

The Relationship Between Childfree Perceptions and Readiness for Marriage Among Muslim Generation Z: A Correlational Study Based on the Perspective of Islamic Family Law

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Abstract: This study examines the correlation between perceptions of the childfree phenomenon and marriage readiness among Muslim Generation Z, situated within an Islamic family law framework. The childfree phenomenon, defined as the voluntary decision not to have children within marriage has increasingly emerged in Indonesian discourse, yet empirical evidence regarding its relationship with marriage readiness remains limited. This study employed a quantitative correlational design. A total of 151 respondents meeting the inclusion criteria (Muslim, aged 18–26 years, unmarried) were recruited via purposive sampling. Data were collected using a four-point Likert scale measuring childfree perceptions and marriage readiness, and analyzed using SPSS through reliability testing, descriptive statistics, normality testing, and Spearman's rho correlation. Both instruments showed acceptable reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.813 and 0.770, respectively). Normality tests indicated non-normal distributions, justifying the use of nonparametric analysis. Results showed no significant correlation between childfree perceptions and marriage readiness ($p = 0.110$; $p = 0.177 > 0.05$), with a negligible effect size. These findings indicate that childfree perceptions do not function as a significant predictor of marriage readiness in this sample, and suggest that marriage readiness is determined by multidimensional factors, including emotional, psychological, financial, and spiritual dimensions that extend beyond reproductive attitudes. This study contributes to the empirical literature on Islamic family law by demonstrating that shifts in social discourse around childfree do not directly translate into altered orientations toward marriage among Muslim Generation Z. Practical implications for premarital education programs are discussed.

Keywords: childfree, marriage readiness, Muslim Generation Z

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji hubungan antara persepsi terhadap fenomena *childfree* dan kesiapan pernikahan pada Generasi Z Muslim. Fenomena *childfree* sebagai pilihan untuk tidak memiliki anak dalam pernikahan menjadi wacana yang semakin berkembang di kalangan generasi muda, sehingga penting untuk dikaji keterkaitannya dengan kesiapan individu dalam membangun kehidupan rumah tangga. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain korelasional. Subjek penelitian berjumlah 151 responden yang memenuhi kriteria, yaitu beragama Islam, berusia 18–26 tahun, dan belum

menikah. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan kuesioner skala Likert empat tingkat yang mengukur persepsi terhadap *childfree* dan kesiapan pernikahan. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan perangkat lunak SPSS dengan uji reliabilitas, statistik deskriptif, uji normalitas, dan uji korelasi *Spearman*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kedua instrumen memiliki reliabilitas yang baik dengan nilai *Cronbach's Alpha* sebesar 0,813 untuk skala persepsi *childfree* dan 0,770 untuk skala kesiapan pernikahan. Hasil uji normalitas menunjukkan bahwa data tidak berdistribusi normal, sehingga analisis dilanjutkan menggunakan teknik nonparametrik. Uji hipotesis menunjukkan bahwa tidak terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara persepsi terhadap *childfree* dan kesiapan pernikahan ($p = 0,110$; $p > 0,05$). Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa persepsi terhadap *childfree* tidak berfungsi sebagai prediktor yang signifikan terhadap kesiapan pernikahan pada sampel penelitian ini, dengan kekuatan hubungan yang sangat lemah (effect size diabaikan). Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa kesiapan pernikahan merupakan konstruk multidimensional yang ditentukan oleh berbagai faktor, meliputi kesiapan emosional, psikologis, finansial, dan spiritual yang melampaui sikap terhadap reproduksi. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada literatur empiris hukum keluarga Islam dengan menunjukkan bahwa pergeseran wacana sosial seputar *childfree* tidak serta-merta mengubah orientasi pernikahan Generasi Z Muslim. Implikasi praktis bagi program pendidikan pranikah didiskusikan.

Kata Kunci: *childfree*, kesiapan pernikahan, Generasi Z Muslim

Introduction

Marriage in Islam is a fundamental institution that holds a strategic position in shaping social order and ensuring the continuity of the Muslim community. The Qur'an positions marriage as a *mitsāqan ghalīẓan*—a strong and sacred bond—that not only legitimizes the relationship between men and women but also establishes a family system grounded in the values of responsibility, worship, and generational continuity.¹

The orientation of marriage toward generational continuity is emphasized in the Qur'an, Surah An-Nahl, verse 72, which states that through the bond of marriage, Allah bestows offspring as part of His blessings. This principle is reinforced by a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, which

¹ Insani, S., & Putri, R. (2025). The Concepts of Mitsāqan Ghalīẓan and 'āsyirūhunna bil-ma'rūf in Surah an-Nisa: 19–21 Regarding the Issue of "Marriage Is Frightening." *ISME: Journal of Islamic Studies and Multidisciplinary Research*, 3(1), 73–82. <https://doi.org/10.61683/isme.vol31.2025.73-82>

encourages marriage to a partner capable of bearing children as a means of ensuring the continuity of the ummah.²

