

Predictors of Young Adults' Desire to Marry: Evidence From Indonesian University Students

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Abstract

Young adults' factors influencing their desire to marry include both internal views on marriage and external social support system. This study aims to examine the influence of attitudes toward marriage and perceived social support on university students' desire to marry. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire involving 219 unmarried college students aged 19–24. The data analysis includes descriptive, correlational, and PLS-SEM tests. The findings reveal that that student generally held positive attitudes toward marriage. However, their desire to marry was only moderate. Positive attitudes toward marriage emerged as the strongest predictor of desire to marry, followed by social support. Negative attitudes toward marriage were associated with lower desire to marry. Family support demonstrated the strongest association among social support dimensions. Furthermore, social support indirectly influenced desire to marry through marital attitudes. These findings highlight the importance of fostering positive marital attitudes and supportive social environments to strengthen young adults' desire to marry.

Keywords: drive to marry, marital attitudes, perceived social support, young adult

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Introduction

The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) (2023) reported a downward trend in the marriage rate in Indonesia every year since 2018. In 2022, the number of marriages reached 1,705,348. However, in 2023, the number of marriages decreased to 1,577,255. This means that over the past two years, Indonesia has experienced a decline in the number of marriages of 128,093. Large provinces such as DKI Jakarta, West Java, Central Java, and East Java experienced a greater decline in the number of marriages than other provinces. The decline in the marriage rate is also accompanied by a decline in the birth rate both in Indonesia and in other countries. The World Bank (2022) states that the total fertility rate (TFR) in Indonesia has continued to decline since 1966. In the 1960s, the TFR was still at 5, while in 2022 the fertility rate in Indonesia had reached 2.15, meaning that one woman gives birth to 2–3 children during her reproductive life. Although Indonesia's total fertility rate is relatively high compared to other ASEAN countries, if it continues to decline, it will impact population growth (Data Commons, 2022; Igustin & Budiantara 2020). The phenomenon of declining marriage rates in Indonesia has been studied in recent years. Many young people believe that delaying marriage can provide them with more opportunities for personal development (Riska & Khasanah 2023). According to Shurts and Myers (2012), attitudes of marriage significantly associate with internalized information from family, friends, and societal organizations, making it crucial for individuals to evaluate young adults' attitudes toward marriage. Keldal and Seker (2022) also state that a strong belief in the importance of marriage increases the likelihood of someone prioritizing marriage in their life plans.

In addition to marital attitudes, the desire to marry can be influenced by the social support an individual receives. Social support is a two-way concept related to gender, cultural change, individual development, and the relationship between the recipient and the support provider (Sarason & Sarason, 2009). In the context of marriage, those closest to young adults can influence their desire to marry. Research by Esmaeily et al. (2019) indicates that support from family, friends, and significant others influences students' desire to marry. Positive support from family, friends, or partners can foster feelings of stability, readiness, and confidence in young adults in making long-term commitments (Rhoades et al., 2010). This finding is supported by Willoughby (2015), who state that a person's desire to marry aligns with their readiness to build long-term commitments and relationships. The desire to marry is dynamic, accompanied by changes in social, cultural, and economic conditions. In collectivist countries like Indonesia, people may feel a strong urge to marry early due to pressures from values and traditions to meet family expectations (Fulda, 2017; Himawan, 2018). Febriyanti and Dewi (2017) added that the higher the level of education, the lower the likelihood of early marriage. Furthermore, an individual's financial situation may contribute to delaying marriage plans (Izzati and Darmawan (2024).

Research on perceptions of marriage (Keshavarz et al., 2018; Krisnatuti & Oktaviani, 2010), marital perceptions on desire to marry (Fam et al., 2017), and social support on marriage intentions (Esmaeily et al., 2019; Xie & Hong, 2022) among young adults has been extensively conducted. However, these studies have focused on the influence of marital perceptions on intent to marry or the influence of social support on young adult marriage. Many studies have also examined aspects of young adults' readiness for marriage (Putriani et al., 2019; Widyawati et al., 2022). Therefore, this study combines and analyzes the predictors of young adults' desire to marry.

