

**EARLY TRANSITION TO MOTHERHOOD:
EVIDENCE FROM KANCHANABURI DEMOGRAPHIC
SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM,
THAILAND**

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Ph.D. (DEMOGRAPHY)

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JAMPAKLAY, Ph.D.**ABSTRACT**

Levels of teenage marriage and fertility are relatively high in Thailand where the overall level of fertility is below replacement level and the great majority of Thai females are delaying their marriage into their twenties. In 2006, 14 percent of Thai women aged 15-19 had married. The fertility rate for women aged 15-19 has not declined as much as other age groups. This study explores the determinants of the timing of first marriage and first pregnancy among Thai female adolescents. Longitudinal data (2000-2004) of the Kanchanaburi Demographic Surveillance System (KDSS) was used for the analysis. The study population was all female aged 15-19 and unmarried at the time of enrolment into the KDSS. Life table method and event history analysis were used in the analysis. The study found that probability of teenage marriage was highest among those who were not in school and the probability of teenage pregnancy was highest among those who did not use contraceptives. The study identifies other variables related to earlier age at marriage and pregnancy included individual, household and community characteristics. Teenage marriage and pregnancy limit the educational and occupational choices of young women and therefore the factors that contribute to early marriage and childbearing need to be brought to the attention of policymakers. Strong political commitment is needed to effectively implement Thai education policy and improve access to adolescent reproductive health services in order to reduce levels of teenage marriage and pregnancy.

**KEY WORDS: TEENAGE MARRIAGE/TEENAGE PREGNANCY//EDUCATION
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