Along with modern social developments, the meaning and purpose of marriage have undergone significant changes. Marriage is no longer understood merely as a normative phase of life that must be gone through, but rather as a personal choice carefully considered from various aspects of individual readiness, which has led to an increase in the age of marriage, the postponement of marriage, and the emergence of family relationship patterns that do not always align with traditional family structures.³

Generation Z is at the center of these changes. As a generation that has grown up in a digital environment, Generation Z has broad access to various global discourses that shape their perspectives on life, including marriage and family. In this context, marriage is often considered rationally, taking into account psychological readiness, economic stability, career goals, and overall quality of life.⁴

One prominent phenomenon in contemporary discourse on marriage is the “childfree” movement – that is, a couple’s conscious decision not to have children after marriage. This phenomenon initially emerged in Western societies, but in recent years it has begun to gain widespread attention in Indonesia through social media, public discussions, and media coverage.⁵

Within Muslim communities, the “childfree” phenomenon has sparked complex debates. On the one hand, there is a perspective that emphasizes individual freedom and the autonomy of couples in determining their family life. On the other hand, there is a normative perspective that asserts that marriage in Islam is oriented toward the continuation of the lineage as part of the objectives of Sharia. The tension between these two perspectives reflects

² Putra, A. H., Ardi, Z., Mudjiran, M., & Rahmaini, I. S. (2024). Analysis of factors influencing marriage readiness among young adult women experiencing trust issues in romantic relationships. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 22(2), 101–113. <https://doi.org/10.7454/jps.2024.12>

³ Lestari, L., & Satria, O. (2025). Social constructions of early marriage among adolescents: an analysis using Berger and Luckmann’s theory. *SEIKAT: Journal of Social Sciences, Politics, and Law*, 4(6), 540–544. <https://doi.org/10.55681/seikat.v4i6.1658>

⁴ Kusumaaningrum, S., Nasir, M. A., & Syarif, S. (2025). The phenomenon of Generation Z marriage at the KUA (An anthropological study of changes in marriage traditions among Indonesian youth). *JOURNAL OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION*, 15(4), 1392–1401. <https://doi.org/10.37630/jpi.v15i4.3709>

⁵ Saputra, M. D., & Muhammad, M. (2023). The “childfree” phenomenon in marriage from the perspective of Nahdlatul Ulama leaders in Subang Regency. *BUSTANUL FUQAHA: Journal of Islamic Law*, 4(3), 345–359. <https://doi.org/10.36701/bustanul.v4i3.1026>

the dynamics in how the younger generation of Muslims understands the purpose of marriage and the role of the family.⁶

For Muslim Generation Z, “*childfree*” is not always interpreted as a rejection of children, but rather as a reflection of their overall perception of readiness for marriage. A positive attitude toward “*childfree*” may be linked to concerns about long-term responsibilities, mental readiness for parenthood, and economic uncertainty.⁷

From the perspective of Islamic family law, readiness for marriage is a multidimensional concept. Readiness for marriage is not only measured by the formal fulfillment of the requirements and pillars of marriage but also encompasses psychological, financial, spiritual, and social readiness. Within this framework, readiness to welcome children cannot be separated from overall readiness for marriage. Although Islam does not require every couple to have a specific number of children, readiness to accept the responsibility of raising children is part of a marital orientation that aligns with the objectives of Islamic law.⁸

So far, studies on the “*childfree*” phenomenon in Indonesia have been dominated by qualitative approaches, normative studies, and discourse analysis. These studies provide conceptual and argumentative insights into the “*childfree*” phenomenon but have not yet provided much measurable empirical evidence regarding the relationship between perceptions of the “*childfree*” lifestyle and marital readiness. On the other hand, research on marital readiness generally focuses on psychological or social aspects without directly linking them to the “*childfree*” phenomenon from the perspective of Islamic family law.⁹

Based on the above discussion and research gaps, this study aims to empirically test the relationship between perceptions of the “*childfree*”

⁶ Nisa', A. R., Lestari, E. W. P., Pradana, H. H., & Dyaksa, R. S. (2023). The *childfree* phenomenon from the perspective of masalah mursalat (A phenomenological study of Generation 5.0). *Psycho Aksara: Journal of Psychology*, 1(2), 179–189. <https://doi.org/10.28926/pyschoaksara.v1i2.1026>

⁷ Zulfahmi, Z., Fernando, A., Hidayatullah, H., Nurlaili, N., & Sakdiah, A. J. (2024). The phenomenon of *childfree* marriage from the perspective of Islamic law. *Innovative: Journal of Social Science Research*, 4(6), 7566–7582. <https://doi.org/10.31004/innovative.v4i6.17333>