Method

This research used a cross-sectional study design and was conducted in Bogor City and Bogor Regency, West Java Province. The study took place at several universities in Bogor, namely IPB University, Djuanda University, Pakuan University, Ibnu Khaldun University, and Tazkia University. The study began in April-May 2025. The population in this study were third- and fourth-year students enrolled as active students in the 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 academic years at universities in Bogor City and Regency. The study population comprised third- and fourth-year students, aged 19–24, and unmarried.

Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires distributed during face-to-face meetings. The study gathered information on respondent characteristics, family characteristics, marital attitudes, social support, and intention to marry. Marital attitudes were measured using a modified version of the General Attitudes toward Marriage Scale (GAMS) developed by Park and Rosén (2014), consisting of 10 items covering positive and negative attitudes toward marriage, rated on a 7-point Likert scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.879$). Social support was assessed using a modified version of the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) by Zimet et al. (1988) comprising 12 items measuring support from family, friends, and significant others on a 7-point Likert scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.843$). Desire to marry was measured using the Desire to Marry (DTM) instrument developed by Blakemore et al. (2005), consisting of five items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.815$).

The data were processed through a series of editing, coding, scoring, data entry, and cleaning processes. The computer programs used to process and analyze the data were Microsoft Excel and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 26. Furthermore, the statistical analysis carried out was descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, and Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) analysis to determine the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables.

Results

Students and Family Characteristics

The respondents in this study were 219 university students, aged 19–24, unmarried, and muslim. The respondents consisted of 101 males (46.1%) and 118 females (53.9%). The respondents' ages ranged from 19–24 years with an average age of 21.3 years. The majority of respondents were IPB University students, amounting to 186 respondents (84.9%). The average monthly income of respondents was IDR1,705,002.00, consisting of parental pocket money and personal income. The birth order of respondents was first-born (35.2%) and last-born (32.4%). Approximately one-third of the students were currently in a romantic relationship (34.7%). Most respondents' parents were middle-aged adults, with an average age of 53.9 years for fathers and 49.9 years for mothers. Parents generally had a high school education or equivalent, with fathers primarily working as entrepreneurs or private employees, while most mothers were housewives. The average monthly family income was IDR 9.29 million, and most respondents came from intact (77.2%) and small-sized families (52.1%).

Marital Attitudes

Marital attitudes refer to an individual's beliefs about marriage, shaped by beliefs about the purpose and importance of marriage. Attitudes toward marriage consist of both positive and

negative components. The results indicate that respondents generally held positive attitudes toward marriage, viewing it as beneficial, valuable, and important in life. However, these positive perceptions were not fully accompanied by emotional readiness for marriage. While respondents tended to believe in the benefits of marriage, they were less certain that marriage necessarily leads to happiness and some still reported concerns about entering married life. Overall, the findings suggest that respondents value marriage as an institution yet remain aware of the challenges and uncertainties associated with it (Table 1).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Positive Attitudes Toward Marriage (n = 219)

Code Indicator	Likert Scale of Agreement (%)							Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
PM1 Marriage is beneficial	0.91	0.46	3.20	9.13	15.53	30.14	40.64	5.91
PM5 Marriage is a good thing	0.46	0.91	2.74	9.59	18.26	29.22	38.81	5.87
PM9 Marriage is important	2.28	2.74	4.11	14.61	18.71	30.14	27.40	5.45
PM7 Marriage makes people happy	2.74	3.20	9.59	22.83	27.40	17.81	16.44	4.88
PM6 I have no fear of marriage	12.33	15.53	21.00	17.35	17.81	9.13	6.85	3.68

Note. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree

The findings suggest that respondents generally viewed marriage positively despite reporting some concerns and uncertainties about it. While fear and doubts regarding marriage were still present among some respondents, negative perceptions of marriage as an undesirable or unhappy institution were relatively uncommon. This pattern indicates that respondents' concerns reflect uncertainty about the marital experience rather than rejection of marriage itself. (Table 2).

