

EDUCATION, ETHNICITY, AND WELFARE KEY FACTORS AFFECTING FIRST AGE MARRIAGE

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ABSTRACT

One of the main performance targets of the BKKBN in 2019 is the median age of first marriage (MUKP) of 21 years. Data from the 2019 BKKBN Program Performance and Accountability Survey (SKAP) shows the MUKP is 19.2 years. BPS data shows that West Nusa Tenggara Province recorded the age of first marriage in 2019 at 20.21 years. This study aimed at revealing how some factors effect the age of first marriage in West Nusa Tenggara Province. The factors studied are ethnicity, regional status, level of welfare, education, and employment. The research was carried out using a quantitative approach with secondary data from the 2019 SKAP results, totaling 1292 respondents as samples. The data analyzed using descriptive statistics and binary logistic regression analysis. The results shows that 1) Variables that have a significant effect on the age at first marriage are ethnicity, education, and welfare status; and 2) The diversity of regional status, which is divided into urban and rural areas, and employment are unable to explain the diversity at the age of first marriage. Achieving the 21-year MUKP target requires sustained coordination and cooperation among various parties, such as through optimizing the role of religious and community leaders, communication and coordination among stakeholders, from the village to the provincial level, which is carried out in a systematic and planned manner, and lastly, increasing understanding and application of the 8 family functions can be improved through family education which is carried out in a programmed manner.

Keywords : *First Marriage Age, Education, Ethnicity, Welfare*

ABSTRAK

Salah satu target kinerja utama BKKBN pada tahun 2019 adalah median usia perkawinan pertama (MUKP) sebesar 21 tahun. Data Survei Kinerja dan Akuntabilitas Program (SKAP) BKKBN tahun 2019 menunjukkan MUKP sebesar 19,2 tahun. Data BPS menunjukkan bahwa Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat mencatat usia perkawinan pertama pada tahun 2019 sebesar 20,21 tahun. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap bagaimana beberapa faktor mempengaruhi usia perkawinan pertama di Provinsi Nusa Tenggara Barat. Faktor-faktor yang diteliti adalah suku bangsa, status daerah, tingkat kesejahteraan, pendidikan, dan pekerjaan. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan data sekunder hasil SKAP tahun 2019 yang berjumlah 1292 responden sebagai sampel. Data dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan analisis regresi logistik biner. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 1) Variabel yang berpengaruh signifikan terhadap usia perkawinan pertama adalah suku bangsa, pendidikan, dan status kesejahteraan; dan 2) Keberagaman status daerah yang terbagi menjadi perkotaan dan pedesaan, serta lapangan pekerjaan, tidak mampu menjelaskan keberagaman usia perkawinan pertama. Pencapaian target MUKP 21 tahun memerlukan koordinasi dan kerja sama yang berkelanjutan antar berbagai pihak, seperti optimalisasi peran tokoh agama dan tokoh masyarakat, komunikasi dan koordinasi antar pemangku kepentingan, dari tingkat desa hingga provinsi, yang dilakukan secara sistematis dan terencana, dan terakhir, peningkatan pemahaman dan penerapan 8 fungsi keluarga dapat ditingkatkan melalui pendidikan keluarga yang dilakukan secara terprogram.

Kata Kunci: *Usia Perkawinan Pertama, Pendidikan, Etnis, Kesejahteraan*

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INTRODUCTION

The population is one of Indonesia's main problems, where the rate of population growth is quite high and uncontrolled will give rise to various population problems. Based on the results of the 2020 Population Census, there is a downward trend in the population growth rate compared to the 2010 census period, from 1.49% previously to 1.25%. The total population recorded in SP2020 was 270.20 million, an increase of 32.57 million people in the 10-year period (BPS, SP2020 Results). This decline in the growth rate can be an indicator that the population control program has been running quite effectively. The achievement does not mean that there are no obstacles to achieve it. For West Nusa Tenggara Province, one of the main performance indicators that have not reached the target is the median age at first marriage (MUKP), which is 20.2 of the target of 21 years. This target means that it is expected that new couples will marry by the time they are 21 years old. According to the BKKBN, the ideal age for marriage and pregnancy is between the ages of 21 and 35 (<https://jabar.antaranews.com/>).

