

# Attitudes of girls teenagers toward early marriage due to pregnancy out of marriage

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## Abstract

**Background:** In the adolescent phase, teenagers experience very high curiosity about various things. In this modern era, teenagers can easily access information and try new things, for example, sexual relations outside marriage. Cases of early marriage due to out-of-wedlock pregnancies have increased recently. This research was conducted to determine the attitudes of young women towards early marriage due to pregnancy out of wedlock. **The Method** in this research is a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. Qualitative methods are used to explain a phenomenon in depth. The data collection technique used is literature study, namely by reviewing various literature that is relevant to the issues in this research. **Results and Discussion:** Factors causing premarital sex include low knowledge, the minimal role of parents, partner influence, friend influence, and exposure to pornographic content. Based on several previous studies, there are still young women who do not know the impact of early marriage due to pregnancy outside of marriage. **Conclusion:** The attitudes shown by young women tend to be positive if their level of knowledge is also good. Adolescence is a transition phase in individual development. Recently, cases of sex outside marriage have often occurred, which can result in early marriage due to pregnancy outside of marriage. The level of knowledge of young women regarding early marriage varies. Providing education to young women can increase the positive attitudes of teenagers regarding early marriage due to pregnancy outside of marriage.

*Keywords: Teenagers; Early-age marriage; Premarital sex*

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## 1. Introduction

Adolescence is a transitional phase when individuals integrate into adult society, an age at which children no longer feel they are below their elders, but are at the same level, at least in terms of rights (Santrock, 2007). In this phase, developmental changes occur including physical, psychological, and psychosocial development (Gainau, 2021). Adolescents explore or try various options as part of identity development. In this phase too, teenagers experience very high curiosity about various things. Facing these conditions, adolescence is a period that is quite vulnerable because curiosity that is not well controlled can push teenagers to do bad things.

The current era is a modern era, where there is the development of advanced technology so that all teenagers can access information easily from various parts of the world. This makes it easier for teenagers to find out about new things that are prohibited based on their norms or values, but teenagers are curious to know and try them, one of which is sexual relations. Teenagers' curiosity about sexual relations, one of which is caused by the majority of society's paradigm of sex education, is something that is vulgar and taboo to discuss. Easy access to information also makes teenagers vulnerable to engaging in risky behavior, including sexual behavior outside of marriage.

This also happens in Indonesia. Based on the Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey, in 2012, 44% of men and 45% of women started dating for the first time when they were teenagers. Based on these figures,

4.5% of men and 0.7% of women had sexual relations outside of marriage during their teenage years (*Pusat Data Dan Informasi Kementerian Kesehatan RI*, n.d.). This sexual behavior can result in unwanted pregnancies, which often lead to marriage at an early age.

Marriage is an important event in a person's life. According to Law Number 1 of 1974, marriage is an inner and outer bond between a man and a woman. Law Number 16 of 2019, provides a minimum age limit for marriage, namely 19 years for men and 19 years for women, with the provision that if deviations occur, dispensation can be requested for urgent reasons. Based on data from the National Commission on Violence Against Women, the dispensation for early marriage in 2021 was 59,709 (a jump from previous years), and 80% of this number was accompanied by reasons for pregnancy out of wedlock (*Ribuan Anak Hamil Di Luar Nikah, BKKBN Nilai Pengetahuan Rendah*, 2023).

Having an early marriage, especially due to an unplanned pregnancy, has physical and psychological impacts. Physical impacts include complications during childbirth, infection, heavy bleeding, and anemia, which can result in the death of the mother and baby. The psychological impacts that occur are anxiety, depression, and the possibility of experiencing physical, sexual, and emotional violence due to lack of status and power in the household.

## 2. Method

This research was conducted using descriptive methods and a qualitative approach. Qualitative methods aim to explain a phenomenon in depth. The data collection technique used in this research is literature study. Literature study is a data collection tool that explains various theories relevant to the issue being discussed by drawing from various literature (journal articles, books, etc.) that are relevant to the research issue. The data obtained was then analyzed using a descriptive method which was carried out by describing the facts followed by analysis.

