

Emotional Maturity as a Predictor of Marriage Readiness in Early Adult Women from Batak Ethnic Groups

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the relationship between emotional maturity and marriage readiness among early adult women in Batak families. Utilizing a quantitative correlational research design, the study involved 87 participants aged 21-25 years. Emotional maturity and marriage readiness were measured using the Emotional Maturity Scale (EMS) and the Criteria for Marriage Readiness Questionnaire (CMRQ), respectively. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, assumption testing, and Pearson correlation analysis. Results indicated a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.193$, $p = 0.036$) between emotional maturity and marriage readiness, suggesting that higher levels of emotional maturity are associated with higher levels of marriage readiness. The findings highlight the importance of emotional stability, progression, social adjustment, personality integration, and independence in preparing individuals for marriage. This research underscores the critical role of fostering emotional maturity to enhance marriage readiness, providing valuable insights for future studies and interventions aimed at supporting early adult women in Batak families. The study concludes that emotional maturity is a significant factor influencing marriage readiness, contributing to the successful transition into married life.

Keywords: emotional maturity, marriage readiness, early adulthood, batak community, correlational study



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INTRODUCTION

Human development encompasses various stages, and one critical phase is the transition from adolescence to early adulthood. This period is marked by the formation of a more prepared individual ready to face life's challenges. Early adulthood, defined as ages 18 to 40, is a time when individuals complete their growth and secure their place in society alongside other adults (Hurlock, 2011). During this stage, many begin to focus on preparing themselves to handle increasing responsibilities, leave home for work, integrate into society, engage in social activities, and seek life partners (Putri, 2019). According to Hurlock (2011), the developmental tasks during early adulthood include the desire to be responsible citizens, join suitable social groups, start careers, find life partners, manage households, and raise children.

Marriage is a pivotal aspect of human life, serving as a formalized union between partners based on mutual affection and commitment (Nurviana & Hendriani, 2021). It involves the exchange and reception of love, helping partners fulfill each other's needs. For a successful marriage, individuals must prepare themselves to fulfill their roles within the family and handle potential marital issues to achieve happiness (Davita, 2021). However, some early adults are not ready for marriage due to various factors, leading them to delay this significant life event. Research by Mahfuzhatillah (2018) involving 40 respondents identified six factors influencing

marriage delays among early adult women, including a desire for personal freedom (62.5%), career focus (57.5%), trauma from parental divorce (52.5%), narcissism and egocentrism (47.5%), strict parental identification (42.5%), and lack of a partner (22.5%).

In the Batak ethnic community, early adult women often express reluctance to marry due to ongoing education, career aspirations, financial instability, or mental unpreparedness, as revealed in interviews conducted on February 4, 2023. The women expressed a desire to achieve personal and professional goals before considering marriage. This trend aligns with findings by Rosalina and Ekasari (2015), who noted that women pursuing higher education are more likely to prioritize their careers over early marriage. In the Batak community, the average age of brides exceeds the legal minimum, often above 23 years, with most having completed at least a bachelor's degree (Barus, 2014). Additionally, higher social status, education, or job positions of women in Batak families typically result in higher dowry (*sinamot*) requirements from the groom's family (Simanjuntak, 2013).

Marriage in Batak culture involves elaborate traditional ceremonies, which include steps such as *marsitandaan* (family introductions), *marhori-hori dinding* (family meeting to plan the wedding), *marhusip* (extended family meeting), *marhata sinamot* (discussion of dowry), *martumpol* (engagement ceremony involving the church), *martonggoraja* (family task delegation for the wedding), *pasu-pasu* (wedding blessing in church), and the wedding feast (Novelita, Luthfie, & Fitriah, 2019). These traditions highlight the importance of readiness for marriage to ensure a harmonious and happy family life. Duval and Miller (1985) define marriage readiness as the preparedness to engage in a spousal relationship, handle new responsibilities, and manage a household and child-rearing. Carroll et al. (2009) emphasize that marriage readiness involves confidence in taking on marital responsibilities.

