculated  $r$ -value  $>$   $r$  table is 0.2500, but if the calculated  $r$ -value is  $0.213 <$   $r$  table, then the question is declared invalid. Obtained from 10 questions, one was invalid, so it was excluded. Then, for the perception questions, which consisted of 2 items, all

**Table 1.** Characteristics of respondents.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<i>Age</i>		
12-14 years	46	23
15-18 years	154	77
<i>Knowledge</i>		
High	110	55
Low	90	45
<i>Parents' Income</i>		
Under UMK	124	62
Above UMK	76	38
<i>Parents Education</i>		
High	89	44.5
Low	111	55.5
<i>Parents Perceptions</i>		
Poor	59	29.5
Well	141	70.5
<i>Parents and Peer Support</i>		
Not Support	127	63.5
Support	73	36.5

were declared valid, and the questions for the parent and peer support variables, which consisted of 2 questions, were all declared valid.

The data was processed using a statistical program [25]. It was tested using the chi-square or Fisher exact statistical test for bivariate analysis and multiple logistic regression statistical tests for multivariate analysis. The research data meets the requirements of the chi-square or Fisher exact test, namely that it is categorical.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents aged 15-18 years with the number 154 (77%), highly knowledgeable with the number 110 (55%), have parents with incomes below the district minimum wage (UMK) with the number 124 (62%). Parents with low education number 111 (55.5%), the perception of good parents is 141 (70.5%), and there is parental support, and peers who do not support the number 127 (36.5%).

### 3.2. Bivariate Analysis Between Variables

The statistical test used to analyze the data obtained was the Chi-Square test with a confidence level (CI) of 95% and significance with  $p$ -value  $<$   $\alpha$  (0.05).

#### 3.2.1. The Relationship between Knowledge and Early Marriage in Young Women

According to the results presented in Table 2, there appears to be no significant association between adolescent knowledge and early marriage in Banama Tingang District, Pulang Pisau Regency, in 2022. The

**Table 2.** Results of bivariate analysis.

Variables	Early Marriage				p-value	OR value (95% CI)
	Case		Control			
	n	%	n	%		
<i>Knowledge</i>						
High	55	27.5	55	27.5	1.000	-
Low	45	22.5	45	22.5		
<i>Parents' Income</i>						
Under UMK	71	35.5	53	26.5	0.013	0.461
Above UMK	29	14.5	47	23.5		
<i>Parents Education</i>						
Low	70	35	41	20.5	0.000	0.298
High	30	15	59	29.5		
<i>Parents Perceptions</i>						
Poor	34	17	25	12.5	0.215	-
Well	66	33	75	37.5		
<i>Parents and Peer Support</i>						
Not Support	59	29.5	68	34	0.240	-
Support	41	20.5	32	16		

findings indicate that the proportion of adolescent girls with less knowledge in the case group who were married early was not substantially different from that of adolescents with good knowledge in the control group who were not married early. In this study, young women who have low knowledge in the case group and control group can be seen in Table 2. This means that young women who have good knowledge and young women who have less knowledge are equally likely to have early marriage and not have early marriage. In Banama Tingang District, Pulang Pisau Regency, teenagers who have high knowledge do not necessarily marry early, and vice versa. Teenagers who have less knowledge do not necessarily marry early because the results are the same or a tie, so everyone has the same opportunity. This is caused by various factors, such as teenagers' emotions, which are still unstable, so they easily fall into promiscuity and frequent pregnancies outside of marriage. Some young women do not want to marry early because the teenagers themselves still want to go to school to achieve their desired goals, which can limit good social interactions and also factors from parents who are stricter in controlling their children's social relationships.

Education and knowledge can not only be obtained in elementary (formal) schools. Still, they can also be obtained in the family, community, and from other media (magazines, news, etc.), for example, as outreach activities related to the impact of early marriage, postponing the age of marriage, family planning, etc. The level of parental education hurts early marriage among young women; parents with low education have a greater influence on their children to marry early. The level of education and knowledge possessed by parents is one of the factors causing early marriage. The lower the level of education of parents, the greater the influence on the

occurrence of early marriage. Parents who lack control and supervision of their teenage children's education and relationships result in teenagers often falling into promiscuity, and this can lead to undesirable things such as drugs or alcohol, free sex, and unwanted pregnancies.

This research is not in line with research conducted by Wulanuari, which states that the lower the family education level, the more marriages are found at a young age. The role of the level of education is related to the family's understanding of family life. This is supported by Ginting, who found that the lower the family's education, the more often teenage marriages and teenage pregnancies are found [26]. The results of this study are not in line with research conducted by Pohan; there is a relationship between knowledge and early marriage in young women [22]. Therefore, many interventions have been carried out by the community service team to be able to reduce the incidence of early marriage through interventions to increase knowledge, such as what has been done by Rosadi, which shows that the Youth Planning Program through a Peer Counselor Approach can be an effective prevention for reducing the incidence of Early Marriage, which consists of activities providing education, socialization and discussions, cadre training, listening counselors, and campaigns against early marriage [27].