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Negative Attitudes Toward Marriage (n = 219)

Code Indicator	Likert Scale of Agreement (%)							Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
PM2 I am afraid of marriage	11.42	14.15	10.50	19.18	18.72	12.79	13.24	4.10
PM4 I have doubts about marriage	12.79	12.33	14.15	22.83	17.81	11.87	8.22	3.89
PM8 Most marriages are unhappy situations	8.22	17.81	28.31	24.20	10.04	6.85	4.57	3.48
PM10 Marriage makes people unhappy	10.50	22.37	25.11	59.00	10.04	3.65	1.37	3.20
PM3 People should not get married*	36.07	30.14	15.07	14.15	2.28	0.00	2.28	2.25

Note. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree

Social Support

Social support is the emotional, instrumental, informative, and affirmative support received by students in the context of marriage. Social support consists of support from family, friendship

groups, and special others. The research results showed that families were perceived as providing adequate support regarding wedding planning, both in decision-making and emotional support. However, respondents tended to discuss marriage-related concerns with their families less frequently. This finding suggests that family support is available, but open communication regarding marriage issues remains relatively limited (Table 3).

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Social Support From Family (n = 219)

Code	Indicator	Likert Scale of Agreement (%)							Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
DS4	Family willingness to help in marriage decision-making	4.11	5.02	4.11	21.00	22.83	21.92	21.00	5.03
DS2	Emotional support from family regarding future marriage planning	3.65	6.85	5.48	21.00	23.74	22.83	16.44	4.89
DS1	Family support in planning future marriage	6.39	5.48	9.13	21.46	21.46	19.63	16.44	4.71
DS3	Discussing marriage concerns with family	9.13	12.33	12.79	17.81	18.26	13.24	16.44	4.29

Note. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree

The findings indicate that friends play an important role as sources of support in matters related to marriage. Respondents generally perceived their friends as trusted discussion partners and felt comfortable sharing concerns about marriage with them. Friends were also viewed as a source of guidance when respondents felt uncertain about marriage, although support in shaping marriage-related decisions was perceived somewhat less strongly. Overall, the results suggest that peer relationships provide meaningful emotional and informational support regarding future marriage plans (Table 4).

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics of Social Support From Friends (n = 219)

Code	Indicator	Likert Scale of Agreement (%)							Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
DS7	Friends as discussion partners about marriage	4.11	4.57	3.19	16.44	22.37	26.94	22.37	5.19
DS8	Discussing marriage concerns with friends	2.74	4.11	5.93	16.44	23.74	23.28	23.74	5.19
DS6	Reliance on friends when uncertain about marriage	5.48	7.76	8.67	20.09	26.48	16.44	15.07	4.64
DS5	Friends' support in thinking about marriage	5.02	5.02	8.67	27.85	27.40	15.98	10.04	4.56

Note. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree

The findings suggest that significant others serve as an important source of support regarding marriage-related matters. Respondents generally felt comfortable sharing their thoughts and concerns about marriage with a special person and perceived that person as caring about their views. Significant others were also viewed as a source of comfort and support when discussing

marriage, highlighting their role in providing emotional reassurance and understanding in the context of future marital plans (Table 5).

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics of Social Support From Special Others (n = 219)

Code	Indicator	Likert Scale of Agreement (%)							Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
DS1	Sharing thoughts about marriage with a special person	3.19	2.74	7.76	13.24	21.92	27.40	23.74	5.25
DS1	A special person who cares about my views on marriage	3.65	2.74	6.39	13.24	28.31	22.37	23.28	5.20
DS1	A special person as a source of comfort in discussing marriage	3.65	4.11	9.13	18.26	15.07	25.11	24.66	5.11
DS9	Support from a special person regarding marriage opinions	4.57	4.57	9.13	14.15	27.40	18.26	21.92	4.98

Note. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly Disagree, 4 = Neutral, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree

Desire to Marry

The findings indicate that respondents generally viewed marriage as a potential source of happiness and expressed positive feelings toward the idea of getting married. However, marriage was not consistently regarded as a major life goal or a top priority, and respondents showed relatively low eagerness to marry. This pattern suggests that although respondents value marriage and recognize its potential benefits, many are not yet strongly motivated to pursue marriage soon (Table 6).