⁸ Siregar, Y. E. Y., Nuraeni, C., Rahmawati, L., Wahyuningsih, S., Rosita, T., & Nurfiana, S. Deni. (2024). Women's readiness for marriage: A qualitative analysis through a literature review on marriage in Indonesia. *Cendikia: Journal of Education and Teaching*, 2(2), 62–72. <https://doi.org/10.572349/cendikia.v2i2.830>

⁹ Endeh, S., Nurul, A. Z., Meisyah, R., Fildzah, R. Zhafirah, & Yulia Elfrida Yanty Siregar, S. P. (2023). The relationship between emotional and financial maturity in readiness for marriage. *Afeksi: Journal of Psychology*, 2(2), 260–269. <https://doi.org/10.572349/afeksi.v2i2.1578>

phenomenon and marriage readiness among Muslim Generation Z using a correlational design. The research hypothesis states that there is a significant relationship between perceptions of the “childfree” phenomenon and marriage readiness among Muslim Generation Z. Theoretically, this study contributes to the study of contemporary Islamic family law by providing empirical data on the relationship between reproductive discourse and marriage orientation. Practically, these findings are expected to serve as a foundation for premarital counselors, educational institutions, and religious organizations in developing family guidance programs that are more contextual and responsive to the changing values of Muslim Generation Z.

Method

This study employs a non-experimental quantitative approach with a correlational design to examine the relationship between perceptions of the “childfree” phenomenon and marriage readiness among Muslim Generation Z. This study does not involve any specific treatments or interventions but rather examines the relationships between variables based on empirical data obtained from respondents.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics (N = 151)

Karakteristik	Kategori	n	%
Jenis Kelamin	Laki-laki	85	56,3
	Perempuan	66	43,7
Usia (M = 20,9 tahun)	18 tahun	6	4,0
	19 tahun	24	15,9
	20 tahun	49	32,5
	21 tahun	26	17,2
	22 tahun	16	10,6
	23 tahun	14	9,3
	24 tahun	11	7,3
	25 tahun	4	2,6
Status	Mahasiswa	139	92,1
	Bekerja	9	6,0
	Tidak bekerja	3	2,0
Penggunaan Media Sosial per Hari	< 1 jam	11	7,3
	1-3 jam	57	37,7
	4-6 jam	51	33,8
	> 6 jam	32	21,2

The characteristics of the study respondents are presented in Table 1. Respondents were predominantly male (56.3%) and students (92.1%), with an average age of 20.9 years. Most respondents used social media 1-3 hours per day (37.7%). Respondents resided in various regions across Indonesia, with the largest concentrations in North Sumatra and Jember, East Java.

Data collection was conducted online by distributing a questionnaire via Google Forms through the researcher's personal network, which spanned multiple regions. A total of 151 respondents participated. Although the sample size was not determined through formal calculations prior to data collection, the adequacy of this number could be verified post-hoc using statistical power analysis. Based on G*Power 3.1 calculations for a two-tailed Spearman's correlation test with $\alpha = 0.05$ and power = 0.80, the minimum sample size required to detect a moderate effect ($r = 0.30$) is 84 respondents.¹⁰

The research instruments consisted of two scales developed independently by the researcher. First, the childfree perception scale was constructed based on three attitude components (the tripartite attitude model), which include the cognitive component (evaluations and beliefs regarding the childfree choice), the affective component (emotional responses and personal values regarding childfree), and the conative component (behavioral tendencies in response to the childfree choice).¹¹ This scale consisted of 15 initial items, which were subsequently narrowed down to 8 valid items following an item validity test, using a four-point Likert response format. Second, the marriage readiness scale was developed based on four dimensions, namely: (1) emotional readiness, encompassing emotional maturity, commitment, and clarity of life goals; (2) financial readiness, which includes financial planning and financial independence; (3) social readiness, which includes the ability to share roles and build relationships with the partner's extended family; and (4) spiritual readiness, which includes understanding marriage as a form of worship and the internalization of Islamic values in household life.¹² The spiritual dimension was added contextually to adapt the construct to the Indonesian Muslim population. This scale consists of 24 items with a four-point Likert response format. Both scales were formulated in the form of positive and negative statements (favorable and unfavorable).

Prior to data collection, the instrument was pilot-tested on a number of initial respondents to assess item validity using the corrected item-total correlation (criterion ≥ 0.30) and reliability using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The collected data were then analyzed using SPSS. The analysis

¹⁰ Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

¹¹ Eagly, A. H., & Chaiken, S. (1993). *The Psychology of Attitudes*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

¹² Carroll, J. S., Willoughby, B., Badger, S., Nelson, L. J., Barry, C. M., & Madsen, S. D. (2009). So Close, Yet So Far: The Impact of Differences in Marriage Horizons on Early Adulthood. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 24(4), 491-519. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558409336677>

stages included testing the reliability of the instruments, testing the normality of the data, and conducting correlation tests to examine the relationship between perceptions of childfree lifestyles and readiness for marriage. *Pearson's* correlation test was used when the data were normally distributed, while *Spearman's* correlation test was used when the data did not meet the assumption of normality.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of the systematic data analysis, which includes instrument validity and reliability tests, descriptive statistics, data normality tests, hypothesis testing, and a discussion of the research results from theoretical and Islamic family law perspectives.

a. Instrument Validity Test

The results of the validity test for the childfree perception scale showed that all 8 items used had corrected item-total correlation values in the range of $r = 0.305\text{--}0.677$. All items were deemed valid because they met the established minimum criteria.

