



# The Motives of Teenage Marriage During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines one phenomenon in Indonesian society, especially in Bandung Regency, West Java Province, during the Covid 19 Pandemic. This phenomenon still occurs in marriages in adolescents aged 16 to 18. It is known that the COVID-19 pandemic had multiple impacts on people's lives, including economic impacts, cultural changes, and political, health, and social impacts. Even though the situation is complicated and uncertain, the pace of early marriage has remained the same. This study focuses on the motives that cause marriage in adolescents during the Covid-19 pandemic. Adolescents generally fill their lives by studying; however, teenagers in Katapang District, Bandung Regency, are filled with marriage at a young age. Whereas based on the Marriage Law, regarding the minimum age limit at marriage, namely Law Number 16 of 2019 article 7 paragraph 1, it says that "Marriage is only permitted if the man reaches the age of 19 (nineteen) years and the woman has reached the age of nineteen years". However, there is a dispensation from the court for couples who are not old enough, provided that they include very urgent reasons and complete supporting evidence submitted by both parents from the male or female side. Not all teenage marriages in Katapang District are registered at the Office of Religious Affairs. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method, data collection through observation, literature study, and in-depth interviews. The theory used is the phenomenological theory from Alfred Schutz. The results showed that the COVID-19 pandemic did not make the people in the research location experience changes in habits. Where it was found that the motive behind teenage marriage during the COVID-19 pandemic was due to traditions that were passed down from generation to generation, following the wishes of their parents, and the motives of economic life (poverty), low level of education, promiscuity, environmental influences, and pregnant before marriage.

**Keywords:** Teen Marriage, Motive Causes, COVID-19 Pandemic

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a sacred covenant that is very sacred for life between a man and a woman, so it is hoped that they can form an eternal family, help each other, love each other, and be peaceful and happy. There is a phenomenon in marriage, namely the phenomenon of an early age. Early marriage is often seen as a way out of poverty and social pressure. What adds to the problem is the divorce rate, the number of violence, and the death rate. Early marriage is a marriage between a man and a woman before the age limit and does not meet the requirements according to regulations. Law No. 16 of 2019, article 7, paragraph 1 says, "Marriage is only permitted if the man reaches the age of 19 (nineteen) years and the woman has reached the age of 19 (nineteen) years. According to the National Family Planning Coordinating Board, early marriage occurs under the reproductive age of fewer than 20 years for women and less than 25 years for men. Early marriage is vulnerable to reproductive health problems such as increasing morbidity and mortality during childbirth

and postpartum, giving birth to premature babies and low birth weight, and being quickly stressed [1]. Fundamental differences easily influence a husband and wife who are psychologically immature. They cannot adapt to differences such as food tastes, different serving methods, or eating behavior. They can experience direct conflict just because of such issues, and finally, divorce can be the best way for the young couple.

Child marriage affects not only education but also health. Awareness to avoid child marriage must continue to be raised. At the family level, the most significant role lies with the parents. Referring to Law Number 1 of 1974, it is written that parents are the decision-makers in child marriage, especially those carried out before the age of 21 years. Parents are the key to efforts to reduce the number of child marriages. Therefore education related to this is also aimed at parents. Another important thing is increasing the

legal minimum age for marriage to prevent child marriage. Ending child marriage will significantly impact girls' educational attainment and increase the expected income of women and household well-being. During the COVID-19 pandemic, people were experiencing various economic difficulties. This is one of the causes of early marriage, even though this pandemic does not increase or decreased the number of early marriages in the Katapang area of Bandung. Early marriages in Sangkanhurip Village, Katapang District, Bandung Regency, were not detected properly by the Office of Religious Affairs, Katapang District, because these couples who married at an early age are reluctant to dispensation to court because of the long bureaucracy. Therefore, the Office of Religious Affairs has very little data on early marriage. Those who have data on early Marriage are P4 officers (Assistant Marriage Registration Officers) because this officer is the one who marries early couples. According to one of the P4 officers in Sangkanhurip Village, informant M, in 2019, four pairs of brides got married early, both women who were not old enough or men. Researchers get data from the Office of Religious Affairs in Katapang District regarding someone who will marry early through the dispensation route. For further data, the researcher got it from the P4 officer (Assistant Marriage Registration Officer) and found it directly in the field.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Phenomenological Theory

Phenomenology is thinking about a phenomenon in various dynamics of subject experiences that give meaning to an event. Phenomenological research tries to explain or reveal the meaning, concept, or phenomenon of experience based on an awareness that occurs in several individuals. According to Schulz, there are relationships between people and objects in this consciousness. With that awareness, we can give meaning to the existing objects [2]. Phenomenology is carried out in natural situations, so there are no limits to interpreting or understanding the phenomena studied, and researchers are free to analyze the data obtained.