Table 6

Categorical Distribution of Desire to Marry

Code	Indicator	Likert Scale of Agreement (%)					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
KM4	Marriage as a source of happiness	3.2	10.0	24.2	37.0	25.6	3.72
KM2	Pride in getting married	9.6	19.6	32.0	22.8	16.0	3.16
KM3	Marriage as a major life goals	11.9	23.3	30.6	23.3	11.0	2.98
KM5	Marriage is not one of my top priorities*	21.5	23.3	24.2	21.0	10.0	2.75
KM1	Eagerness to get married	25.6	20.5	34.2	14.2	5.5	2.53

Note. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Correlation Analysis Between Variables

Correlation analysis revealed that positive attitudes toward marriage exhibited the strongest positive correlation with desire to marry, while negative attitudes showed a substantial negative correlation. Family support had the strongest association among the social support dimensions, followed by support from significant others and friends. Additionally, students who had a partner and those with older parents tended to report a higher desire to marry. Overall, the

findings indicate that both favorable marital attitudes and supportive social relationships are important correlates of young adults' desire to marry (Table 7).

Table 7
Correlation Test

Variable	Attitudes toward Marriages		Social Support			Desire to Marry
	P	N	FAM	FRI	SO	
Individual Characteristic						
Age (year)	0.021	0.030	-0.062	0.057	0.015	-0.033
Birth Order (1=first child, 0=others)	- 0.168*	0.135*	-0.075	0.023	0.002	-0.224*
Relationship Status (1=have a partner, 0=single)	0.158*	-0.140*	0.077	-0.051	0.274**	0.156*
Family Characteristic						
Father's age (year)	0.036	-0.138	0.133	-0.063	-0.063	0.161*
Mother's age (year)	0.135	-0.149*	0.052	0.001	-0.035	0.186**
Father's educational level (year)	0.109	-0.072	0.073	0.089	0.100	0.091
Mother's educational level (year)	0.162*	-0.110	0.067	0.033	0.058	0.152*
Attitudes toward Marriage						
Positive		- 0.735**	0.405**	0.093	0.261**	0.713**
Negative			-0.369**	-0.050	-0.179**	-0.621**
Social Support						
Family				0.282**	0.241**	0.388*
Friends					0.453**	0.140*
Special Others						0.280**

Note. ** = significant on $p < 0,01$ (2-tailed), * = significant on $p < 0,05$ (2-tailed), P = Positive, N = Negative, FAM = Family, FRI = Friends, SO = Special Others