Table 2. Results of the Validity Test for the Childfree Perception Scale

Item	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Keterangan
X1	0,450	Valid
X3	0,601	Valid
X5	0,500	Valid
X7	0,677	Valid
X9	0,579	Valid
X11	0,305	Valid
X13	0,555	Valid
X15	0,585	Valid

The results of the validity test for the marriage readiness scale show that 22 of the 24 items have corrected item-total correlation values in the range of $r = 0.318\text{--}0.726$. Two items, namely Y7 ($r = 0.153$) and Y10 ($r = 0.207$), fell below the minimum criterion of 0.30 but were retained in the scale because they represent dimensions not covered by other items and do not significantly lower the reliability coefficient.

Table 3. Results of the Validity Test for the Marriage Readiness Scale

Item	Corrected Item-Total Correlations	Description
Y1	0.584	Valid
Y2	0.588	Valid
Y3	0.318	Valid
Y4	0.494	Valid
Y5	0.415	Valid
Y6	0.621	Valid
Y7	0.153	Forwarded
Y8	0.519	Valid
Y9	0.654	Valid
Y10	0.207	Retained
Y11	0.726	Valid
Y12	0.655	Valid
Y13	0.627	Valid
Y14	0.693	Valid
Y15	0.663	Valid
Y16	0.723	Valid
Y17	0.517	Valid
Y18	0.680	Valid
Y19	0.725	Valid
Y20	0.439	Valid
Y21	0.691	Valid
Y22	0.617	Valid
Y23	0.658	Valid
Y24	0.604	Valid

b. Instrument Reliability Test

The reliability test in this study used *Cronbach's Alpha* coefficient. The alpha value indicates the level of internal consistency among items within a scale. In general, a *Cronbach's Alpha* value of ≥ 0.70 is considered adequate for social research. The results of the reliability test for both research scales are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Reliabilitas Instrumen Penelitian

Variable	Number of Items	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	Description
Perception of <i>Childfree</i>	8	0.813	Highly Reliable
Readiness to Marry	24	0.770	Trustworthy

1. Reliability of the *Childfree* Perception Scale

The *childfree* perception scale initially consisted of 18 statements. However, based on the initial reliability analysis, several statements had low

or negative item-total correlations, thereby reducing the scale’s internal consistency. Therefore, a statement selection process was conducted to retain statements with a *corrected item-total correlation* of ≥ 0.30 . After the selection process, 8 statements were identified that met the reliability criteria. The test results showed a *Cronbach’s Alpha* value of 0.813. This value indicates that the *Childfree* Perception Scale has excellent internal consistency and is suitable for use as a measurement tool in research.

2. Reliability of the Marriage Readiness Scale

The marriage readiness scale consists of 24 items covering various aspects of an individual’s readiness to enter married life, including psychological, emotional, financial, social, and spiritual readiness. The reliability test results showed a *Cronbach’s Alpha* value of 0.770.

3. Descriptive Statistics

This analysis includes the minimum, maximum, *mean*, and standard deviation for each variable.¹³ The descriptive statistics for the two research variables are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation
Perceptions of <i>Childfree</i>	151	8	32	20.42	4.17
Readiness for Marriage	151	48	86	71.30	7.37

1. Perceptions of *Childfree*

The analysis results show that the *childfree* perception score has a mean of 20.42 with a standard deviation of 4.17. The minimum score obtained by respondents was 8 and the maximum score was 32. The mean value, which is around the midpoint of the score range, indicates that, in general, respondents’ perceptions of *childfree* fall into the moderate category based on the hypothetical categorization norm. Categorization was performed using a hypothetical mean ($\mu = 20$) and a hypothetical standard deviation ($\sigma = 4$) derived from the theoretical score range of the scale (minimum score = 8, maximum score = 32), with the categories divided as follows: low ($X < 16$), moderate ($16 \leq X \leq 24$), and high ($X > 24$). The respondents’ average score of 20.42 falls within the moderate category, indicating that, in general, respondents neither completely reject nor fully accept the concept of “*childfree*,” but rather hold a moderate position.