Emotional maturity is a crucial factor influencing marriage readiness. It encompasses emotional stability, progression, social adjustment, personality integration, and independence (Singh & Bhargava, 2005). The Batak community values openness and expressiveness in emotional expression (Suciati, 2016). Women entering marriage in the Batak community must adapt to new familial roles and environments, necessitating emotional maturity to manage potential conflicts and maintain harmony (Karunia, Salsabilah & Wahyuningsih, 2018). Singh and Bhargava (2005) describe emotional maturity as sensitivity to one's emotions and appropriate reactions to various emotional behaviors.

Previous research supports the link between emotional maturity and marriage readiness. Salsabila (2019) found a positive correlation between the two variables, indicating that higher emotional maturity contributes significantly to marriage readiness. Similarly, Fitriani and Handayani (2021) confirmed a significant positive relationship between emotional maturity and marriage readiness. Thahura (2020) noted that young women (ages 18-20) often lack emotional maturity, affecting their marriage readiness due to issues such as difficulty controlling emotions, reliance on others, and impatience. This study aims to explore the relationship between emotional maturity and marriage readiness specifically among early adult women in the Batak community, addressing a gap in the current research.

METHOD

Research Design and Variables

This study employs a quantitative correlational research design. Correlational research is conducted to understand the relationship between emotional maturity and marriage readiness among early adult women in Batak families. This study involves two variables: Independent variable (X): Emotional Maturity; Dependent variable (Y): Marriage Readiness

Operational Definitions

Emotional Maturity Emotional maturity refers to the sensitivity within an individual towards their emotions and their reactions to various emotional behaviors that are considered consistent with existing norms (Singh & Bhargava, 2005). The measurement tool used to assess emotional maturity in this study is the Emotional Maturity Scale (EMS) developed by Singh and Bhargava (2005), consisting of 48 items which were then adapted into Indonesian by the researcher. This tool is based on five aspects as outlined by Singh and Bhargava (2005): emotional stability, emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration, and independence. Higher scores indicate higher levels of emotional maturity, while lower scores indicate lower levels of emotional maturity.

Marriage Readiness Marriage readiness is defined as an individual's confidence in their readiness to marry, whether they feel prepared or not (Carroll et al., 2009). The tool used to measure marriage readiness in this study is the Criteria for Marriage Readiness Questionnaire (CMRQ) based on ten dimensions as proposed by Carroll et al. (2009): independence, interdependence, chronological transitions, biological transitions, role transitions, norm compliance, interpersonal competencies, family capacities, relationship experiences, and marriage preparation. This tool consists of 57 items and was adapted into Indonesian by Novianti, Purba, Noer, and Kendhawati (2018). However, in this study, the items have been modified to 42 items. Higher scores indicate higher levels of marriage readiness, while lower scores indicate lower levels of marriage readiness.

Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

Population The population in this study comprises early adult women in Batak families (aged 21-25 years). **Sample** According to Sugiyono (2017), a minimum sample size of 30 to 500 respondents is considered adequate. Using the Slovin formula, this study sampled 83 early adult women from Batak families. **Sampling Technique** The sampling technique employed in this study is Purposive Sampling, which is based on specific criteria, including early adult women in Batak families who are either unmarried or about to marry, currently studying, working, or not engaged in education or employment. The Slovin formula was used to determine the sample size. Thus, the sample size determined from a population of 500 is 83 respondents.

Measurement Instruments

Data collection in this study uses questionnaires to obtain information about Emotional Maturity and Marriage Readiness. Emotional Maturity Scale The Emotional Maturity Scale (EMS) developed by Singh and Bhargava (2005) measures emotional maturity based on five aspects: emotional stability, emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration, and independence. The EMS consists of 48 items with a reliability coefficient of 0.75. The items were adapted into Indonesian and modified into statements with responses on a 5-point Likert scale: 1 (Almost Never), 2 (Rarely), 3 (Sometimes), 4 (Often), and 5 (Very Often). Higher scores indicate higher emotional maturity.

