

# Revealing the Impact of Underage Marriage: How is Household Welfare Adversely Affected?

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**ABSTRACT** – Family The journey of life through marriage is a universal experience that all individuals will undergo. This is a stage in life where the maturity of the married couple plays a significant role in successfully establishing a family. Child marriage, on the other hand, is a marital union between an individual of the male gender and an individual of the female gender who have not attained or not achieved the legal marriage-eligible age, as defined by the law. As per the regulations stipulated in Law Number 16 of 2019, Article 7, subsection (1), marriage is permissible only if both the male and female parties have attained the age of 19 (nineteen) years. It is hoped that this age restriction on marriage will make couples more prepared to undergo household marriage. The location of this research was carried out in a village in Sidoarjo district. The purpose of this paper is to provide education about the relationship between underage marriage and household welfare and explain what kind of influence it will have. This research uses a quantitative approach. Primary data was obtained directly from respondents, namely from married couples who married underage in one of the villages in Sidoarjo district. The sample in this study amounted to 30 people who entered into underage marriages, where all the population was used as respondents. The results of this study confirm that there is indeed an influence of underage marriage on household welfare.

Keywords: underage marriage, family life, marriage, maturity, age limit, household welfare.

## A. INTRODUCTION

Harmony in a marriage relationship it represents the aspiration that each married pair wants to achieve. A harmonious family can be seen in the unity, happiness, togetherness, and rare conflicts between family members. The success of creating a happy family depends on the couple's adherence to religious teachings, the implementation of their respective duties and responsibilities, mutual respect, mutual

appreciation, mutual love, good cooperation, and maintaining good communication. Marriage that occurs at a young age can affect the social and economic conditions of the couple. Generally, couples who marry at an immature age do not yet have stable jobs, so they face difficulties earning a living to meet household needs. These economic difficulties can trigger conflicts within the household, which ultimately disrupt the harmony of their relationship.

Underage marriage, experienced by young women under the age of 16, is still a phenomenon in several regions of Indonesia. The theme of underage marriage is not a new thing to discuss, even though there are many risks that must be faced by those who do it. Underage marriage is associated with time, which is very early. For people who lived in the 20th century or before, it was customary for women to marry between the ages of 13 and 16, and men between 17 and 18. However, this practice is no longer typical in today's society, it is an anomaly. A woman marrying before the age of 20 or a man before the age of 25 is considered unnatural, but it is true. Adolescents who marry before the right biological and psychological age are vulnerable to the adverse effects. In compliance with the regulations or as per the stipulations outlined in Law Number 1 of 1974, marriage is defined as a physical and psychological union between a male and a female, in the capacity of husband and wife, with the objective of establishing a joyful and lasting Domestic unit or residence guided by divine principles. Of course, this marriage is carried out legally, which has been trusted by both parties. Marriage is permitted if both parties, or men and women, are 19 years old, based on the law agreed upon in Law 16 of 2009 amending Law 1 of 1974. So underage marriage is a marriage between a man and a woman where the age of both is still below the minimum limit set by law and the prospective bride and groom are not ready physically or mentally. The prospective bride and groom do not have a

mature mentality and are also not ready in terms of material (Rahmatiah, 2016).

This means that the marital age holds significant importance and needs to be considered in conducting a marriage because being too young when a person enters into a marriage can affect the running of his household (Umah, 2020). Determining the age restriction for entering into matrimony holds great significance, namely to create family benefits and harmony in the household (Mustofa, 2019). The age limit in marriage set by the legislator is intended so that the household formed can achieve the purpose of marriage, namely achieving happiness, not only for husband and wife but also for both parents and other families. The age of maturity for a person to be ready to enter married life must be extended to 20 (twenty) years for women and 25 (twenty-five) years for men. 10 This is necessary to realize the benefit and avoid damage, both in terms of health and social responsibility (Karim, 1994). Actually, there are many negative effects of underage marriage; at that time, the bride and groom are not ready to face the responsibilities that must be carried out like adults. In fact, if married, both parties must be mature enough and ready to face problems, be they economic, spouse, or children. Meanwhile, those who marry underage are generally not mature enough to solve problems. The impact in terms of physical, psychological, and social aspects will certainly be felt by someone who marries at a young age; for example, their daily needs are not met, there is no readiness to build a household so that there is no knowledge to become a father and mother, and an environment may not necessarily accept it as a result of an unwanted marriage (married by accident). Another risk of young marriage is the occurrence of domestic violence. The risk increases when giving birth because the reproductive organs at a young age have not developed properly, which will have an impact on the death of the mother or baby. Young marriages will also result in unpreparedness in building a household because they are not mature enough in behavior and decision-making. In addition, some of the reasons for young marriage in Indonesia are low social and economic status, the culture of young marriage, forced marriage, and free sex (BKKBN, 2012). This young marriage is also influenced by arranged marriage, religion, family demands, social pressure, self-will, and education. The perception that marrying young can release burdens and problems can also be a factor. This

certainly raises questions regarding how their welfare in marriage can be realized.