The Influence of Marriage Perception and Social Support Towards Desire to Marry

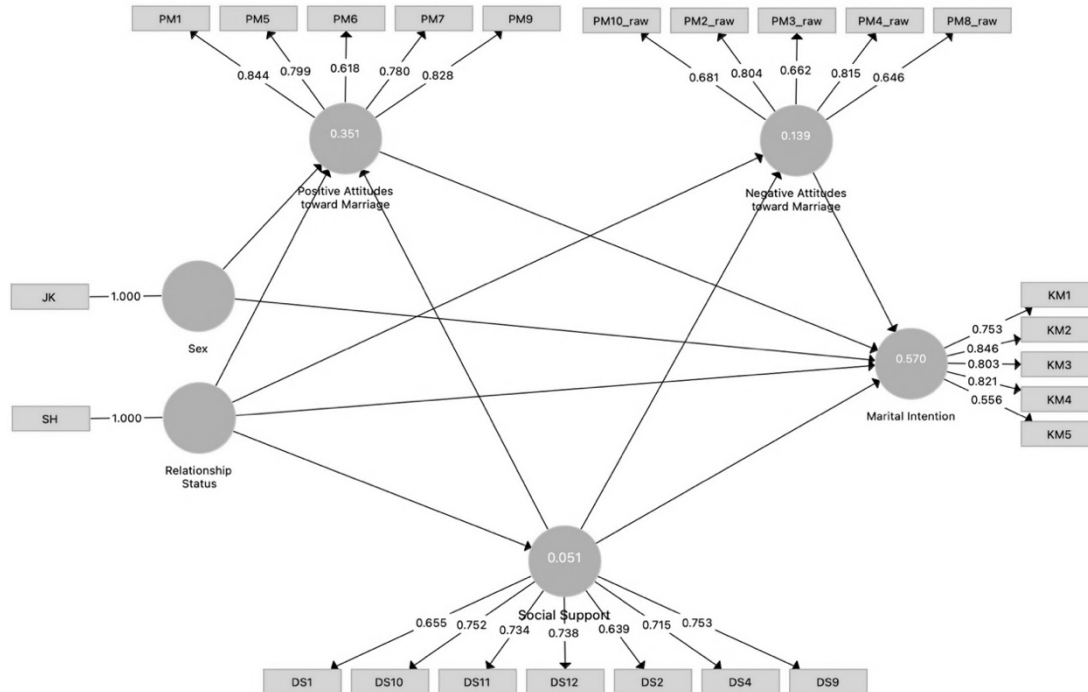
The SEM results indicate that marital intention was influenced by marital attitudes, social support, sex, and relationship status. The model explained 57.0% of the variance in marital intention ($R^2 = 0.570$), suggesting that the predictors included in the model provided substantial explanatory power. Positive attitudes toward marriage and social support contributed positively to marital intention, whereas negative attitudes toward marriage were expected to reduce marital intention (Figure 1).

Relationship status was linked to positive attitudes toward marriage, negative attitudes toward marriage, social support, and marital intention, indicating that being in a romantic relationship may shape both perceptions of marriage and the desire to marry. In contrast, sex showed direct associations with positive attitudes toward marriage and marital intention. The model also suggests that marital attitudes contribute to social support perceptions, which may further

influence marital intention, indicating a potential indirect pathway from attitudes toward marriage through social support.

Regarding the measurement model, all indicators demonstrated moderate to strong factor loadings, indicating that the observed variables adequately represented their respective latent constructs. Positive attitudes toward marriage, negative attitudes toward marriage, social support, and marital intention were therefore measured with acceptable construct validity.

Figure 1
Structural Equation Model



The reliability and validity assessment showed satisfactory results for all constructs. Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from 0.773 to 0.843, while Composite Reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.846 to 0.883, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. These results indicate good internal consistency reliability. Furthermore, all constructs achieved Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above 0.50, demonstrating adequate convergent validity. Overall, the findings suggest that the indicators reliably and validly measured marital intention, positive marital attitudes, negative marital attitudes, and social support (Table 8).

Table 8
Construct Reliability and Validity

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Desire to Marry	0.815	0.872	0.582
Positive Marital Attitudes	0.832	0.883	0.605
Negative Marital Attitudes	0.773	0.846	0.526
Social Support	0.843	0.876	0.503

The structural model showed that all hypothesized relationships were statistically significant. Positive attitudes toward marriage emerged as the strongest predictor of desire to marry,

followed by social support. In contrast, negative attitudes toward marriage were associated with a lower desire to marry. These findings indicate that students who perceive marriage more positively and receive greater social support tend to report a stronger desire to marry. Social support was also significantly associated with marital attitudes, contributing to more positive attitudes and fewer negative attitudes toward marriage. This suggests that supportive social environments may foster favorable perceptions of marriage, which in turn are linked to a stronger desire to marry. Relationship status played an important role in the model. Students who were in a romantic relationship reported higher levels of social support, more positive attitudes, fewer negative attitudes toward marriage, and a stronger desire to marry than those who were single. In addition, sex was significantly associated with both positive attitudes toward marriage and desire to marry, indicating differences between male and female students in their perceptions of and aspirations toward marriage. Overall, the findings suggest that desire to marry among university students is shaped not only by individual attitudes toward marriage but also by the social support they receive and their relationship experiences. Positive perceptions of marriage and supportive interpersonal relationships appear to be key factors in strengthening young adults' desire to marry.