Table 1. Blueprint of the Emotional Maturity Scale

No.	Aspect	Indicator	Favorable
1	Emotional Stability	No excessive reactions, sudden mood changes due to emotional situations	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
2	Emotional Progression	Adequate feelings followed by positive emotions towards the environment	11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20
3	Social Adjustment	Interaction between individual needs and social demands	21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30
4	Personality Integration	Integrating different aspects of the individual to create harmony	31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40
5	Independence	Individual's tendency to make independent decisions	41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48
	Total		48

Marriage Readiness Scale The Criteria for Marriage Readiness Questionnaire (CMRQ) designed by Carroll et al. (2009) measures marriage readiness based on ten dimensions. This tool consists of 57 items and was adapted into Indonesian by Novianti, Purba, Noer, and Kendhawati (2018), with a reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) of 0.851. The items were modified to 42 items and use a 4-point Likert scale: 1 (Not Important), 2 (Less Important), 3 (Quite Important), and 4 (Very Important). Higher scores indicate higher marriage readiness.

Table 2. Blueprint of the Marriage Readiness Scale

No.	Dimension	Indicator	Favorable
1	Independence	Feeling free before marriage, handling responsibilities	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
2	Interdependence	Good emotional control, self-regulation, long-term commitment	9, 10, 11
3	Chronological Transitions	Health considerations at certain ages	12, 13, 14

No.	Dimension	Indicator	Favorable
4	Biological Transitions	Biological aspects before marriage	15, 16
5	Role Transitions	Current and future roles, financial independence	17, 18, 19, 20
6	Norm Compliance	Adherence to norms, avoiding deviant behavior	21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27
7	Interpersonal Competencies	Listening skills, understanding partner's feelings	28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34
8	Family Capacities	Skills in cooking, child-rearing, financial management	35, 36, 37, 38
9	Relationship Experiences	Good relationship with partner, sexual knowledge	39, 40
10	Marriage Preparation	Preparations before marriage	41, 42
	Total		42

Instrument Testing

Validity and reliability tests for the questionnaires were conducted using a try-out method. Emotional Maturity Scale; Validity Test: Using IBM SPSS version 25.0, 9 out of 48 items were eliminated due to a corrected item-total correlation index < 0.3. The remaining 39 items were valid. Reliability Test: Using Cronbach’s Alpha technique, the reliability coefficient was 0.928, indicating high reliability.

Table 3. Blueprint of the Valid Emotional Maturity Scale

No.	Aspect	Indicator	Favorable
1	Emotional Stability	No excessive reactions, sudden mood changes due to emotional situations	1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10
2	Emotional Progression	Adequate feelings followed by positive emotions towards the environment	11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20
3	Social Adjustment	Interaction between individual needs and social demands	21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30
4	Personality Integration	Integrating different aspects of the individual to create harmony	31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40
5	Independence	Individual's tendency to make independent decisions	41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47
	Total		39

Marriage Readiness Scale; Validity Test: Using IBM SPSS version 25.0, 5 out of 42 items were eliminated due to a corrected item-total correlation index < 0.3. The remaining 37 items

were valid. Reliability Test: Using Cronbach's Alpha technique, the reliability coefficient was 0.916, indicating high reliability.