Realizing a harmonious household is not an easy or fast job. The dynamics of feelings, hearts, thoughts, relationships, and interactions that take place from day to day, months, and years in the household do not always run harmoniously; sometimes husband and wife have differences of opinion, desires, feelings, thoughts, and others that sometimes cause tension in their family households. Nonetheless, the actual situation within the community where child marriages take place affects the marital harmony. The desire to wed without having attained psychological maturity, often due to not being old enough, leads to instability within the household and complicates the marriage journey. This occurrence highlights the fact that couples who marry at a young age tend to face difficulties in dealing with marital issues. There are many divorces committed by those who marry underage, where their marriage relationship is still very young.

A person whose life is prosperous is a person whose health is maintained, whose clothing, food, and shelter are sufficient, who is accepted in the association of a civilized society, and whose human rights are protected by religious, legal, and moral norms. On the other hand, to realize a prosperous marriage, namely a family that is as safe and peaceful as possible, the spouses have a crucial role in achieving a joyful and thriving family, including there is a need to enhance knowledge and comprehension of how to nurture family life in accordance with religious principles and societal regulations. This is to ensure that every member, particularly the husband and wife, can achieve a fulfilling family life, will be able to create a stable household life filled with peace and tranquillity in an effort to build a prosperous family.

In achieving this welfare, of course, it is greatly influenced by many things, one of which is the level of maturity of the husband and wife, without which it is very impossible to achieve happiness because it will affect the pattern in the household. For example, in terms of solving problems that occur in the household, it is very different when they are resolved in a good and mature way with an immature mindset. Of course, the problems that are solved do not bring solutions but have an unfavourable impact on the family situation and will certainly affect the expected family.

The concept of a sakinah family is not much different from the concept of a prosperous family that has been explicitly included in Law Number 10 of 1992 concerning Population Development and Family Welfare Development. At least the basic elements, such as legal marriage, fulfilment of material and spiritual needs, and the establishment of harmonious relationships among family members and with the community, have shown similar perceptions. The purpose of this paper is to provide education on the relationship between underage marriage and household welfare and explain what kind of influence it will have.

## B. METHOD

This research was conducted in a village in Sidoarjo district. The purpose of this paper is to provide education about the relationship between underage marriage and household welfare and explain what kind of influence it will have. This research uses a quantitative approach. Primary data was obtained directly from respondents, namely from married couples who married underage in one of these villages. The sample in this study amounted to 30 people who entered into underage marriages, where all the population was used as respondents. All of them are expected to be willing to spend their time filling out questionnaires related to the variables under study, namely underage marriage and household welfare.

Underage marriage includes economic factors, parents who do not prioritize children's education, the fact that marrying young is a habit in their place of residence, and environmental influences. Household welfare consists of understanding the meaning of a prosperous family, feeling more prosperous after marriage, being happier after marriage, fulfilling children's education, ensuring family health, and having a comfortable living space.

A Likert scale is used to find out the opinions of respondents, which are measured based on a range of 1 to 5. In addition, the analysis tool uses simple regression assisted by SPSS 26. Furthermore, there are also summary results of respondent profiles, validity tests, reliability tests, t tests, and coefficients of determination.

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the respondent data here, it is described through age, gender, occupation, and last education. From the results of the age of the respondents, it was found that all of them were

17 years old. According to gender, the same results were obtained, namely 15 respondents each. According to the average occupation of a casual daily laborer, all of them have not completed their high school education.

The minimum requirement for an instrument item to be considered valid is a validity index  $> 0.3$  for the corrected item total correlation. Based on this determination, all question items based on the variables of underage marriage and household welfare are valid because they match the results of the specified index. The SPSS program provides facilities to measure reliability with the Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ) statistical test, where it is required to be above 0 for the category of reliable instruments.

**Table 1. Reliability Test Results**

No	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of item	Status
1	Underage marriage	0.796	8	Reliable
2	Household welfare	0.783	12	Reliable

According to the output on SPSS, the findings for each Cronbach alpha owned by the underage marriage and household welfare variables as shown in Table 1 are indeed reliable. This can be seen from underage marriage reaching a Cronbach alpha of 0.796, and for household welfare, the alpha is 0.783.

