ABSTRACT

This research attempted to determine the impacts of the socio-demographic, geographic, economic and husband's characteristics on first marriage age amongst ever married and currently married women belonging to urban and rural areas in Afghanistan. The study uses data from the 2015 Afghanistan Demographic and Health Survey (AfDHS). The AfDHS was conducted on 29,461 women but this study focused only on 28,848 ever married women aged 15-49 years. The variables of the study are; women's first marriage age, age in 5 years groups, highest education level, ethnicity, region and type of place of residence, respondent's occupation, husband's education and occupation. We use univariate, bivariate and multivariate regression analysis in this study to find out the impacts of different factors on first marriage age. One-way ANOVA test and t test are also used in the study to find the significance of dependence of first marriage age on its determinants. The bivariate and multivariate results suggest that women's first marriage age in Afghanistan tends to decrease for recent birth cohorts while education has a direct relationship with first marriage age as women marry later as their education increases. Other socio-demographic, geographical and husband's characteristics also show a significant relationship with first marriage age. The wives of highly educated men have higher mean first marriage age than those of the uneducated husbands. The economic characteristics of women did not show any significant association with first marriage age. There is a need to make policies to promote educational and occupational facilities for both males and females in Afghanistan so that marriages in very early age may be discouraged.

KEY WORDS: First marriage age, Determinants, Marriage, Women, Afghanistan, Demography.