2. Readiness for Marriage

¹³ Subhaktiyasa, P. G., Candrawati, S. A. K., Sumaryani, N. P., Sunita, N. W., & Syakur, A. (2025). The application of descriptive statistics: Quantitative and qualitative perspectives. *Emasains: Journal of Mathematics and Science Education*, 14(1), 96-104. <https://doi.org/10.59672/emasains.v14i1.4450>

The marriage readiness score had a mean of 71.30 with a standard deviation of 7.37. The minimum score obtained was 48 and the maximum score was 86. The categorization of marriage readiness scores was performed using hypothetical norms with a hypothetical mean ($\mu = 60$) and a hypothetical standard deviation ($\sigma = 12$) derived from the theoretical score range of the scale (minimum score = 24, maximum score = 96), with the following category divisions: low ($X < 48$), moderate ($48 \leq X \leq 72$), and high ($X > 72$). The respondents' average score of 71.30 falls within the moderate category, approaching the upper limit of that category. This indicates that the majority of respondents in this sample have a moderate-to-high level of marriage readiness, which suggests that the Muslim Generation Z participants in this study have achieved a sufficiently adequate level of readiness, although they are not yet fully mature for entering married life.¹⁴

c. Data Normality Test

In this study, normality tests were conducted using the *Kolmogorov-Smirnov* and *Shapiro-Wilk* tests. The results of the normality tests for both research variables are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Results of the Data Normality Test

Variabel	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Sig.	Shapiro-Wilk Sig.	Keterangan
Persepsi <i>Childfree</i>	< 0,001	< 0,001	Tidak normal
Kesiapan Pernikahan	< 0,001	< 0,001	Tidak normal

The results of the normality test show that the significance values of the *Kolmogorov-Smirnov* and *Shapiro-Wilk* tests for both variables are less than 0.05 ($p < 0.001$). This indicates that neither the data on *childfree* perceptions nor the data on readiness for marriage are normally distributed. Consequently, the assumption of normality is not met; therefore, the analysis of the relationship between variables does not use the parametric *Pearson* correlation technique but instead uses the nonparametric *Spearman's rho* technique, which does not require a normal distribution.

d. Hypothesis Testing

A hypothesis test was conducted to determine whether there is a relationship between perceptions of the *childfree* phenomenon and marriage readiness among Muslim Generation Z individuals. Since the results of the normality test showed that the data were not normally distributed, the analysis of the relationship between variables used *Spearman's rho*, a

¹⁴ Azwar, S. (2012). *Development of psychological scales* (2nd ed.). Pustaka Pelajar.

nonparametric correlation technique.¹⁵ The results of the *Spearman* correlation test are presented in Table 7 .

Table 7. Results of the *Spearman* Correlation Test

Variabel	Koefisien Korelasi (ρ)	Sig. (2-tailed)		Keterangan
Persepsi <i>Childfree</i> - Kesiapan Pernikahan	0,110	0,177	51	Tidak signifikan

The results of the study indicate that perceptions of the *childfree* phenomenon are not significantly associated with marriage readiness among Muslim Generation Z ($\rho = 0.110$; $p = 0.177$). The very low correlation coefficient ($\rho = 0.110$) indicates a negligible effect size (Cohen, 1988); thus, both statistically and practically, perceptions of the “childfree” phenomenon do not contribute to variations in marriage readiness within this sample. This finding aligns with previous research stating that reproductive decisions are a specific aspect of family life distinct from readiness to enter marriage itself. However, this finding differs from the initial assumption emerging from normative studies that posited a link between attitudes toward the “childfree” lifestyle and marriage orientation. This discrepancy indicates that normative assumptions need to be empirically tested, particularly in the context of Muslim Generation Z, who more clearly separate reproductive issues from the decision to marry.

Marriage Readiness as a Multidimensional Construct

Previous research has found that readiness for marriage in early adulthood is influenced more by emotional maturity and clarity of life goals than by reproductive decisions. Previous studies have also shown that readiness for marriage is multidimensional and cannot be measured by a single indicator alone. In the fields of family psychology and Islamic family law, readiness for marriage is viewed as a multidimensional construct that encompasses various internal and external aspects of an individual’s readiness, including emotional, psychological, social, financial, and spiritual readiness.¹⁶

Emotional readiness relates to an individual’s ability to manage emotions, control impulses, and respond constructively to conflict. In married

¹⁵ Waluyo, E., Septian, A., Jerilian, E., Hidayat, I. N., Prahadi, M. A., Prasetyo, T., & Sabilah, A. I. (2024). Analysis of sample data using hypothesis testing for comparative research with ANOVA and t-tests. *Journal of Economics and Business*, 2(6), 775–785. <https://j-economics.my.id/index.php/home/article/view/186>

¹⁶ Mutiara, Z., & Priyanto, A. (2025). Legal ethics of marriage in Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism: A comparative interfaith analysis. *Averroes: Journal of Science and Religious Studies*, 2(03), 196–210. <https://doi.org/10.62446/averroes.020304>

life, couples face various dynamics that require emotional maturity, such as personality differences, economic pressures, and the demands of family roles. Psychological readiness encompasses personality maturity, decision-making ability, and the readiness to commit to a long-term relationship. Marriage is not merely a romantic relationship but also a social institution that demands responsibility and consistency.