## 3. Result and Discussion

### 3.1 Factors causing sexual relations outside of marriage

Many factors can encourage the phenomenon of sexual relations by teenagers outside of marriage to increase in this modern era. These factors can come from within a teenager himself (internal factors). A teenager's desire to be understood more than other people can cause teenagers to commit deviant actions, an attitude that puts them too low or always elevates themselves. If they put themselves down too much, teenagers are more likely to look for shortcuts to get things done. Several internal factors in a teenager that can lead to sex outside of marriage include knowledge, attitudes toward sexuality, lifestyle, self-control, social activities, age, and religion (Alifah et al., 2021).

Apart from that, there are also factors that come from outside a teenager (external factors). External factors have the greatest influence on a teenager's deviant behavior. Some of these external factors include:

- Minimal parental role  
Lack of parental role or supervision can make teenagers fall into free sexual practices. Casual/premarital sex can result in unwanted pregnancy. The parent's job is to think about and implement methods that are appropriate to the child's condition, not just play the role of parent with the orientation of wanting to make the child a miniature parent. So it does not open up space for children to express their freedom and the rights that children have
- Partner influence  
The next causal factor is dating status. Nowadays it is normal for teenagers to have boyfriends. Dating status can be a cause for teenagers to engage in sexual acts outside of marriage (Harnani et al., 2018).

Teenagers who have boyfriends have a higher risk of having premarital sex. Those aged 13-18 years are more susceptible to premarital sex than those above because the older they get, the more awareness they have to take care of themselves (Habte et al., 2018). The feelings of affection, a sense of belonging, and fear of being abandoned by a lover are often expressed by young women in particular when asked about the reasons for having sex before marriage (Puji et al., 2021).

- **Friends influence**  
 Teenagers' relationships with their peers are closer than with their parents, especially regarding personal matters such as attraction to the opposite sex. Teenagers admitted that they had carried out heavy sexual activities, namely kissing, hugging, and touching their lover's sensitive areas because their peers also carried out these sexual acts. More intense interaction with peers makes it easier for teenagers to follow the behavior of their playgroup in an effort to be accepted (Sari et al., 2020). Adolescents receive information and knowledge about sexual behavior from their friends (M. K. Wijaya et al., 2018). Peers are also a factor that shapes adolescents' subjective norms regarding the fairness of premarital sexual relations (Tarmidi et al., 2018). If they belong to a group that considers free sex to be normal, teenagers tend to have this belief that they are the same as their other friends.
- **Konten Pornografi**  
 In the modern era, with easy access to information, it can be misused by teenagers. One of the reasons for the intention to have sexual relations is influenced by content commonly seen in the mass media which presents more attractive visualizations of sex in the form of videos or photos that are easily accessible on the internet by people of all ages. The most dominant factor that makes teenagers engage in premarital sex is watching pornography (Nababan & Cunha, 2020). Apart from the internet, exposure to information media in the form of magazines, comics, books, and novels that show pornographic stories contributes to the desire to try having sex with one's love (Sari et al., 2020).

### *3.2 Knowledge of girls teenagers regarding early marriage*

Based on research conducted by N. Wijaya et al., (2022), young women choose to discuss early marriage with their peers and feel reluctant to discuss it with their parents. Their understanding of early marriage is a marriage carried out by someone who is underage or carried out by a teenager. Young women conclude early marriage based on observations they make in their surrounding environment. Regarding the impact of early marriage, young women agree that self-marriage can have negative impacts. According to them, early marriage can have an impact on the health of teenagers, because teenagers who marry early, if they become pregnant, are vulnerable to experiencing worsening health conditions, miscarriage, and death. Apart from that, early marriage can also result in someone who marries early being shunned by peers, becoming a topic of conversation in society, and closing themselves off from the social environment. According to the young women who were the subjects of this research, early marriage also affects marital harmony, where teenagers are considered too young to start family life, based on what they observe, although not all teenage couples who marry early experience this.

Based on research conducted by Rahman et al., (2015), one of the respondents entered into an early marriage based on their own desires. Other respondents entered into early marriage due to encouragement from the family, either in the form of encouragement to get married immediately or because of an arranged marriage. Of all respondents, they did not know the impact of early marriage.