The MUKP target of 21 years still requires hard work to be achieved. BPS data shows that the average MUKP in West Nusa Tenggara Province is at 20.15 to 20.35 for the period 2016 to 2020 (<https://ntb.bps.go.id>). Although there has been an improvement trend in the last 5 years, it has not yet reached the 21-year target. And several districts have a consistent average MUKP of 19 years throughout 2016 – 2020, such as Central Lombok Regency and East Lombok Regency. The BPS data will look more positive compared to the results of SKAP families for the period 2017 to 2019, where the MUKP recorded was in the range of 19 and 20 years. Marriage age is the age when someone starts or gets married (first marriage). The problem of marriage is one part of the population problem that needs to be taken seriously, this is because marriage will cause new problems in the population sector which in turn will hinder development. Marriage, in Article 1 of Law No. 1 of 1974 is defined as a physical and spiritual bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife with to form a happy and eternal family or household based on the Belief in One Almighty God. Marriage is one of the important characteristics in the demographic map, where the status of married, single, and divorced becomes an identity that will be attached to each individual.

One of the factors that can affect the quality of marriage is the age of the partner. According to Law No. 1 of 1974 Article 7, couples can enter into marriage if the man has reached the age of 19 years and 16 years for the woman. This marriage age was later revised in Law No. 16 of 2019 to 19 years for both parties. Based on this rule, a man and a woman can only marry if they have reached the age of 19. According to the BKKBN, in the program targeting population growth rates, the ideal age for a couple to get married is 21 years. The age limit for first marriage needs to be strictly regulated because it is the basis for policy-making to reduce the rate of population growth. The age at first marriage is defined as the age at which a woman marries for the first time through legal and biological marriage ties. Biological bonding means the start of the reproductive period of fertilization. According to BPS, the age at first marriage will have a negative correlation with fertility, which means that the lower the age at first marriage, the more children will be born due to the long reproductive period (<https://sirusa.bps.go.id/sirusa/>).

The age of first marriage is the first time a husband and wife have intercourse. According to some data, the average number of first marriages in Indonesia is still quite low, namely under 20 years. First marriage under 20 years of reproductive health can be said to be too young, mentally-socially not ready, and economically also usually not well established (<https://pkpp.ristek.go.id>). The age of first marriage has a risk for childbirth experienced by women, either if they are too young or too old. The younger the age of the first marriage, the greater the risk that will be faced, not only for the mother, but also for the child to be born, as

well as for the family she will build. The same risk also applies if a woman's first marriage age is getting older. The risks posed are not only medical in nature and involve the physical safety of the mother and child, but also the quality of the human resources for the next generation they will produce (Sriudiyani & Soebijanto, 2011). On a macro level, this will lead to an increase in the population growth rate of a region.

Family is defined as the smallest unit in a society consisting of husband and wife, husband and wife and their children, father and child, or mother and child (Prihyugiarto et al., 2019). In research on marriage, the variables often raised are related to educational and employment status, housing conditions, and ownership of family assets. Housing conditions can be associated with the area where the respondent lives, such as rural or urban areas. Meanwhile, asset ownership can be associated with poverty. Some of these family characteristics are factors that can explain the variation in the age of the couple's first marriage. Utina et al (2014) who studied the influence of socio-economic factors on the age of first marriage found that education and employment status factors were significant factors. Similar findings were also shown by research conducted by Qibtiyah (2018) regarding the significant influence of education. However, data from Qibtiyah's research does not show that work and income have a significant effect on the marriage of young women in Tuban Regency, East Java.

Sahara et al (2018) found that 12.15% of early marriages in West Sumatra could be explained significantly by factors of education, poverty, and area of residence. Specifically, for the education factor, Sahara et al found that respondents with a high school education and above had a greater chance of getting married at the age of ≥ 21 years. Putri (2022) found that girls aged 17, who live in rural areas and come from poor families, are the most vulnerable group to the practice of child marriage.

Qibtiyah (2018) found that of the 3 factors thought to influence marriage age, social factors consisting of place of residence and level of education were 2 factors that had a significant effect. Meanwhile, economic and cultural factors are not the dominant factors. This research was conducted in Tuban Regency, East Java Province. The results of research conducted by Utina et al (2014) showed that education and employment status factors had a positive and significant effect at the age of first marriage. As for the domicile factor, there is not enough evidence to say that this factor has an effect on the age of first marriage in Gorontalo Province. The decision of couples of childbearing age (PUS) to marry can be influenced by many factors. Some research results show that among the influential factors are education level, employment status, knowledge (Rohmah and Sulistinah, 2013; Sudibia et al., 2015), poverty and area of residence (Sahara et al., 2018). Observing these factors, the main trigger for PUS to marry at an early age comes from within their family, both directly related to the couple and other family members.