Social readiness is also a crucial dimension of marriage readiness. Marriage unites not only two individuals but also two families and a broader social network. Individuals ready for marriage need strong interpersonal communication skills, the ability to adapt to their partner's family environment, and the readiness to fulfill social roles as new family members. Additionally, financial readiness is a factor that cannot be overlooked. Married life requires the ability to meet the family's basic needs, manage finances, and plan for the economic future. Spiritual readiness also plays an important role, particularly in the context of Muslim society. Spiritual readiness encompasses an understanding of the rights and obligations of husband and wife, the intention to worship, and a commitment to building a harmonious family.

Thus, the lack of a significant relationship between perceptions of the *"childfree" lifestyle* and marital readiness can be explained by the complexity of the construct of marital readiness itself. Perceptions of *being "childfree"* reflect attitudes toward only one aspect of family life, whereas marriage readiness encompasses broader and more fundamental dimensions.¹⁷ This finding confirms that assessments of marriage readiness cannot be reduced to a single variable but must comprehensively consider an individual's overall readiness to lead a married life.

The Islamic Family Law Perspective on the Purpose of Marriage

Marriage is a sacred bond (*mitsāqan ghalīzan*) that serves as the foundation for family formation, social stability, and a means of worshiping Allah. Therefore, the purpose of marriage in Islam encompasses spiritual, emotional, social, and moral dimensions, in addition to the biological dimension. The Qur'an emphasizes that one of the primary purposes of marriage is the attainment of peace and tranquility through a relationship grounded in love and mercy. This is stated in Allah's words in Surah Ar-Rum, verse 21, which indicates that the aspects of *sakinah* (tranquility), *mawaddah* (affection), and *rahmah* (compassionate love) are at the core of married life.

¹⁷ Masyhud, L., & L, S. (2024). *Childfree* in the modern era: Challenges and opportunities from the perspective of Islamic law. *Al-Hukamaa: Journal of Islamic Family Law*, 2(2), 54–63. <https://doi.org/10.35905/hukamaa.v2i2.10810>

These three concepts describe a harmonious and enduring relationship that does not depend solely on the presence of children.¹⁸

In classical fiqh literature, the purposes of marriage are often articulated in several aspects, including preserving one's faith, maintaining honor, attaining inner peace, and building a stable family. Procreation is indeed one of these purposes, but it is not the only one.¹⁹ Scholars also emphasize that the presence of children is a blessing from Allah that is not always within human control; therefore, it cannot be considered an absolute prerequisite for a successful marriage.

In the context of this study, the lack of a significant relationship between perceptions of the "childfree" lifestyle and readiness for marriage can be understood as a reflection of the broad scope of the purposes of marriage in Islam. Muslim Generation Z may still view marriage as an institution of religious and social value, even though they hold diverse views on reproduction.²⁰ In other words, attitudes toward the "childfree" lifestyle do not automatically reflect attitudes toward marriage itself.

Analysis within the Framework of *Maqāṣid al-syar'ah*

The results of this study indicate that attitudes toward the *childfree* lifestyle do not automatically reflect readiness for marriage among Muslim Generation Z individuals. These findings can be understood within the framework of *maqāṣid*, as readiness for marriage is not only related to *ḥifẓ al-naṣl* but is also closely linked to the preservation of life, religion, reason, and property.²¹

First, the aspect of safeguarding the soul (*ḥifẓ al-naṣl*) relates to an individual's psychological and emotional well-being. A marriage entered into without mental readiness has the potential to lead to prolonged conflict, domestic violence, or emotional instability that is detrimental to both parties. Second, the preservation of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*) is also a primary purpose of

¹⁸ Nazaruddin, N. (2020). Sakinah, mawaddah, and rahmah as the objectives of marriage: A review of the evidence and a comparison with other objectives based on authentic hadiths. *Jurnal Asy-Syukriyyah*, 21(02), 164-174. <https://doi.org/10.36769/asy.v21i02.110>

¹⁹ Prabowo, P. D., & Malela, A. (2023). The Concept of Procreation in Genesis 1:26-28 as a Response to the Childfree Lifestyle. *Jurnal Teologi Pengarah*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.36270/pengarah.v5i1.148>

²⁰ Pratama, A., M Taufik Rahmadi, & Sugiharto. (2024). The Complexity of the Domino Effect of the Deeply Entrenched Trend of Early Marriage. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 13(1), 103-112. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jish.v13i1.73225>

²¹ Hilmy, A. A. M., & Toriqirrama, F. (2020). Integrated marriage validation from the perspective of maqasid al-sharia. *Al-Ahwal: Journal of Islamic Family Law*, 13(1), 79-90. <https://doi.org/10.14421/ahwal.2020.13108>

marriage. Marriage serves as a means to uphold honor and prevent individuals from engaging in behavior that contradicts Islamic law.²² Individuals with a strong religious consciousness may view marriage as a form of worship that must be undertaken with adequate spiritual preparation.