Schulz distinguishes two types of motifs, namely:

#### 1) *In Order To Motive*

Related to the reason someone takes action to create situations and conditions that are expected in the future. The individual's actions are subjective actions with a purpose, and existence cannot be separated from intersubjectivity.

#### 2) *Because Motive*

It is a factor that causes a person to take certain actions where one's actions do not just appear. However, instead go through a long process to be evaluated and consider social, economic,

cultural, and religious ethical norms based on the level of ability of one's understanding before the action is taken [3].

### 2.2. Meaning of Marriage

Marriage is one part of the life cycle that humans go through to continue their offspring. There are several meanings of marriage, including:

#### 1) The Meaning of Marriage in Indonesian Law.

Marriage is also regulated in law, namely in the Marriage Law number 1 of 1974, which states, "Marriage is an inner and outer bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife to form a happy and eternal family (household) based on God. The Almighty [4]. According to marriage legislation, the bond between a man and a woman means marriage is the same as an engagement (*verbitenis*).

#### 2) The Meaning of Marriage in Customs and Traditions

In general, Marriage in Indonesia is not only a civil agreement but also a customary engagement and, at the same time, an engagement concerning the family relationship between husband and wife, and the kinship relationship between the two families, both on the husband and wife side. It is also deal with family, kinship, and even the customs where they live. As well as carrying out their obligations to carry out the marriage following religious regulations and beliefs to become a happy family.

#### 3) The Meaning of Marriage in Islam

According to the terms of Islamic law, marriage, according to *syara*, is a contract determined by *syara* to allow fun between men and women and justify the fun of women with men. Marriage guarantees the certainty of the fundamentals of Islam, family, and establishing an honorable and dignified society. Marriage stands on the principles of upholding honor, commendable morals, sharing burdens, responsibilities, and the realization of peace of mind for husband and wife, mutual help in each family, and establishment of strong relationships across families and communities with kinship ties.

#### 4) Early Marriage

Early marriage is something (acts) of marriage that has not been in time. Early marriage is a marriage performed at a young age. It is very difficult for teenagers who undergo early marriage because they have no readiness to build a household, so they need people who show how to act and make decisions. This problem will get bigger if we look at it differently. The problem between early childhood and marriage is faced with ways or how the child's behavior, attitude, the importance of mindset, maturity, and economic readiness.

### 3. Research Methodology

This research uses a phenomenological study to analyze in more detail the reality of early Marriage in Sangkanhurip Village, Katapang District, Bandung Regency, using a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research aims to gain a general understanding of social reality from the perspective of participants (informants) [5]. In contrast, the study of phenomenology seeks to reveal the meaning of one's experience. The meaning of something experienced by someone will greatly affect how people relate to that thing [2]. According to Mujib (2015), there are two characteristics of the phenomenological approach in religion. First, this approach is a method of understanding other people's religions from a neutral perspective. In this situation, the researcher uses the person's preferences to reconstruct within and based on that person's experience. In this condition, the researcher leaves himself (epoche) and tries to build on the experiences of others. Second, in digging up data, this approach is assisted by other disciplines, such as history, archeology, philology, psychology, sociology, literary studies, language, and others. [6].

#### 3.1. Research Data Source

Informants in this study were male and female, who had married at an early age in Sangkanhurip Village, Katapang District, Bandung Regency.

#### 3.2. Data collection technique

This study uses participant observation techniques (involved observation), in-depth interviews, and document reviews. The researcher made observations involved directly looking for informants to be studied through P4 officers (Assistant Marriage Registration Officers) because P4 officers were the ones who had data on anyone who married at an early age.

#### 3.3. Data analysis technique

Data analysis techniques used in qualitative research include interview transcripts, data reduction, analysis, data interpretation, and triangulation. From the results of the data analysis, conclusions can then be drawn.