Table 4. Blueprint of the Valid Marriage Readiness Scale

No.	Dimension	Indicator	Favorable
1	Independence	Feeling free before marriage, handling responsibilities	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
2	Interdependence	Good emotional control, self-regulation, long-term commitment	9, 10, 11
3	Chronological Transitions	Health considerations at certain ages	12
4	Biological Transitions	Biological aspects before marriage	15, 16
5	Role Transitions	Current and future roles, financial independence	17, 18
6	Norm Compliance	Adherence to norms, avoiding deviant behavior	21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27
7	Interpersonal Competencies	Listening skills, understanding partner's feelings	28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34
8	Family Capacities	Skills in cooking, child-rearing, financial management	35, 36, 37, 38
9	Relationship Experiences	Good relationship with partner, sexual knowledge	39, 40
10	Marriage Preparation	Preparations before marriage	41, 42
	Total		37

Data Analysis Method

Data analysis was conducted after collecting all the data from the subjects. The analysis aims to calculate and answer the research questions and test the hypotheses (Sugiyono, 2017). IBM SPSS version 25.0 was used for calculations. Descriptive Analysis Descriptive analysis is a process aimed at analyzing data by describing or depicting the collected data without making general conclusions (Sugiyono, 2017). Assumption Testing Assumption testing is necessary for using correlation methods to draw accurate conclusions from the collected data. The tests conducted include: 1) Normality Test: This test checks whether the data distribution is normal. If the significance value is greater than 0.05, the data is normally distributed; otherwise, it is not (Sugiyono, 2017). 2) Linearity Test: This test determines whether there is a linear relationship between the variables (Siregar & Sofyan, 2014). Using the ANOVA table in SPSS, linearity is checked based on Deviation From Linearity. If the significance value (p) > 0.05, a linear relationship exists; if (p) < 0.05, the relationship is non-linear. 3) Hypothesis Testing This study uses the Pearson Product-Moment correlation technique to examine the relationship

between the independent variable X (Emotional Maturity) and the dependent variable Y (Marriage Readiness).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Orientation and Data Collection

The research was conducted by distributing questionnaires through Google Forms, shared via social media platforms WhatsApp and Instagram. The distribution through WhatsApp and Instagram was done with permission to share the questionnaire with individuals who met the study's criteria. Data collection took place from October 11 to October 28, 2023. There were some challenges in collecting the data, as the researcher had difficulty reaching the target number of participants within a short period. Some subjects delayed completing the questionnaire due to their busy schedules, requiring more time for participants to finish the questionnaire.

Research Participants

The respondents in this study consisted of 87 early adult women from Batak families. Based on Table 4, the age characteristics of the research participants show that the majority were 21 years old, representing 54% of the participants. The smallest group was 24 years old, comprising 4.6% of the participants. Based on Table 5, the employment status of the participants shows that the majority were continuing their education, representing 58.6%, while the smallest group was those working while continuing their education, representing 3.4%.

Table 4. Participant Characteristics by Age

Age	N	Percentage
21	47	54%
22	12	13.8%
23	12	13.8%
24	4	4.6%
25	12	13.8%
Total	87	100%

Table 5. Participant Characteristics by Employment Status

Description	N	Percentage
Working	27	31%
Continuing Education	51	58.6%
Working while Continuing Education	3	3.4%
Others (Not Working)	6	6.9%
Total	87	100%

Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

The descriptive statistics in Table 6 show that 87 participants had a minimum emotional maturity score of 78 and a maximum of 181, with a standard deviation of 20.514 and an average score of 129.71. For marriage readiness, participants had a minimum score of 86 and a maximum of 148, with a standard deviation of 13.714 and an average score of 125.36.

Emotional Maturity Variable. Table 7 shows that the emotional maturity levels of the 87 participants are divided into three categories: high, moderate, and low. In the low category, there were 0% of participants. In the moderate category, 51% of participants fell within this range, while 49% were in the high category. With an average score of 129.71, it can be said that early adult women in Batak families have a high level of emotional maturity, with 49% of participants falling into this category. **Marriage Readiness Variable.** Table 8 shows that the marriage readiness levels of the 87 participants are divided into three categories: high, moderate, and low. In the low category, there were 0% of participants. In the moderate category, 18% of participants fell within this range, while 82% were in the high category. With an average score of 125.36, it can be said that early adult women in Batak families have a high level of marriage readiness, with 82% of participants falling into this category.