Third, the preservation of reason (*hifz al-'aql*) relates to an individual's ability to think rationally, make decisions, and plan their life thoughtfully. Fourth, the preservation of wealth (*hifz al-māl*) relates to economic capacity and resource management. Married life requires financial stability to meet the family's basic needs.

Thus, the “*childfree*” phenomenon in the context of this study does not automatically indicate a lack of readiness for marriage or a deviation from the objectives of marriage in Islam. Rather, it may reflect an individual's effort to ensure that marriage is entered into with adequate readiness across various aspects of life. Within the framework of *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, prioritizing emotional, spiritual, and economic readiness before having children can be understood as an effort to safeguard the family's overall well-being.²³

The Social Context of Muslim Generation Z

Generation Z is a group born and raised in an era of intense globalization and digitalization. Access to information technology and social media allows them to engage with various global discourses on family, career, individual freedom, and life planning.²⁴

Massive exposure to information through social media has also introduced various lifestyle alternatives that were previously less known in traditional societies, such as delaying marriage, focusing on career development, or choosing a *childfree* lifestyle. These discourses are often presented within the framework of modern rationality—for example, in relation to economic stability, mental health, and quality of life. As a result, some members of Generation Z view marriage as a decision requiring careful

²² Nadhiroh, J., & Larashati, E. D. (2021). An analysis of maqashid al-sharia regarding the increase in marriage dispensations during the COVID-19 pandemic at the Mojokerto Religious Court. *Ma'mal: Journal of Sharia and Law Laboratory*, 2(5), 473–494. <https://doi.org/10.15642/mal.v2i5.101>

²³ Siregar, Y. E. Y., Nuraeni, C., Rahmawati, L., Wahyuningsih, S., Rosita, T., & Nurfiana, S. Deni. (2024). Women's readiness for marriage: A qualitative analysis through a literature review on marriage in Indonesia. *Cendikia: Journal of Education and Teaching*, 2(2), 62–72. <https://doi.org/10.572349/cendikia.v2i2.830>

²⁴ Tirta, K. D., & Arifin, S. N. (2025). A phenomenological study: “Marriage is scary” among Generation Z. *TERAPUTIK: Journal of Guidance and Counseling*, 8(3), 12–20. <https://doi.org/10.26539/teraputik.833675>

consideration, not merely a normative milestone to be reached at a certain age.²⁵

Nevertheless, within the context of Muslim society, religious values continue to play a significant role in shaping attitudes toward marriage. Islamic teachings that emphasize the importance of marriage as a means of preserving honor and building a harmonious family can serve as a strong normative foundation. These religious norms are often reinforced by family culture and social environments that still regard marriage as an ideal and desirable institution.²⁶

These religious values can serve as a supporting factor that keeps attitudes toward marriage positive even when individuals are exposed to various alternative discourses. In other words, Muslim Generation Z may accept or understand the “childfree” discourse as a social phenomenon, but they do not necessarily use it as a basis for evaluating the “ ” of marriage itself.²⁷ This may explain why respondents’ readiness to marry remains relatively high despite varying perceptions of the “childfree” movement.

The social context of Generation Z is also characterized by a growing awareness of mental health and personal well-being. Many individuals view psychological readiness as a key prerequisite for marriage, including the ability to manage conflict, maintain emotional stability, and foster healthy communication.²⁸ Within this framework, the decision to have children is often viewed as a subsequent stage once the marital relationship is considered stable. Therefore, perceptions of the “childfree” lifestyle do not always correlate with readiness for marriage.

Consequently, the “childfree” phenomenon among Muslim Generation Z cannot be directly interpreted as an indication of rejection of marriage or a lack of readiness for marriage. Rather, it reflects the dynamics of values and

²⁵ Indriyanti, S., Wulandari, D. A., Wibowo, U. D. A., & Noveni, N. A. (2025). The meaning of marriage from the perspective of Generation Z in Cilacap Regency. *Jurnal EMPATI*, 13(4), 369–374. <https://doi.org/10.14710/empati.2024.46520>

²⁶ Damayanti, I. N. P., & Kamal, M. (2025). Challenges Faced by Generation Z in Understanding the Moral Ideals of Marriage Law in the Digital Age. *QOSIM: Journal of Social Education & Humanities*, 3(3), 1133–1145. <https://doi.org/10.61104/jq.v3i3.1880>

²⁷ Yunida’ Afah, N., & Mansyur, S. (2026). Generation Z Marriage in Building a Prosperous Family from an Islamic Perspective. *ULIL ALBAB: Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal*, 5(3), 412–426. <https://doi.org/10.56799/jim.v5i3.14170>