#### 3.4. Informant

The data obtained from the data sources are then analyzed for the sake of integrity and regularity, which are arranged based on the categories of informants, namely: (1) Informant profile, (2) Age, (3) Gender, (4) Education level, and others. Because this is a qualitative research methodology with a phenomenological approach, the informants of this study were five who married early and were only 16,

17, 18, and 19 years old when this research was conducted.

Table 1 Informant Data Based on Age

No	Age	Total
1	15	1
2	16	1
3	17	1
4	18	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>

Sources: Result of Research

Table 2 Informant Data Based on Gender

No.	Gender	Total
1	Male	1
2	Female	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>

Sources: Result of Research

Table 3 Informant Data Based on Education Level

No	Education Level	Total
1	Primary school	4
2	Junior high school	-
3	Senior High School	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>

## 4. Results

The causes of early marriage are very diverse, ranging from the economy, parents, association, and pregnancy out of wedlock. That's all the reason someone did early marriage. The motives that cause someone to do early Marriage in Sangkanhurip Katapang Village are:

#### 4.1. Tradition

According to the tradition regarding early marriage, parents assume that hastening marriage will prevent their children from promiscuity and committing adultery. Therefore, the reputation of his family's family is still maintained from the past until now. An informant said that it is a commonplace to postpone marriage even at an early age,

"If you're already married, hurry up even though you're still young. If you're old enough, it's even better."

Another informant said that early marriage had become a tradition in his family.

"Yes, there is a tradition that children must marry young. You also get married young, so you call it derivative. From the first brother to the second, the marriage was young, and the grandmother's family was still young. They were already married. Moreover, his mother married four times, the first brother twice, the second sister three times".

The meaning of the tradition is that marriage is a matter of mental readiness, the time is right, the effort made to find a partner, and the path that God has determined.

#### **4.2. Parents' Desire**

The informants' parents usually urge their children to get married immediately when they are already in a relationship. As experienced by the informant, who later felt sorry after getting married at an early age,

"Yes, I feel that my early marriage is because of my parents, especially when I see my husband is not working. I naturally want to divorce, but I think again about my children. It's true that at the beginning, you blame your parents, why do you have to get married when you are young. Sometimes when you feel sorry, you want to be like someone else, it's like *lelengohan*, so if you want to go anywhere, it's good to be free, not tied to your husband and children."

Parents only give the best advice, don't force them to get married young. However, if you look at the condition of dating for a long time, it is better to get married than continue dating to avoid negative things. Parents advise their children if they are mentally ready to get married immediately, but if they are not ready, they don't need to be forced because it will impact the quality of their marriage. However, one informant felt that his parents caused him to marry early because he was still very young, but his parents married him off. Meanwhile, the informant desires to pursue higher education. Parents are the most important decision-makers in their children's marriages. Decisions are made based on reasons for the future of their children. Children and their parents can discuss their marriage for the common good. With the interpersonal communication that children do with their parents, they can produce the right decisions. The desire to marry can come from parents or their children.

#### **4.3. Weak economic conditions/lack**

Economic factors cannot be denied to be the main factor in marriage because this factor will determine whether the course of a marriage can be good or bad. Someone from a family with a less-than-adequate economic level will expect an improved economy after marriage. Therefore, when you have a prospective partner whose economic level is sufficient, parents will hasten their children to marry in the hope that their economy will improve. The results show that not everyone who wants to get married thinks in advance about improving the economy because the economy can be searched together. Being middle class is enough to convince a couple to continue their intention to get married. The path God has given regarding Marriage is more of the main reason because God always gives the best for his people.

In this study, the informants felt that their economic situation was sufficient. However, nothing more, but it was enough to make them feel worthy of getting married immediately, even though the work was not yet a qualified job. Most importantly, it did not burden the family economy. This is not following Alfred Schulz's phenomenological theory about the weak economy being the cause of early marriage. Because the economic conditions of all the informants are in sufficient condition, all the answers from all informants are unrelated to the phenomenological theory of the because of motive. All of the informants felt that they were married because it was their destiny to marry at a young age, and the economic conditions of all the informants were in sufficient condition. The attitude of support from one of the informants' answers that the informant already has his income despite being a casual worker. However, the informant does not burden his parents.