Especially for West Nusa Tenggara Province, there has been no research that tries to reveal the factors that play a role in deciding to marry. SKAP itself presents a variety of relevant variables to be analyzed to determine the factors that influence the age of marriage, namely domicile area, ethnicity, level of welfare, occupation, and level of education. Knowing these factors will be able to assist stakeholders in determining policies and program directions to achieve targets related to MUKP. The results of this research can later become the initial basis for stakeholders to formulate evidence-based policies in realizing the vision and mission of the BKKBN.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach using an *ex-post facto* research design. The research utilizes secondary data sourced from the 2019 Program Performance and Copyright (c) 2025 CENDEKIA : Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan

Accountability Survey (SKAP) conducted by the National Population and Family Planning Board (BKKBN).¹ The geographical scope of this research is specifically limited to the West Nusa Tenggara (*West Nusa Tenggara*) province. The total population of SKAP respondents in this province was 1,583 individuals. From this population, a purposive *sample* was selected, consisting of 1,292 respondents who were married at the time of the survey. This selection criterion was essential as the primary focus of the study is the age at first marriage, making marital status a prerequisite for inclusion. The use of existing survey data allows for the analysis of relationships between variables that have already occurred, providing a robust foundation for examining the factors influencing marriage age without direct intervention from the researcher.

The variables in this study were defined and operationalized for analysis. The dependent variable is the *age at first marriage*, which was measured as a categorical variable, divided into two groups: under 21 years old and 21 years or older. This dichotomization aligns with the BKKBN's national target. The independent variables consist of five demographic and socioeconomic factors. First, *ethnicity*, categorized into Bima, Sasak, Sumbawa, and Others. Second, *regional status*, classified as *urban* or *rural*. Third, *education level*, simplified into three groups: no schooling/not yet in school, elementary/junior/senior high school, and *college*. Fourth, *employment*, categorized based on the respondent's primary occupation. Lastly, *welfare level*, which was measured and grouped into three tiers: low, medium, and high. Each variable was coded numerically to facilitate quantitative analysis and model building.

The data analysis process was conducted in two main stages using the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) software. The first stage involved descriptive statistics, where frequencies, percentages, and means were calculated to provide a comprehensive overview of the respondents' characteristics based on all the defined variables. This initial analysis was crucial for understanding the data distribution and identifying preliminary trends. The second stage involved inferential analysis using *binary logistic regression*. This statistical technique was chosen to determine the significance and magnitude of the influence of the five independent variables (*ethnicity*, *regional status*, *education*, *employment*, and *welfare*) on the binary dependent variable (age at first marriage). The model's validity was assessed using the *Hosmer-Lemeshow test*, while the explanatory power was measured by the *Nagelkerke R²* value, and the effect of each predictor was interpreted through its *odds ratio* (*Exp(B)*) value.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Characteristics of Respondents

The results of the descriptive analysis showed that the average age of the first marriage of respondents was 20.57 years, with the lowest age being 9 years, the highest being 44, and the standard deviation of 4.68. The age of first marriage is classified into 2, namely under and over 21 years, according to the targets in the main performance indicators of the BKKBN. The data shows that 726 respondents (56.2%) married under the age of 21, and 566 respondents (43.8%) married for the first time when they were 21 years or older. West Nusa Tenggara Province consists of 2 large islands, namely Lombok and Sumbawa, with 3 indigenous tribes, namely Bima, Sasak, and Sumbawa. Table 4 shows the percentage of Sasak respondents who tend to marry before they are 21 years old, namely 66% or 479 people out of 726 respondents. Although other ethnic groups have a lower tendency to marry before the age of 21, the proportion is still relatively high, namely in the range of 30 and 40 percent. The area classification in the 2019 SKAP is divided into 2, namely urban and rural areas. When viewed from the status of these regions, there is no apparent tendency for marriage under the age of 21

to occur in any of the regions. In both urban and rural areas, the proportion of marriages under the age of 21 is greater than those over 21 years.