²⁸ Alaudin, R. (2023). The influence of the childfree lifestyle among Indonesia’s youth. *Nathiqiyah*, 6(2), 33–40. <https://doi.org/10.46781/nathiqiyah.v6i2.858>

rational considerations in the face of modern social changes, which continue to interact with strong religious and family cultural norms.²⁹

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, no significant relationship was found between perceptions of the “childfree” lifestyle—specifically, attitudes toward having children—³⁰ Readiness for marriage is a complex construct involving various interacting dimensions, including emotional, psychological, social, economic, and spiritual readiness. Thus, an overly narrow “ ” approach to understanding readiness for marriage has the potential to result in inaccurate assessments of an individual’s circumstances.³¹

In practical terms, the results of this study have implications for various parties involved in family counseling and premarital education. Educational institutions, premarital counselors, and religious organizations can use these findings as a basis for designing more comprehensive and contextually relevant marriage education programs.³² Premarital counseling programs should not only emphasize reproductive aspects or readiness to have children, but also give balanced attention to psychological readiness, couple communication, conflict management, financial planning, and the strengthening of spiritual values.³³

Another practical implication is the need to reinforce the understanding that readiness for marriage is not merely about biological

²⁹ Atsilah, M. A., Abtasari, S. M., Juniarti, & Nurjanah, A. S. (2025). The dynamics of psychological well-being among adolescents who marry early. *GUIDELINE: JOURNAL OF GUIDANCE, COUNSELING, AND EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY*, 1(4).
<https://journal.ycn.or.id/index.php/guideline/article/view/91>

³⁰ Ramadhan, A. R. (2024). Reproductive rights and the “childfree” choice from the perspective of Islamic law and their implications in Muslim society. *Al-Zaujiyyah: Journal of Islamic Family Law*, 1(2), 82-97.
<https://journal.syamilahpublishing.com/index.php/zaujiyyah/article/view/399>

³¹ Sonia, L., Noviani, D., Liza, E., & Awaludin. (2024). The Qur’anic Theory of Marriage: Religious Practices and Social Implications in Indonesian Muslim Society. *Journal of Innovative Learning Circle*, 5(11).
<https://oaj.jurnalhst.com/index.php/jlpi/article/view/5848>

³² Subhan, A. (2023). *CHILDFREE FROM AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ECONOMIC ASPECTS (An Analysis of the Childfree Movement from Religious and Economic Perspectives)*. *Opinia de Journal*, 3(1).
<https://doi.org/10.35888/opiniadejournal.v3i1.54>

³³ Antony, F., & Ja’far, A. K. (2024). Implications of marriage by telephone from the perspective of Islamic family law. *Bulletin of Islamic Law*, 1(2), 83-94.
<https://doi.org/10.51278/bil.v1i2.1519>

readiness to start a family, but about readiness to build a healthy and sustainable relationship.³⁴

Overall, the results of this study indicate that perceptions of the “childfree” phenomenon are not a significant determinant of marriage readiness among Muslim Generation Z. Marriage readiness is proven to be more influenced by various complex and interrelated dimensions, such as emotional, psychological, social, economic, and spiritual readiness.³⁵

Interpretatively, these findings can be understood from the perspective of Islamic family law, which emphasizes that the purpose of marriage is not solely oriented toward procreation but also includes efforts to achieve peace of mind, affection, and moral and spiritual protection.

Conclusion

This study aims to examine the relationship between perceptions of the “childfree” phenomenon and marriage readiness among Muslim Generation Z. The results of the analysis show that there is no significant relationship between the two variables ($\rho = 0.110$; $\rho = 0.177$). These findings indicate that an individual’s attitude toward the choice to remain childfree is not directly related to their level of readiness to enter into marriage.

The research results confirm that marriage readiness is a multidimensional construct influenced by various factors, such as emotional, psychological, social, economic, and spiritual readiness, and therefore cannot be reduced to just one specific aspect, including attitudes toward reproduction. In the context of Islamic family law, marriage has broad objectives that include the realization of peace, affection, and moral responsibility; thus, the presence of children is not the sole indicator of readiness or the success of a marriage.

Within the framework of *maqāṣid al-syarī’ah*, these findings indicate that readiness for marriage is related to the preservation of various aspects of the public interest – not only the preservation of the lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*) but also the preservation of religion, life, reason, and property. Therefore, perceptions of the “childfree” lifestyle cannot be used as the sole criterion for assessing marriage readiness among the younger generation of Muslims.

³⁴ Lestari, M. M. (2025). Informal marriages and the implications of Law No. 1 of 1974. *Jurnal Tana Mana*, 6(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.33648/jtm.v6i1.668>

³⁵ Rizhan, A. & Aprinelita. (2024). The “childfree” phenomenon from the perspective of Islamic family law in Indonesia. *Proceedings of the National Seminar on Research Results and Community Service*, 1(1), 21–24. <https://doi.org/10.36378/prosidinguniks.v1i1.4002>

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