Table 9
Structural Model Assessment

Path	β	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	Result
Positive Attitudes toward Marriage → Desire to Marry	0.513	6.961	0.000	Supported
Negative Attitudes toward Marriage → Desire to Marry	-0.200	2.873	0.004	Supported
Social Support → Desire to Marry	0.440	8.235	0.000	Supported
Relationship Status → Desire to Marry	0.099	2.736	0.006	Supported
Sex → Desire to Marry	-0.206	4.995	0.000	Supported
Social Support → Positive Attitudes toward Marriage	0.423	8.127	0.000	Supported
Social Support → Negative Attitudes toward Marriage	-0.368	5.874	0.000	Supported
Relationship Status → Social Support	0.225	3.035	0.003	Supported
Relationship Status → Positive Attitudes toward Marriage	0.095	2.778	0.006	Supported
Relationship Status → Negative Attitudes toward Marriage	-0.083	2.632	0.009	Supported
Sex → Positive Attitudes toward Marriage	-0.401	8.248	0.000	Supported

Note. β = standardized path coefficient

Mediation analysis showed that positive attitudes toward marriage significantly mediated the effects of social support, sex, and relationship status on desire to marry. Social support also influenced desire to marry through reduced negative attitudes toward marriage. These findings suggest that marital attitudes serve as an important pathway through which social and individual factors shape young adults' desire to marry (Table 10).

Table 10
Mediation Analysis

Path Coefficient	β	t	Sig
Social Support → Positive Attitudes toward Marriage → Desire to Marry	0.217	5.696	0.000
Social Support → Negative Attitudes toward Marriage → Desire to Marry	0.074	2.418	0.016
Sex → Positive Attitudes toward Marriage → Desire to Marry	-0.206	4.995	0.000
Relationship Status → Social Support → Positive Attitudes toward Marriage → Desire to Marry	0.049	2.680	0.008

The structural model demonstrated a moderately strong ability to explain desire to marry, accounting for 56.5% of its variance. The model also showed moderate explanatory power for positive attitudes toward marriage but relatively weak explanatory power for negative attitudes toward marriage and social support. This indicates that the proposed predictors are more effective in explaining young adults' desire to marry than in explaining their perceptions of social support or negative attitudes toward marriage (Table 11).

Table 11
Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Endogenous Variable	R^2	Sig
Desire to Marry	0.565	Moderately strong
Negative Attitudes toward Marriage	0.135	Weak
Positive Attitudes toward Marriage	0.351	Moderate
Social Support	0.051	Very weak

Discussion

Positive attitudes toward marriage emerged as the strongest predictor of desire to marry. Students who perceived marriage as beneficial, meaningful, and valuable were more likely to report a stronger desire to marry. This finding supports the study by Fam et al. (2017), which found that young adults' attitudes toward marriage significantly influence their desire to marry. When individuals believe that marriage will bring benefits to their lives, they are more likely to consider marriage as part of their future. Thus, positive evaluations of marriage serve as an important foundation for the development of a desire to marry.

Despite these positive attitudes, the descriptive results indicated that respondents' desire to marry was only moderate. Most respondents viewed marriage as a source of happiness and a meaningful life institution, yet relatively few considered marriages a top priority or expressed a strong eagerness to marry soon. This finding suggests that positive attitudes toward marriage do not necessarily translate into an immediate desire to marry. As university students, respondents may still prioritize completing their education, preparing for their careers, and achieving financial stability before entering marriage. This is consistent with the findings of Willoughby et al. (2013), who argued that beliefs regarding the appropriate timing of marriage, the importance of marriage, and readiness in terms of economic, social, and educational resources influence marriage-related decision-making. In other words, although students generally hold favorable views of marriage, they tend to consider various prerequisites before acting on their desire to marry.