Table 6 Descriptive Statistics Results

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Emotional Maturity	87	78	181	129.71
Marriage Readiness	87	86	148	125.36
Valid N (listwise)	87			

Table 7. Categorization of Emotional Maturity

Interval	Category	N	Percentage	Mean
$129 \leq x < 181$	High	43	49%	129.71
$77 \leq x < 129$	Moderate	44	51%	
$25 \leq x < 77$	Low	0	0%	
Total	87	100%		

Table 8. Categorization of Marriage Readiness

Interval	Category	N	Percentage	Mean
$111 \leq x < 148$	High	71	82%	125.36
$74 \leq x < 111$	Moderate	16	18%	
$37 \leq x < 74$	Low	0	0%	
Total	87	100%		

Assumption Test Results

Assumption tests in this study included normality and linearity tests. These tests were conducted to determine whether the collected data met the analytical assumptions required for hypothesis testing. Normality Test The normality test in this study was based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test.

Table 9. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test Calculation

	Emotional Maturity	Marriage Readiness
N	87	87
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	129.71
	Std. Deviation	20.514
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.062
	Positive	.062
	Negative	-.043
Test Statistic	.062	.093
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.200 ^{c,d}	.058 ^c

Based on the normality test results in Table 9, the emotional maturity variable has a Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test value of 0.200 with a probability (p) or significance of $p > 0.05$, indicating that the emotional maturity variable is normally distributed. The marriage readiness variable has a Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test value of 0.058 with a probability (p) or significance of $p > 0.05$, indicating that the marriage readiness variable is normally distributed. Therefore, the data is normally distributed based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test.

b. Linearity Test The linearity test aims to determine whether the independent and dependent variables have a significant linear relationship. The linearity test calculation was performed using IBM SPSS version 25.0 for Windows. From the linearity test results in Table 10, the Deviation from Linearity value is 0.998 with a significance of 0.515 ($p > 0.05$), indicating that emotional maturity and marriage readiness among early adult women in Batak families are linearly related.

Table 10. ANOVA Table for Linearity Test of Emotional Maturity and Marriage Readiness

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
KM*KE	Between Groups	(Combined)	10670.704	56	190.548
	Linearity	604.893	1	604.893	3.297
	Deviation from Linearity	10065.811	55	183.015	.998
Within Groups	5503.250	30	183.442		
Total	16173.954	86			

Hypothesis Test Results

The hypothesis test in this study used Pearson correlation statistics to examine the relationship between emotional maturity (X) and marriage readiness (Y) among early adult women in Batak families. The calculation was performed using IBM SPSS version 25.0 for Windows. Based on Table 11, the Pearson Correlation is 0.193 with a significance of 0.036 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a significant positive relationship between emotional maturity and marriage readiness among early adult women in Batak families. Thus, an increase in emotional maturity is associated with an increase in marriage readiness, and vice versa.

Table 11. Pearson Correlation

	Emotional Maturity	Marriage Readiness
Emotional Maturity	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	
	N	87
Marriage Readiness	Pearson Correlation	.193*
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.036
	N	87

The correlation test results show a significant positive relationship between emotional maturity and marriage readiness among early adult women in Batak families. The correlation analysis revealed an r-value of 0.193 with a significance level of 0.036 ($p < 0.05$), supporting the study's hypothesis. This means that the higher the emotional maturity of early adult women in Batak families, the higher their marriage readiness. This strong relationship is evident from the high average scores of both variables. This finding aligns with the study by Al'azm and Fitniwilis (2023), which demonstrated a positive and significant correlation between emotional maturity and marriage readiness, with a strong relationship level.

The effective contribution of emotional maturity to marriage readiness was 3.69%. These results indicate that emotional maturity significantly contributes to marriage readiness, making it a crucial factor influencing the readiness of early adult women in Batak families to marry. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that high emotional maturity supports increased marriage readiness among early adults (Salsabila, 2019). The study found that participants' emotional maturity level was high, with an average score of 129.71. This suggests that participants are sensitive to their emotions and capable of understanding how to react to various emotional behaviors. Additionally, participants' marriage readiness was also high, with an average score of 125.36, indicating their preparedness for future marital life.