SKAP 2019 data divides education levels into 6 groups. This level of education is simplified to only 3, namely not/not yet in school, SD/SMP/SMA, and tertiary education. Based on this level of education, there is a tendency that the lower the level of education, the greater the tendency to marry before the age of 21. The descriptive analysis result shows that when a person's education is at the tertiary level, the tendency to marry is over the age of 21, with a proportion of 85.25%. Meanwhile, for respondents who had an elementary/junior high school education or who had not attended school, the tendency was to marry before the age of 21, with a proportion of 76.7% and 61.2%. Based on their work, the data shows the proportion of those who are married under the age of 21 is more among the respondents who work as farmers/fishermen, namely 66.3%, followed by casual workers/others, and then respondents who do not/have not worked or as Housewife. Respondents who work as civil servants tend to marry after they are 21 years old. The last factor used to explain the age of first marriage is the level of welfare. It shows that the group of respondents in the low and medium welfare categories tend to marry earlier than those in the high category, namely 60.4% for the low category, 63.2% for the medium category, and 37.7% for respondents with high welfare.

The Effect of Respondent Characteristics on First Marriage Age

The results of the logistic regression analysis showed a $-2\log L$ value of 1552.424 which was significant at the 0.01 level. The expected result of this $-2\log L$ value is a value that is smaller than the Chi-Square table value. Based on the Chi-Square table value with degrees of freedom of 1275 and a significance level of 0.01, a value of 1359.182 is obtained, which means that the $-2\log L$ value is very significantly greater than the table value. These results indicate that the hypothesized model does not fit the data. Omnibus Tests results give a Chi-Square value of 218.803 with a significance of 0.000. This result means that adding independent variables to the model will improve the suitability of the model. The Nagelkerke R² value obtained was 0.209 which means that 20.9% of the variation in the variable age at first marriage can be explained by the variability of the independent variables. Although the proportion of variance described is relatively small, the results of the Goodness of Fit test based on the Hosmer-Lemeshow test show a Chi-Square value of 3.933 with a significance level of 0.787 indicating that the model is acceptable and can predict the observed value.

Table 1. Distribution of First Marriage Age Based on Regional and Ethnic Status

Territory Status	Suku	First Marriage Age (Year)								Sum	
		< 18		18 - 19		20 - 21		21 <			
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Urban	Bima	11	0,9	20	1,5	33	2,6	52	4,0	116	9,0
	Sasak	111	8,6	89	6,9	58	4,5	92	7,1	350	27,1
	Sumbawa	2	0,2	7	0,5	5	0,4	17	1,3	31	2,4
	Others	10	0,8	13	1,0	3	0,2	28	2,2	54	4,2
	Sum	134	10,4	129	10,0	99	7,7	189	14,6	551	42,6
Rural	Bima	40	3,1	46	3,6	56	4,3	89	6,9	231	17,9
	Sasak	131	10,1	86	6,7	57	4,4	102	7,9	376	29,1
	Sumbawa	6	0,5	12	0,9	10	0,8	46	3,6	74	5,7
	Others	15	1,2	11	0,9	10	0,8	24	1,9	60	4,6
	Sum	192	14,9	155	12,0	133	10,3	261	20,2	741	57,35
Total		326	25,2	284	22,0	232	18,0	450	34,8	1292	100

Table 2. Distribution of First Marriage Age Based on Education and Welfare Level

Education Level	Prosperity Level	First Marriage Age (Year)								Sum	
		< 18		18 - 19		20 - 21		21 <			
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Not/not yet in school	Low	4	0,3	4	0,3	3	0,2	3	0,2	14	1,1
	Medium	13	1,0	6	0,5	4	0,3	3	0,2	26	2,0
	High	1	0,1	0	0,0	1	0,1	1	0,1	3	0,2
	Sum	18	1,4	10	0,8	8	0,6	7	0,5	43	3,3
Elementary / Junior / Senior School	Low	73	5,7	66	5,1	42	3,3	82	6,3	263	20,4
	Medium	193	14,9	148	11,5	119	9,2	167	12,9	627	48,5
	High	41	3,2	49	3,8	41	3,2	73	5,7	204	15,8
	Sum	307	23,8	263	20,4	202	15,6	322	24,9	1094	84,7
College	Low	0	0,0	0	0,0	2	0,2	9	0,7	11	0,9
	Medium	0	0,0	2	0,2	7	0,5	18	1,4	27	2,1
	High	1	0,1	9	0,7	13	1,0	94	7,3	117	9,1
	Sum	1	0,1	11	0,9	22	1,7	121	9,4	155	12,0
Total		326	25,2	284	22,0	232	18,0	450	34,8	1292	100