Suryani et al., (2023), in their research, stated that teenagers' knowledge about early marriage is not good. However, after being given education regarding the impact of early marriage, and legal views on early marriage, there was an increase in knowledge regarding early marriage. Providing education about early marriage, namely before being given education, was 33.3%, and after it was 86.7%, meaning there was an increase in teenagers' knowledge before and after being given education about early marriage. Research

shows that increasing knowledge of early marriage among teenagers can prevent early marriage. Prepare and plan carefully before the wedding so that you are physically and psychologically ready after marriage.

Research by Dewi & Putro, (2020), shows that teenagers' knowledge about early marriage as a whole falls within the high criteria as indicated by an average score of 67.4%. The level of knowledge of a person, including the respondents in this study, can be influenced by various factors, both internal and external. Elementary and middle school teenagers have moderate knowledge, then high school teenagers have high knowledge. Factors that influence the level of knowledge of teenagers in this case are education and age. Adolescents who are already in high school have higher knowledge because age influences the maturity of thinking. The higher the level of education a person has, the longer the time spent studying so that more knowledge is gained.

Based on research conducted by Saragih, (2022), of the 40 young women who were the objects of research, 25 respondents (62.5%) had very good knowledge, 10 respondents (25%) had good knowledge, while 5 respondents had less knowledge. (12.5%).

Based on researches by Suwandewi, (2021), more than half of young women's knowledge is in the good knowledge category and there are still some in the sufficient and poor knowledge categories. In this study, the indicators/parameters used to measure the level of knowledge are about the meaning of early pregnancy, the pregnancy process, causes, problems, and prevention of early pregnancy. On the parameters of understanding and the process of pregnancy, the majority of respondents had sufficient knowledge, while on the parameters of causes and problems resulting from early pregnancy, respondents had good knowledge, but on prevention parameters, almost half of the respondents' knowledge was in the poor category.

### *3.3 Attitudes of girls teenagers toward early marriage due to pregnancy out of wedlock*

According to Suryani et al., (2023), there is an increase in positive attitudes of teenagers through providing education. Positive attitudes before being given education were 47% and negative attitudes were 53%, while after being given education positive attitudes were 86.7% and negative attitudes 13.3%. The results of educational research on education about early marriage increased positive attitudes from 47% to 86.7%.

According to Dewi & Putro, (2020), teenagers' attitudes regarding early marriage consist of 4 aspects, namely accepting, responding, respecting, and being responsible. Overall, the research results show that the average attitude of teenagers regarding early marriage is in a good category with an average of 75.74%. A total of 55.81% of respondents had a good attitude, 31.40% of respondents had a fairly good attitude, 11.63% of respondents had a very good attitude and 1.16% of respondents had a poor attitude. The results of research on attitudes based on aspects are 80.1% accepting, 77.5% responding, 59% appreciating, and 81.5% responsible. In the aspect of accepting, responding, and being responsible, the results obtained are not much different and are included in the good attitude category. The attitude aspect with the highest score is responsibility, 88.4% of teenagers have a good plan and do not want to marry under the age determined by law. Meanwhile, the attitude aspect with the lowest score was respected, namely 59% or in the quite good category. The aspect of respect here is about respondents being able to respect themselves and others to prevent early marriage.

Research by Saragih, (2022), shows that there are more adolescent girls who have attitudes in the better category than girls who have attitudes in the poor category. Attitude describes likes or dislikes towards objects where attitudes are often obtained from one's own experience or that of other people.

Research by Suwandewi, (2021), the knowledge of young women in the good category mostly supports efforts to prevent early pregnancy but there are also those who do not. However, in the lack of knowledge category, all respondents supported efforts to prevent early pregnancy. The attitude in this research is a statement by young women as a form of readiness to support efforts to prevent early pregnancy.

### *3.4 Analysis*

Several factors influence a person's knowledge, namely age, education, information, experience, socio-economics, and environment. Adolescents have characteristics including being selective in finding peers, having an idea of their own role, and having developed thinking abilities. Age also affects a person's grasping power and thinking patterns, the older one gets, the more a person's grasping power and thinking pattern develops.