### 3.2.2. The Relationship between Parents' Income and Early Marriage in Young Women

There is a relationship between parental income and the incidence of early marriage because parents whose income is less than the minimum wage have a greater risk of early marriage in their children compared to parents whose income is above the minimum wage. Because most parents of teenage girls have low-income levels,

parents can no longer afford to send their children to a higher level but can only afford to go to elementary or middle school in the village; this causes parents & teenagers to decide to just accept it, get married quickly, because apart from easing the burden on parents, it is also a solution to help the family's economy.

The results of this research align with research conducted by Lia in 2020; families with low socio-economic conditions are less able to ensure the continuity of their children's education; this condition makes a child who has completed basic education unable to continue their education to a higher level. Children who just stay at home are unproductive and are considered to add to the family's economic burden. One consideration for reducing the family's economic burden is to marry off children from an early age. Marrying children is considered one of the solutions to lighten the burden on parents. This is also in line with research conducted by Indiana; there is a relationship between a low parental economy and the incidence of early marriage. The research results show that a low-family economy will double the chance of early marriage [20].

### 3.2.3. *The Relationship between Parental Education and Early Marriage in Young Women*

There is a relationship between parental education and the incidence of early marriage because parents with low education have a greater risk of early marriage in their children compared to parents with high education. Low education referred to in this research is junior high school or below. In this study, parents with low education were more common, as can be seen in Table 2, meaning that parents with low education had a greater risk of early marriage for their children. Because the educational level of most of the parents of teenage girls is low, the way they care for or educate their children and how to control their children's education and relationships is very lacking; as a result, teenagers who are still emotionally unstable can fall into promiscuity and often become pregnant out of wedlock. To overcome all these problems, like it or not, the family must immediately marry off their child.

The results of this research align with research conducted by Redjeki; education is one aspect that must be had in a family; education is a support and source of earning a living to meet all needs in the household. Parents who have a low level of education often cause their teenage children to no longer go to school because education costs are unaffordable, causing many women to drop out of school and then marry, thereby shifting the burden of responsibility as parents. This is also in line with research conducted by Lia; there is a significant relationship between education and early marriage; the research

results show that samples with primary education have a 4.18 times greater risk of early marriage compared to respondents with secondary education and further education [28].

### 3.2.4. *The Relationship between Parents' Perceptions and Early Marriage in Young Women*

The research results show no relationship between parents' perceptions of the incidence of early marriage because, based on Table 2, both the control and case groups are dominated by good parental perceptions. This shows that parents' perceptions cannot be a determining factor for teenagers to marry early. Even though parents have a good perception, if circumstances force them to marry early due to a low economy, then in the end, this action will occur.

The results of this study are not in line with research conducted by Montazeri and Lee-Rife; parents are the main factor that encourages young women to marry early; marrying children at a young age is one way to maintain children's safety and protect children from promiscuity. And pregnancy. which is undesirable. Parents think that marrying off their children at a young age is one way for their children to become mature and responsible. This can happen because there may be differences in environmental or regional factors, community characteristics, and social culture, so there are differences in the results of this research [29, 30].

### 3.2.5. *The Relationship between Parental and Peer Support with Early Marriage in Young Women*

The research results show no relationship between parental and peer support on the incidence of early marriage among teenagers in Banama Tingang District, Pulang Pisau Regency, in 2022. This finding is because teenagers in Banama Tingang District get married early, not because of a lack of support from peers, but because most of it is influenced by parents in terms of income and their education. Even though peers support teenagers to avoid early marriage, these teenagers cannot make their own life decisions because their parents dominate them.

This is not in line with Husna's research, which shows a positive relationship between parents and friends regarding early marriage. The early marriage that occurred in Sleman Yogyakarta is a type of mixed marriage that occurs because of the parent's decision, but teenagers have a positive influence. This influences early marriage and choosing a partner. Apart from that, most parents in Sleman Yogyakarta choose to marry their children at a young age to prevent promiscuity and pregnancy out of wedlock so that the family's good name is maintained. Peer interaction also greatly influences

**Table 3.** Multivariate test results with all five variables.

Variable	B	SE	Wald	Df	Sig.	Exp (B)	95% CI	
							Lower	Upper
Knowledge Teenager	-.143	.310	.213	1	.644	.867	.472	1,591
Parent's Education	1.153	.310	13,806	1	.000	3,169	1,725	5,823
Parent's Income	.503	.322	2,447	1	.118	1,654	.880	3,108
Parent's Perception	.403	.342	1,393	1	.238	1,497	766	2,924
Parents and Peer Support	-.269	.325	.684	1	.408	.764	.404	1,445
Constant	-.826	.419	3,881	1	.049	.438		

teenagers' use of social media because teenagers will contact friends via social media to find information, to find fun, or just to communicate and make transactions [31].