These findings underscore the importance of emotional maturity for early adult women in Batak families to be more prepared for marriage. Emotional maturity is essential for managing marital life and is a foundation for deciding readiness to build a household with a partner (Siswandari & Astrella, 2023). The ability to control and manage emotions is a crucial factor in determining marital success (Zuhdi & Yusuf, 2022). Therefore, individuals with stable emotional maturity are better equipped to handle potential issues in married life. The study

adhered to research protocols, but some limitations were encountered. One limitation was the time required to collect data, as reaching the target number of participants was challenging, and some subjects delayed completing the questionnaire due to their busy schedules.

Implications for Counseling and Guidance

The findings of this study, which demonstrate a significant positive relationship between emotional maturity and marriage readiness among early adult women in Batak families, have several important implications for counseling and guidance services. Counselors should prioritize helping clients develop emotional maturity, recognizing its crucial role in preparing individuals for marriage. Counseling sessions can incorporate techniques and activities that promote self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and resilience. By enhancing emotional maturity, counselors can help clients build a strong foundation for their future marital relationships. Educational institutions and community organizations should offer marriage preparation programs that address both emotional maturity and practical aspects of marriage. These programs can include workshops on communication skills, conflict resolution, financial planning, and shared responsibilities. Emphasizing the importance of emotional maturity in these programs can better prepare individuals for the complexities of marital life. Given that the study participants were predominantly university students, counseling interventions should be tailored to the unique challenges faced by this demographic. For instance, counselors can provide guidance on balancing educational and career aspirations with personal relationships. Counseling can also address the pressures and expectations from family and cultural traditions, helping clients navigate these influences while making informed decisions about their readiness for marriage. Understanding that early adult women in Batak families may face specific cultural and familial expectations, counselors should be culturally sensitive and supportive of diverse family structures and dynamics. Providing a safe space for clients to explore their values, beliefs, and aspirations regarding marriage can empower them to make choices that align with their personal goals and cultural contexts. Counselors should consider offering longitudinal support to clients as they transition from singlehood to married life. This ongoing support can include follow-up sessions to address any emerging issues, reinforce emotional maturity skills, and provide guidance on managing marital challenges. By maintaining a long-term relationship with clients, counselors can help them navigate the evolving dynamics of married life and sustain their emotional well-being. Counselors should collaborate with other professionals, such as educators, financial advisors, and healthcare providers, to offer a holistic approach to marriage readiness. This interdisciplinary collaboration can ensure that clients receive comprehensive support, addressing all aspects of their readiness for marriage. Counselors should encourage clients to engage in open and honest communication with their partners and family members. Facilitating discussions about expectations, roles, and responsibilities in marriage can help clients build strong, transparent relationships that are essential for marital success. By implementing these strategies, counseling and guidance services can significantly enhance the marriage readiness of early adult women in Batak families, ensuring they are well-prepared emotionally and practically for the responsibilities and challenges of marital life. This

approach not only supports individual well-being but also contributes to the overall stability and harmony of marital relationships.

CONCLUSION

This study found a significant positive relationship between emotional maturity and marriage readiness among early adult women in Batak families, indicating that higher levels of emotional maturity are associated with higher levels of marriage readiness. The study's results, supported by a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.193 with a significance level of 0.036 ($p < 0.05$), highlight the critical role of emotional maturity in preparing individuals for marriage. The findings suggest that emotional stability, progression, social adjustment, personality integration, and independence are essential factors that contribute to an individual's readiness for marriage. This research emphasizes the importance of fostering emotional maturity to enhance marriage readiness and provides valuable insights for future studies and interventions aimed at supporting early adult women in Batak families in their journey towards successful and fulfilling marital lives.

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