

## THE FEAR OF MARRIAGE IN ISLAMIC LEGAL PERSPECTIVE: RELIGIOUS SCHOLARS' VIEWS ON UNMARRIED INDIVIDUALS IN ASAHAN REGENCY

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### Abstract

This study aims to explore the factors influencing individuals to choose not to marry and examine the perspectives of religious scholars in Asahan Regency regarding this decision. Employing an empirical approach with a sociological legal framework, this research utilizes a qualitative descriptive method. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews with eight residents of Sei Renggas and five religious scholars in Asahan Regency, while secondary data were sourced from journals and relevant literature. The findings reveal that the decision to remain unmarried is primarily driven by fear, stemming from past relationship trauma, economic constraints, aspirations for career advancement or further education, and adverse family experiences. From an Islamic legal perspective, postponing marriage for economic reasons is permissible, as marriage law is contextualized based on individual circumstances. This study provides a nuanced understanding of the fear of marriage phenomenon within a specific socio-religious context. It highlights the interplay between personal, economic, and cultural factors in shaping marital decisions and contributes to the discourse on religious scholars' roles in addressing such concerns. Addressing the fear of marriage in Asahan Regency requires a collaborative effort. Policymakers should develop marriage education programs that emphasize mental, economic, and social preparedness while expanding access to premarital counseling. Religious scholars must offer balanced guidance on marriage rulings, providing appropriate solutions for those hesitant to marry. Additionally, the community should foster a supportive environment by reducing the stigma against unmarried individuals and promoting open family communication to prevent intergenerational trauma. A coordinated approach among the government, religious scholars, and society is essential to fostering a more informed and constructive discourse on marriage.

**Keywords:** Fear of Marriage, Scholars' Views, Ruling on Not Marrying, Islamic Law

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### INTRODUCTION

Humans inherently need a sense of belonging and love. God created humans with a natural inclination toward the opposite sex, prompting them to seek partners, find a spouse, and establish a household, as being single often feels empty. One of the key

developmental tasks in early adulthood is to seek or choose a life partner and build a family<sup>1</sup>. By nature, humans will inevitably look for companionship to fulfill their need for love and affection.

Law Number 1 of 1974 defines marriage in Chapter 1, Article 1, stating, "Marriage is a bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife with the aim of forming a happy and eternal household."<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the Compilation of Islamic Law describes marriage as a form of worship. Chapter II, Article 2, states, "Marriage according to Islamic law is a very strong contract (*mitsaaqon gholidhan*) to obey Allah's command, and carrying it out is a form of worship."<sup>3</sup>

Islam teaches that marriage fosters love, affection, and gentleness between husband and wife, as stated in the Quran (Surah Ar-Rum, verse 21):

*It means: "Among His signs is that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may find rest in them, and He has placed between you love and mercy. Verily in this are signs for a people who give thought."*

Despite this, some individuals deliberately choose not to marry. Many fear the responsibilities that come with marriage, avoiding serious relationships and preferring casual connections due to concerns about potential failure. This phenomenon is especially common in societies with low marriage rates, such as Japan. However, Islam discourages remaining single, as it contradicts the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). A hadith narrated by Ibn Majah states:

*It means: From Aisyah r.a said: Rasulullah SAW said: "Marriage is My sunnah, whoever does not practice My sunnah then he is not included in My nation, get married because I am very pleased with your numbers in front of other nations, whoever has the ability, then get married if not then fast, because fasting can be a control." (H.R Ibnu Majah).*

Based on this hadith, marriage is strongly recommended. A true believer in Allah and His Messenger should view marriage as an act of obedience and a way to follow the Prophet's Sunnah. Thus, those who deliberately remain unmarried are not considered

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<sup>1</sup> Abu Nayla, *Keluarga Kecil Islami* (Yogyakarta: Darul Hikmah, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> Undang-Undang RI Nomor 16 Tahun 2019 Tentang Perubahan Atas Undang-Undang Nomor 1 Tahun 1974 Tentang Perkawinan, (Bandung : Citra Umbara 2020), h. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, h. 319.

among his followers.<sup>4</sup> But what if a Muslim chooses not to marry because he is afraid of marriage, even though marriage is recommended by the Prophet and those who do not follow it are not from his group.

Previous research linked the decision to remain unmarried with historical scholars practicing *tabattul* (celibacy) to avoid distractions from worship and knowledge. For instance, Abu Bakar bin Al-Anbari (Muhammad bin Qasim bin Muhammad), a scholar of grammar, interpretation, literature, and hadith, refrained from marriage to preserve his memory and focus entirely on scholarship. These scholars believed marriage could be an obstacle to achieving their noble intellectual and spiritual pursuits. However, this is distinct from modern trends, where individuals remain single due to economic instability, fear of commitment, mental unpreparedness, selective partner criteria, or career and educational priorities.

Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency of North Sumatra Province, it is known that the number of marriages in Asahan Regency in 2023 decreased from the previous year. In 2022 the number of marriages reached 5,673 while in 2023 it decreased to 5,128 marriages.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, the marriage data at the KUA of West Kisaran City District in 2022 was 411 marriages, and experienced a decrease, namely there were only 377 marriages in 2023.<sup>6</sup> From that number, it can be said that the number of unmarried people is increasing. In reality, some men and women who are considered old enough to marry choose to live single, even though in terms of marital status categories, unmarried status in adults will tend to be positioned as a negative or inferior identity status because this status tends to be considered inappropriate or "abnormal".<sup>7</sup>

According to the Syafi'i School, there are five laws of marriage. First, it is permissible for those who are not prevented from getting married, are not yet obligated to get married, and are not forbidden if they do not get married. Second, it is obligatory if

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<sup>4</sup> Nuril Azizah "Hadits-Hadits Tentang Keutamaan Nikah Dalam Kitab Lubâb Al-Hadîts Karya Jalâl Al-Dîn Al-Suyûthî," 12, no. 1 (2014), h. 120.

<sup>5</sup> Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Sumatera Utara. <https://sumut.bps.go.id/statistics-table/> Diakses pada 15 Agustus 2024.

<sup>6</sup> Dataset Jumlah KUA, Penghulu dan Peristiwa Nikah Kabupaten Asahan. <https://data.asahankab.go.id> Diakses pada 15 August 2024.

<sup>7</sup> Ema Septiana dan Muhammad Syafiq, "Identitas "Lajang" (Single Identity) Dan Stigma: Study Fenomenologi Perempuan Lajang Di Surabaya", *Jurnal Psikologi: Teori & Terapan*, 1 (Agustus, 2013), h. 73

marriage is the only way to avoid forbidden acts, whether male or female. Third, it is Makruh if he feels unable to carry out the obligations of marriage. For example, a woman who has no desire and no need to get married, and she is not worried that someone will act badly towards her, or for a man who has no desire to get married and is unable to provide a dowry and halal sustenance. Fourth, it is Sunnah if one has the desire to get married and is able to fulfill household obligations and to protect oneself from sinful acts. And the last is Haram if someone is unable to carry out the obligations of marriage and the marriage is only intended to hurt their partner.

Based on these problems, this study aims to explore the factors that cause individuals in Sei Renggas to choose not to marry and to explore the views of scholars in Asahan Regency regarding this phenomenon. The hypothesis proposed in this study is that the choice not to marry in Sei Renggas is more influenced by economic factors, mental unpreparedness, and social influences than reasons of worship as was the case with previous scholars. This study is expected to provide insight into how these factors contribute to the increasing trend of individuals choosing to live single in modern Muslim society.

## **METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative method with a field study approach to examine issues directly based on real conditions in society. The qualitative method was chosen as it is well-suited for field research that aims to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon through direct interaction with respondents and an analysis of legal and social aspects. The research was conducted in Sei Renggas Village, Kota Kisaran Barat District, Asahan Regency. This location was selected due to its relevance to the issues being studied and its alignment with the social conditions of the local community. The study adopts a legal sociology approach, which seeks to understand how law is applied and perceived within the social fabric of society. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with eight unmarried individuals and five clerics in Asahan Regency, who were considered to have profound insights and understanding of the research topic. Meanwhile, secondary data were gathered from various sources, including scientific

journals, previous studies, and literature related to the subject matter. Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative descriptive method, wherein interview results and field findings were systematically narrated. The collected data were then categorized, analyzed, and interpreted to provide a clear and comprehensive picture of the studied issues. By doing so, this study aims to offer a deeper understanding of the societal phenomena related to legal and social aspects.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Factors Causing Fear of Marriage

Lately, the Marriage is Scary trend has been a hot topic on social media. This trend is predicted to cause fear of marriage, which is formed from various negative narratives about marriage, thus triggering fear, namely fear of failing to make one's partner or child happy in the future, fear of not being able to maintain a good relationship, and fear of not being able to be responsible for one's small family.<sup>8</sup>

Those who choose to live single are not actually unwilling to have a relationship with another person, but when it comes to discussing the commitment of marriage, they will try to avoid it, and if forced, they will even prefer to leave their partner.<sup>9</sup> This fear can be experienced by anyone, both men and women, and of course this cannot be present directly, there must be a cause. This fear also occurs because of an experience that makes it traumatic about a commitment or marriage, so that it triggers bad thoughts about marriage and they feel that marriage is a scary specter or even a nightmare that should not be done.<sup>10</sup>

The following is a table of interview results with eight Sei Renggas residents who are mature enough to marry but are not yet married.