Regression coefficients, Wald statistics, and their significance are presented in Table 3. Based on Wald's Chi-Square values obtained and their significance, the variables that are significant in predicting age at first marriage are ethnicity, education, and welfare level. The Region Status (Urban-Rural) and Occupational Variables show insignificant Wald values, which means that these two variables cannot predict the dependent variable well. The results of binary logistic regression analysis for the Tribe variable showed a Wald value of 59.933 with a significance of 0.000. From the significance of the regression coefficient and the Wald value for each ethnic group, a significant factor predicting the age at first marriage is the Sasak and Sumbawa tribes. For the Sasak tribe, the coefficient is -0.616 with an Exp(B) value of 0.540. With a negative coefficient value and Exp(B) which is lower than 1, it means that if other factors are held constant, then the odds for the Sasak people to marry over 21 years are reduced by 0.540. Meanwhile, the Sumbawa tribe obtained a positive and high coefficient value, namely 0.996 with an Exp(B) value of 2.707. This statistic indicates that if other factors are constant, then the chances of the Sumbawa people marrying over 21 years of age increase by 0.996.

The negative effect on the age of marriage is shown by the variable Education. Based on the regression coefficients and Exp(B) values obtained for respondents who do not/have not yet attended school and those with elementary/junior high school education. Negative regression coefficient values and Exp(B) values lower than 1 indicate that respondents with these 2 education categories have lower odds of getting married after the age of 21. The last variable that has a significant effect on the age of first marriage is Welfare Level. Similar to the level of education above, the regression coefficient obtained by respondents with low and medium welfare categories is negative with an Exp(B) value lower than 1. Based on these results it can be concluded with a 95% confidence level, if the other variables are constant, that the lower a person's level of welfare, the lower the chances of him getting married after the age of 21.

Discussion

The results of the analysis show that ethnicity has a significant effect on the age of the respondent's first marriage. The Sasak ethnic factor makes a significant negative contribution

to the age of first marriage, which means that the chances of marriage under the age of 21 are greater than the other two tribes. Meanwhile, the Sumbawa tribe tends to have a greater chance of getting married at the age of 21. This inference is relevant to BPS NTB data (2022) which shows that during the period 2018-2020, the average age of first marriage for people in 3 districts on the island of Lombok is lower than other districts/cities in the Province of NTB.

The high number of marriages under the age of 21 in NTB can be attributed to the large number of child marriage cases in this region. Rosyidah & Fajriyah (2013) explain qualitatively how the number of child marriages in Lombok is relatively high. Factors mentioned as playing a role in the case of child marriage are economic factors, moral decadence, developments in technology and means of transportation, socio-cultural pressures, and weak legal awareness. One tradition that can also explain this is the practice of attracting and psychologically creating myths that place girls in a situation of being 'forced' to enter into a marriage that may not under their expectations.

The regional status in the 2019 SKAP is divided into 2, namely urban and rural areas. The results of the analysis show that the area of residence cannot be used to explain the age at first marriage. This finding is relevant to the results of research conducted by Utina et al (2014) in Gorontalo Province. Different results were found in other areas, such as Bogor, West Java (Risya, 2011), Tuban, East Java (Qibtiyah, 2014), West Sumatra (Sahara et al., 2018), South Denpasar – Bali (Putra & Dewi, 2021), and South Sulawesi (Putri, 2023), where the area of residence has a significant effect on the age of first marriage or a couple's decision to marry.

The area of residence is not sufficiently interpreted as a specific place or area, but is also more of an economic, political, social, administrative, climatic, and geographical unit (Supriyatno et al., 2020). Urban and rural areas have different characteristics. There are at least 7 aspects that differentiate between the two, namely population density, environment, economic system, social stratification, style of life, patterns of interaction, and social solidarity (Rachman, in kompas.com, 2022). With these differences, the characteristics of people living in urban areas should be different from those living in rural areas, including the tendency to decide on the age of first marriage. However, with the insignificant effect of the status of this area on the age of first marriage, it would be interesting to identify the cause.