**Table 2. Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	42.127	4.679		9.004	.000
X	1.614	.702	.399	2.299	.029

From the coefficient table above, the regression equation model can be seen from the coefficient (unstandardized coefficient B), namely  $Y = 42.127 + 1.614X$ . From the regression equation, it can be interpreted that the value of 42.127 is the constant value a, which indicates that if the underage marriage variable is constant or fixed, the household welfare is 42.127. If there is an increase in the underage marriage variable by a unit, then household welfare increases by 1.614. This also shows a significant effect because there is a significance value below 0.05, namely 0.029.

**Table 3. Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.399 <sup>a</sup>	.159	.129	6.18019	1.797

Based on the Model Summary table, the results of this study have a value of  $R = 0.399$ , meaning that the correlation between the variable underage marriage and household welfare is 39.9%. The correlation coefficient found at

0.399 is included in the strongly agree category. So, there is a very strong relationship between underage marriage and household welfare. The results in the model summary table show that the coefficient of determination (R square) of 0.159 means that underage marriage affects household welfare by 15.9%, while the remaining 84.1% is influenced by other variables that are unknown and not included in this regression analysis.

Underage marriage affects household welfare (Kunratih, 2019; Ridwan & Ilyas, 2022; Kahfi & Lesmana, 2023). The concept of well-being can be quite multifaceted, with individuals often holding varying viewpoints on what constitutes well-being (Darmawan, 2021). However, broadly speaking, well-being can be categorized into two types: material well-being and non-material well-being. Material welfare includes how much property the possessions we possess and the amount of earnings we receive, and anything that can be actualized. Meanwhile, non-material well-being is the type of well-being that encompasses aspects not related to physical possessions or similar items. It can include elements like one's health, for instance we feel or having children who are sholeh and sholehah. Young people still have vulnerabilities on the psychological side, with emotions that are mentally unprepared, and the level of emotion that is still high causes family resilience to erode (Fadlyana & Larasaty, 2009). In addition, if you look at the facts in the field, many of these young couples marry not on the basis of the prerequisites for family resilience itself but only physical readiness. Whereas readiness to marry means readiness to build a family, which, of course, is used as a foundation for building family resilience. Young couples should first take into account the risks they will face. Because there are so many divorces among young couples due to a lack of adequate knowledge about households, this is also inseparable from the role of interested parties in overcoming this, and of course there must be continuous cooperation as a preventive measure.

## D. CONCLUSION

From the results of research based on underage marriage and household welfare, there are several factors that cause underage marriage; namely, one of the main factors is the customs or habits of the local community. In the view of the community, marrying a child is a matter of pride. Parents will feel embarrassed if there is a

child who has not yet found a mate, but they will continue to try so that their child gets a mate. Second, a weak economy in addition, there is also no activity or unemployment, which causes their parents to decide to marry their children immediately in order to reduce the family's economic burden. The economic level of a community can be a driver of underage marriage. Communities whose economic capabilities are very weak encourage underage marriage. For example, a girl who comes from a weak economic family wants to marry quickly so that she can get out of her suffering immediately, with the hope that her husband can support the wife's family. As well as the lack of education obtained in the village.

The suggestions that the author can give regarding underage marriage, which has an impact on domestic welfare, are as follows: first, marriage can only be achieved if it is carefully planned and carried out at a certain level of maturity for both women and men. In an immature or mature soul, it is characterized by an attitude that is always unstable, easily changes its stance, has many requests, and is easily anxious. This kind of attitude demands a lot of desires but has not been matched by existing abilities, both psychological and material, so sooner or later it will definitely shake up married life. So, in addition to physical preparation, mental preparation is also needed when entering married life, so physical and mental preparation for husband-and-wife couples is needed so that the sakinah household they desire can be realized. Secondly, the duty of parents is to educate their children and prepare them so that they can prepare themselves to build a prosperous household and a happy life, not a household that is supported by those who do not know their religious and world affairs. They are married off only for material interests, for example, to get an inheritance and other cheap things. Marriages that are not based on piety have bad beginnings and bad consequences; they will only cause regret, misery, and household chaos and will not last long. This is what makes the author hope that parents will not marry their children before everything is ripe, both physically and mentally. The three cases of young marriages in Indonesia need to be addressed immediately by providing education to students who go to school so that they fully understand the impacts that will be obtained when marrying young. In addition to young marriage, there is also a need for education on how to build family resilience in

order to produce quality families so that no one interprets marriage only as having children and also has a very mature marriage readiness. In addition to physical readiness, other aspects need to be considered with the aim of producing a prosperous family.

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