The level of education can determine the level of a person's ability to understand and absorb the knowledge that has been obtained. Generally, education influences a learning process, the higher a person's level of education, the better their level of knowledge. Knowledge is a model that humans use to understand the world and that can be changed by information received by the human mind. The relationship between information and knowledge places more emphasis on understanding information and knowledge as a continuous process. Information is information, statements, ideas, and signs that contain values, meanings, and messages, including data, facts, and explanations that can be seen, heard read, and presented in various packages and formats in accordance with developments in information and communication technology. electronically or non-electronically.

Formally, in schools there are no subjects that discuss reproductive health, so to gain knowledge about early pregnancy, information from other sources is needed. Because knowledge is related to information, correct information about early pregnancy is something that teenagers must have.

The ease of obtaining information, especially for teenagers, certainly has both positive and negative impacts. There are many positive impacts in terms of knowledge, skills, and world development. However, the negative impact is very large, with the ease of accessing internet information, for example, negative access can arise, such as crime and pornographic content.

Attitude is a readiness to react to an object as a result of understanding the object. One of the components that form attitudes is the cognitive component. The cognitive component consists of a person's thoughts about a particular object including facts, knowledge, and beliefs that a person has regarding what is true and what applies to the attitude object. Factors that influence a person's attitude are experience, the influence of other people who are considered important, cultural influence, the influence of educational institutions, and the influence of social media.

The more sources of information that teenagers get, the better their sexual attitudes and behavior will be. Conversely, if the sources of information that teenagers get are few and half-assed, it will make teenagers' sexual behavior wrong or risk health problems such as unwanted pregnancy, and disease. sexually transmitted infections, and others. Information about sex that is incorrectly received by teenagers always has a negative effect, meaning that teenagers learn more about sexual matters through television, stimulating teenagers to be more curious and inquisitive after accessing the information and even always experimenting. Television and internet media provide pornographic images or films that give negative reactions to stimulate teenagers to respond sexually.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Adolescence is an important transition phase in individual development, where they integrate with adult society, experiencing physical, psychological, and psychosocial changes. The exploration of identity and the high level of curiosity among teenagers is influenced by technological advances that make it easier to access information, including taboo subjects. In the modern era, easy access to information also brings the risk of risky behavior, such as having sex outside of marriage. Data from the Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey shows that a number of teenagers are involved in relationships and sex at a young age, which can result in out-of-wedlock pregnancies and trigger early marriage. Early marriage, especially one triggered by out-of-wedlock pregnancy, has serious physical and psychological impacts, including the risk of complications during childbirth and the potential for physical, sexual, and emotional violence.

The increase in extramarital sex among teenagers in the modern era is influenced by many factors. Internal factors, such as the desire to be understood and self-deprecation, can encourage deviant behavior. Other internal factors, including knowledge, attitudes towards sexuality, lifestyle, self-control, social activities, age, and religion, also influence teenagers' extramarital sexual behavior. External factors, such as minimal parental role, partner influence, peer influence, and pornographic content, have a big impact. Lack of parental supervision can lead teenagers to promiscuous sex, dating status increases the risk of having sex outside of marriage, and peer influence and exposure to pornographic content also play an important role in teenagers' decisions regarding sexual behavior.

In research conducted by several researchers, young women tend to discuss early marriage more comfortably with their peers than with their parents. They identify early marriage as a marriage entered into by someone underage and are aware of its negative impacts, including health risks, loss of social support, and the impact on marital harmony. Some young women noted that the drive for early marriage could stem from personal desires, family pressure, or a lack of knowledge about negative impacts. Education about early marriage has been proven to increase teenagers' knowledge, while the level of knowledge can be influenced by factors such as education and age. Even though the majority of respondents have good knowledge, there are still those who have sufficient or insufficient knowledge about early marriage, especially in terms of prevention.

According to Suryani et al. (2023), education can increase teenagers' positive attitudes regarding early marriage. Before education, positive attitudes were 47%, after education, it increased to 86.7%. Dewi & Putro (2020) concluded the results of research on teenagers' attitudes toward early marriage, which overall was in a good category with an average of 75.74%. Saragih (2022) found that there were more young women with better attitudes than those with poor attitudes. Suwandewi (2021) stated that some young women with good knowledge support preventing early pregnancy, while those with poor knowledge, all respondents support this prevention.

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