The decision to marry is influenced by many factors, including ownership of assets (wealth) and the human resource development index (IPM). NTB BPS data (2022) shows that during the period 2018 - 2021, the gini ratio in all districts/cities in NTB Province is at the lowest rate of 0.331 and the highest of 0.394. Meanwhile, the Gini ratio for the province is 0.377 for the period 2018 – 2021. This statistic implicitly shows that inequality in each district/city is relatively not much different, namely in the moderate category (Oshima in Saputri & Suryowati, 2018). NTB BPS data (2022) also shows that the HDI of the people of the NTB Province does not differ much between districts/cities (Figure 1). Even though the HDI in Mataram City, Bima City, and West Sumbawa Regency were relatively higher compared to other regions, the HDI in other districts was not significantly different. These two statistics show that the characteristics of people living in rural areas are not much different from those living in urban areas. These two things can be suspected as the cause of the non-significant influence of regional status on the age of the first marriage of respondents in the Province of NTB.

The results of the analysis show that the education variable has a significant effect on the age of the respondent's first marriage. These results are consistent with the findings of Rohmah (2011), Utina et al (2014), Qibtiyah (2014), Sudibia (2015), Kartika et al (2016), Kurniawati et al (2016), Febriyanti & Dewi (2017), Sahara et al (2018) , Imron et al (2020), and Putra & Dewi (2021). Suhaili & Afdal (2020) qualitatively confirm research findings that

are not much different. The results of these studies indicate that there is a very strong tendency that the lower a person's education level, the greater the chance of getting married sooner, compared to those with higher education. When the respondent's education only reaches junior high school or does not complete high school, the chances of getting married sooner will be even greater.

Table 3. Coefficients, Wald Test Result, Significance, and Odds Ratio

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Tribe			59,933	3	0,000*	
Bima	0,179	0,235	0,584	1	0,445	1,196
Sasak	-0,616	0,224	7,592	1	0,006*	0,54
Sumbawa	0,996	0,303	10,802	1	0,001*	2,707
Others (reference)						
Region			2,237	1	0,135	
Urban	-0,201	0,135	2,237	1	0,135	0,818
Rural (reference)						
Education			43,607	2	0,000*	
Unschool	-2,2	0,461	22,764	1	0,000*	0,111
Elementary/Junior/Senior	-1,823	0,281	42,148	1	0,000*	0,162
College (reference)						
Work			6,33	4	0,176	
Enemployed/Housewife	0,181	0,26	0,484	1	0,486	1,199
Farmer/Fisherman	-0,05	0,306	0,027	1	0,869	0,951
Private Sector	0,499	0,288	3,008	1	0,083	1,648
Government employee	0,381	0,513	0,553	1	0,457	1,464
Freelancer (reference)						
Prosperity Level			12,104	2	0,002*	
Low	-0,649	0,198	10,78	1	0,001*	0,522
Middle	-0,476	0,162	8,631	1	0,003*	0,621
High (reference)						
Constants	1,886	0,408	21,367	1	0,000*	6,596

Source: Research data analyzed, 2022

Education should be suspected as an indirect factor affecting the age of marriage. There are various other things that are behind this educational factor. Saptandari (2020) mentions several factors that are at the root, such as discrimination against women, the feminization of poverty, and traditions or culture that are justified by religious interpretations. In the Sasak tribe, one of the traditions that is still widely practiced is "melaik" or pulling, namely where a man "runs away" or "steals" ("paling", Sasak language, which means stealing) a woman who will become his future wife. If a woman has been stolen/stolen by the community (Sasak tribe), then the man must marry her shortly. If they are not married, then both men will be considered irresponsible and both parties in the family will feel ashamed and can be subject to customary sanctions (Handayani et al., 2021). This "interesting" tradition should be suspected as the cause of the high drop-out rate and forcing school-age children to marry early.

The results of this study indicate that the employment variable is not effective in predicting the age at first marriage in NTB. These results differ from the findings of other studies, such as Rohmah (2011), Utina et al (2014), Sudibia (2015), Kartika et al (2016), Kurniawati et al (2016), Febriyanti & Dewi (2017), and Putra & Dewi (2021)). Febriyanti & Copyright (c) 2025 CENDEKIA : Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan

Dewi (2017) even mention that work is the most dominant factor influencing women's decisions to marry young. The insignificant effect of the work variable can be seen in the studies of Kurniawati (2016), Medika (2019), Ilham (2021), and Sumiyati (2021).

The influence of the insignificant work variable can be understood from a statistical perspective in that the variation in the respondent's employment status cannot be used to explain the variation in the age of first marriage. Based on the distribution of research data, there is no visible pattern that leads to a particular trend, where respondents who do not work are significantly more likely to marry earlier than respondents who are already working. A person's decision to marry is based on certain motives, and based on the results of this study, employment status is not a person's motive in deciding to marry.