#### **4.4. Low Education Level**

A low level of education affects a person's decision to marry early because of limited insight and knowledge. All the informants stated that that was how they felt. According to one informant, a low level of education is very influential, so when they are required to get married, they quit school. Another informant stated that he was forced to stop going to school because there was no money, and then he had to get married, he used to want to go to school, but there had to be a fee, entering junior high school also cost money, so my mother couldn't afford to pay the fees, so I didn't continue the school even though I wanted to. a School like that. If you go to school, you won't get married early, and it seems that the school's focus will not be a lot of dating. It was also when I used to go to junior high school, but because I continued to be in arrears in payments, I ended up dropping out of school."

#### **4.5. Environmental Influence**

The environment is one of the most influential on the behavior and association of a child. Because a child spends a lot of their daily time in the environment, they live in. The interactions that are carried out are very intense, and the influence obtained is also very large. Therefore, the environment impacts a child, but the impact can be positive or negative. Almost all of the informants admitted that the environment greatly influenced the condition of their early marriage.

"There are environmental influences, you can see that some of my friends are already married, and some of my classmates are already married and have children too. But if the children's business has not been thought about. If you get married, it looks good, and you are free and not prohibited from going anywhere."

Meanwhile, another informant said that seeing his friend was married made this informant want to get married too.

"Seeing my friends are already carrying their children, so I want to get married like that, and I want someone to take care of it too."

The environment greatly influences the informants to marry early because they see that many of their friends in the environment are married and many have children. Starting from this, the informant intended to get married immediately because he wanted to feel what his friend felt. The meaning of environmental influence is that the personality and attitude of a person will affect the purpose of his marriage. So the environment does not always affect someone to getting married. It all depends on his stance on getting married.

#### **4.6. Avoid getting pregnant out of wedlock.**

Pregnancy out of wedlock is very influential in the decision to get married early because if it happens, you inevitably have to get married even though you are not old [7]. Knowing that this has a very bad impact on a relationship, the informant chooses to justify his relationship with marriage even though he is not old enough. It is done to avoid negative things such as getting pregnant outside marriage. The meaning of getting pregnant outside of marriage is that the impact of promiscuity that often occurs is pregnant out of wedlock. It becomes a serious thing to avoid for parents because it will negatively impact their survival. So speeding up the marriage will prevent their child from promiscuity, which usually occurs in getting pregnant out of wedlock.

### **5. Discussion**

Informants marry early because they have been in a relationship with the opposite sex since they were young, so they are quick to get married even though they are underage. Marriage is a matter of mental readiness. The time is right, the effort made to find a

partner, and the path God has determined. Therefore, marriage cannot be forced by the customs or traditions of an area or from a family. This is following Alfred Schulz's phenomenological theory about the motives for early marriage due to tradition, namely the existence of a tradition that has been passed down in his family starting from his grandmother, namely allowing young marriages and underage marriages and getting used to being married several times. The informant felt that was one of the reasons he was able to get married early.

Parents are an important factor in the marriage of their children, but parents also cannot force their children to marry young. However, if you look at the condition of dating for a long time, it is better to get married than continue dating to avoid negative things. Parents are the most important decision-makers in their children's marriages. The decision is determined based on reasons that are considered for their children's future. This follows Alfred Schulz's phenomenological theory about parents being the cause of the informant's early marriage when before marriage, his parents urged him to get married even though the informant's age was still very young, namely 14 years.

All of the informants felt that they were married because it was their destiny to marry at a young age, and the economic conditions of all the informants were in sufficient condition. The attitude of support from one of the informants' answers that the informant already has his income despite being a casual worker. However, the informant does not burden his parents. The answer relates to interpersonal communication theory about the support that effective interpersonal relationships are relationships with an attitude of mutual support. The motive that causes teenagers to marry early is to believe that destiny and time mate are the cause of teenagers getting married early. The second causal motive is seeing that many of their peers are already married, so the informants want to get married even though they are not old enough according to government regulations.

### **6. Conclusion**

The motive for (causing motive) for early marriage in adolescents in Sangkanhurip Village, Katapang District, Bandung Regency is that the motive for (causing motive) from the informants tends to be inconsistent with the theory of motives or because motive (cause motive) because motive refers to past experiences. Individuals, where not all of the informants' past experiences are the cause of their marriage at an early age.

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