### 3.3. Multivariate Analysis

Based on the results of the multivariate analysis presented in Table 3, the multiple logistic regression test can include 5 factors of early marriage. Exp B for each variable shows that the value for the adolescent knowledge variable is 0.867, parental education is 3.169, parental income is 1.654, parental perception is 1.497, and parental and peer support is 0.764.

It can be concluded that of the 5 (five) variables that have a dominant relationship with the incidence of early marriage in Banama Tingang District, Pulang Pisau Regency, it is parental education ( $p = 0.000$ ) with a Beta Exponent (Exp B) value of 3.169, which means Parental education plays a dominant role in the incidence of early marriage, low parental education has a 3,169 risk of marrying off their children at an early age, meaning that there is a significant relationship between parental education and the incidence of early marriage among young women in Banama Tingang District, Pulang Pisau Regency (OR= 3.169; 95% CI = 1.725-5.823;  $p=0.000$ ).

From all the problems above, it can be discussed further that the variables of adolescent knowledge, parental perception, and support from parents and peers have nothing to do with the incidence of early marriage in adolescent girls because no matter how good the adolescent's knowledge is, the perception of parents and adolescent girls has nothing to do with it. With the incidence of early marriage among young women. Regarding the support of parents and peers, it all depends on the young women themselves and their parents who will determine their path in life, their dreams, and their future, so that if teenagers can think well, positively, and maturely, then what will happen? What they will do has been carefully thought out in advance, and they are ready to face all the risks of problems that will occur later. Likewise, vice versa, no matter how little knowledge a teenager has, the perception of parents and the support of parents and

peers do not have much influence because it depends on the young woman and her parents in making decisions that are good or bad for their family regarding the incidence of early marriage. The variables of parental income level and parental education level are related to the incidence of early marriage in young women. Low parental income and education greatly influence and are interrelated with parental knowledge and the family's economic needs, so they can influence parents in making decisions. Good or bad decisions for his family, especially his child's future. To overcome all the problems above and break the chain of problems that are always related, especially in the fields of education and the economy of poor families, in this case, more serious attention is needed from all parties involved, especially the important role of regional governments and the government. Central government. The results of this research can be used as a basis for the government to formulate policies. Related to improving the community's economy and providing education to the community regardless of whether they have high or low education. So that the risk factors for early marriage can be minimized.

### 4. Conclusions

Based on the result of the study, there is no correlation between the respondents' knowledge and parents' perceptions of incidents of early marriage in the District Banama Tingang Regency Pulang Pisau in the year 2022. Then, there is the correlation between parents' income and parent education with an incident of early marriage in the District Banama Tingang Regency Pulang Pisau in 2022. Apart from that, there is a positive relationship between parental income and parental education and the incidence of early marriage in Banama Tingang District, Pulang Pisau Regency, in 2022. The magnitude of the relationship can be seen in the OR value. The OR value of the education variable is 0.298, which negatively influences the incidence of early marriage among young women. Then, the OR value of the income variable is 0.461, which has a greater negative influence on the incidence of early marriage among young women, compared to parental income, which is already above the district minimum wage.

Based on multivariate analysis using multiple logistic regression tests, parental education is the dominant variable associated with the incidence of early marriage in Banama Tingang District, Pulang Pisau Regency, in 2022. Namely with an Exp(B) value of 3.169, which means Parental education plays a dominant role in the incidence of early marriage; low parental education has a 3.169 risk of marrying off their children at an early age

The findings from this research are that there are factors of early marriage that are not related to a teenager's behavior towards early marriage. The variables of adolescent knowledge, parental perception, and support from parents and peers have no relationship with the incidence of early marriage in young women because no matter how good the adolescent's knowledge, parental perception, and support from parents and peers, it all depends on the young woman herself. They and their parents will determine their respective life paths, aspirations, and future so that if teenagers can think well, positively, and maturely, what they will do has been thought through carefully. They are ready to face all the risks of problems what will happen later. Likewise, on the other hand, no matter how little knowledge teenagers have, parents' perceptions and support from parents and peers do not have much influence because it depends on the young women and parents themselves in terms of making decisions that are good or bad for their families regarding the incidence of early marriage.

Further research is needed regarding unrelated risk factors found in this study and research conducted in other areas and with different research methods. Thus, it will be known whether the results of this research will be different from the results of subsequent research or whether they are the same.

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