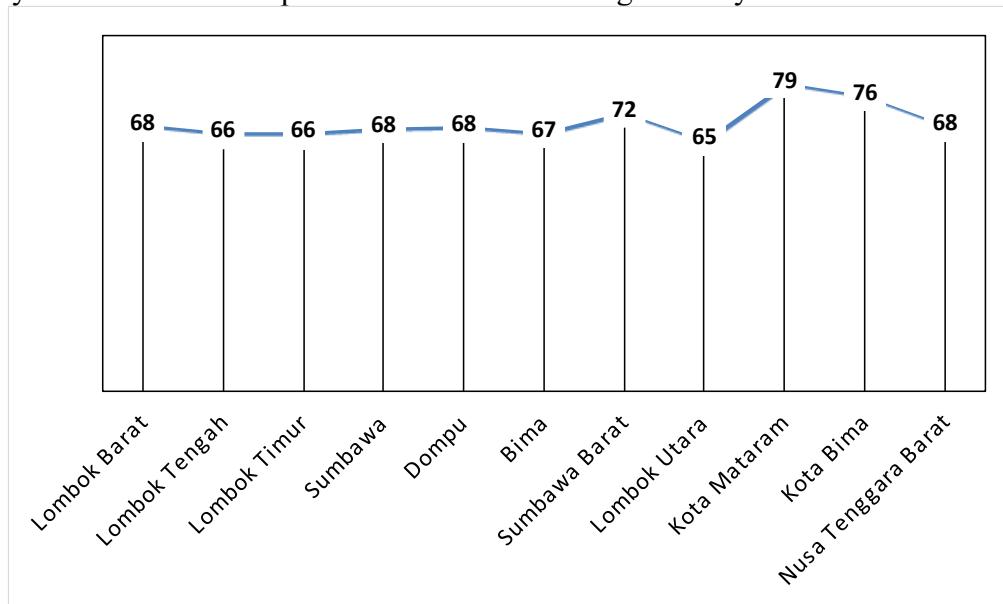


Figure 1. District/City HDI Average in NTB Province for 2018-2022

(Source: NTB BPS data)

The results of this study indicate that the level of well-being has a significant effect on the age at first marriage. As previously mentioned, the definition of influence here is that the welfare level variable can be used significantly to explain the age of first marriage, and the prediction results are reliable. These results are consistent with the research findings of Sudibia (2015), Kartika et al (2016), Kurniawati et al (2016), Imron et al (2020), Suhaili and Afdal (2020), Putra & Dewi (2021), and Princess (2022). In these studies, the level of well-being is referred to by different terms, such as poverty, parental income, family economy, wealth quintile index, income, simultaneous income, and parental asset value. These various terms can be referred to as welfare indicators according to BPS (2021).

Referring to NTB BPS data, the percentage of poor people in NTB Province for the periods of 2016, 2017 and 2018 were 16.48%, 16.07% and 14.75% respectively. This number is certainly very significant when considering the population of the Province of NTB which is at 5,320,092 people per year 2020. Even though the poverty percentage has shown a decreasing trend in the last 3 years, namely 2019-2022, the percentage is 13-14% (BPS NTB 2022) still relatively high. With these statistics, realizing the target age for first marriage over 21 years is not an easy job for the relevant stakeholders.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The conclusions that can be drawn based on the results of the analysis and discussion are: 1) Variables that have a significant effect on the age at first marriage are ethnicity, education, and welfare status; and 2) The diversity of regional status, which is divided into urban and rural areas, and employment cannot explain the diversity at the age of first marriage. Based on the results of the discussion and conclusions above, suggestions that can be given are: 1) Achieving the 21 year MUKP target requires synergy from various related parties, starting from related government agencies, religious leaders, community leaders, and the family itself as the smallest part of society; 2) Optimizing the role of religious leaders and community leaders needs to be institutionalized so that their functions can be optimized in various community empowerment programs, both formal and informal; 3) Programs aimed at educating the public need to be improved so that the quality of family education and understanding of the 8 family functions can be better; 4) It is necessary to reorient local traditions that support the achievement of the 21-year MUKP target; and 5) Strengthening the introduction of adolescent reproductive health (KRR) through formal education.

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