The study also found that social support positively influenced desire to marry. Students who perceived greater support from family, friends, and significant others tended to report a stronger desire to marry. Social support may provide a sense of security, confidence, and readiness for marital life, thereby increasing individuals' desire to marry. This finding is consistent with Park and Rosén (2013), who emphasized that support from close social networks can shape young adults' desire for marriage.

In addition to its direct effect, social support also exerted an indirect effect through marital attitudes. The mediation analysis showed that social support increased positive attitudes toward marriage while reducing negative attitudes, which in turn enhanced desire to marry. These findings suggest that a supportive social environment not only provides emotional resources but also shapes individuals' perceptions of marriage. This result is supported by Siddaiah and Ashraf (2024), who found that parental support contributes to the development of more positive attitudes toward marriage. Among the different sources of support, family support demonstrated the strongest association with desire to marry. This finding is understandable given that, in collectivistic cultures such as Indonesia, the family continues to play a central role in the socialization of marital values and expectations regarding family life. Support from family members and significant others may provide social validation and reinforce the belief that marriage is a realistic and attainable life goal.

Romantic relationship status was also found to influence desire to marry. Students who were currently involved in a romantic relationship reported higher levels of social support, more positive attitudes toward marriage, and greater desire to marry than those who were single. Being in a romantic relationship allows individuals to experience emotional closeness, commitment, and interpersonal support firsthand, which may make marriage appear more realistic and attainable. This finding is consistent with Yoon and Park (2025), who reported that young adults involved in deep romantic relationships tend to express a stronger desire for marriage than their single counterparts. Furthermore, the mediation analysis revealed that the effect of relationship status on desire to marry operated through increased social support and more positive attitudes toward marriage.

The findings also indicated that sex significantly influenced positive attitudes toward marriage and desire to marry, suggesting that men and women differ in how they perceive marriage. This result supports the findings of Hussain and Hayee (2024), who reported gender differences in marriage-related orientations. According to Singh (2013), women tend to view marriage as a relationship grounded in love, affection, and emotional intimacy, whereas men are more likely to approach marriage from a practical perspective. These differences may influence how individuals evaluate the benefits and costs associated with marriage.

Moreover, changing gender roles, increased educational attainment, and career aspirations may also shape young adults' desire to marry. Although both men and women increasingly view marriage as a personal choice (Leonhardt et al., 2022), the considerations underlying that choice may differ. Men may be concerned about losing personal freedom after marriage, whereas women may be more concerned about the long-term success and stability of the marital relationship. For highly educated women, career aspirations may create tensions with traditional expectations associated with the roles of wife and mother (Yoon & Park, 2025), which may subsequently influence their attitudes toward marriage and their desire to marry.

Conclusion

This study found that positive attitudes toward marriage, social support, relationship status, and sex significantly influenced university students' desire to marry, with positive attitudes toward marriage emerging as the strongest predictor. Social support not only had a direct positive effect on desire to marry but also indirectly influenced it through more positive and less negative attitudes toward marriage. Family support showed the strongest association with desire to marry among the different sources of support. In addition, students who were involved in romantic relationships reported greater social support, more favourable attitudes toward marriage, and stronger desire to marry than those who were single. Although respondents generally viewed marriage positively, their desire to marry remained moderate, suggesting that educational, career, and financial considerations continue to shape marriage-related decisions among young adults. Overall, the findings highlight the important roles of marital attitudes, social support, and relationship experiences in shaping young adult's desire to marry.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

The author declares that Google Translate, an AI-assisted writing software, was used in translating, proofreading, and refining the language used in the manuscript. The usage was limited to correcting grammatical errors for accuracy and clarity. The author further declares that, apart from Google Translate, no other AI or AI-assisted technologies have been used to generate content in writing the manuscript. The ideas, design, procedures, findings, analyses, and discussion are originally written and derived from careful and systematic conduct of the research.

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