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<sup>8</sup> Adha Eugeni Akbarandi, Skripsi: *"Analisis Masalah Terhadap Pandangan Penderita Gamophobia Tentang Pernikahan"*. h. 14

<sup>9</sup> Hi Pontianak, *"Gamophobia Bisa Menyerang Perempuan Millennial"*  
<https://kumparan.com/hipontianak/gamophobia-bisa-meny Serang-perempuan-millennial-1rU5JSu8B4F>  
Diakses pada 18 Agustus 2024

<sup>10</sup> Nila Nur Khairani, Skripsi: *"Gamophobia Tokoh Utama Novel 3 Wali 1 Bidadari Karya Taufiqurrahman Al-Azizy Tinjauan Psikologi Sastra"*, (Fakultas Ilmu Budaya Universitas Andalas, Padang, 2022) h. 02.  
<http://scholar.unand.ac.id/108730> Diakses pada 02 August 2024

Table 1. Interview Data from the Sei Renggas Community

NO	Inisial	Reasons for Not Being Married			
		Afraid	Bad Past Experiences	Economic Factors	Career Focus
1	N				✓
2	F	✓	✓		
3	G	✓	✓		
4	M	✓	✓		
5	R	✓		✓	
6.	S			✓	
7.	T	✓		✓	
8.	Z				✓
<b>TOTAL</b>		5	3	3	2

The table above shows that out of eight informants, 5 people were afraid to get married so they chose not to get married. But of course their fear was also influenced by other things. Like a person with the initials M, aged 36, who was not married because of fear caused by trauma from having failed to get married twice. M's confession, he said that until now he had never been seen close to a woman and his daily life only worked in his field.<sup>11</sup> Not only M, the researcher also interviewed a woman aged around 27 years with the initials G who chose not to marry because she was left by a man who had promised to marry her after everything was given including her honor. G felt that she was dirty and no one would want a dirty woman. Fear of people's acceptance of her made her afraid to get married.<sup>12</sup>

It is different from what was experienced by a woman with the initials F, aged 30, who experienced fear of marriage because her parents often fought and even caused domestic violence (KDRT). From the interview results, it was discovered that her mother had arranged a marriage for her because she had not gotten married, but F refused.<sup>13</sup> In contrast, a 30-year-old man with the initials R has not been married until now. His job as an ojol driver makes him afraid to start a married life. R once had a love affair but it had

<sup>11</sup> M, Interview with the Community, Kelurahan Sei Renggas, 27 Juli 2024.

<sup>12</sup> G, Interview with the Community, Kelurahan Sei Renggas, 28 Juli 2024.

<sup>13</sup> F, Interview with the Community, Kelurahan Sei Renggas, 27 Juli 2024.

to end because his girlfriend asked to get married soon but R was not ready because his economy was still lacking.<sup>14</sup> A similar case was also experienced by Sekurang-kurang material and he was the only breadwinner of the family, making him afraid to build a family.

In the case of the source N, he already has a good career and his daily life only focuses on himself. Therefore, N chose not to get married because he was afraid that if he got married, his life would change for the worse and he was afraid that his family would not be taken care of because he was busy working. In addition, N also added that he often saw social media reporting about scary households.<sup>15</sup> Lastly, there is a woman with the initials Z who is currently studying for her Masters. Z is afraid of getting married because she is focusing on her career and education, and is afraid of getting a husband who is not her equal. Z feels that she can be an independent woman without having to be controlled by a man. Z has too high criteria for her partner so that no one is suitable for her and then chooses not to get married rather than not according to her wishes.<sup>16</sup>

From the above explanation, it can be concluded that some people who choose not to marry have different backgrounds or triggering factors. Some of the triggering factors for fear of marriage include:

- a. Trauma from Bad Experiences in Previous Relationships. Trauma always leaves bad memories and hinders the course of life. A deep sense of discouragement and a lack of courage to take risks will ultimately create great fear.<sup>17</sup>
- b. Growing up in a rough and disharmonious family. A child who grows up witnessing his parents' relationship often fighting is likely to grow up with a fear of commitment because he is afraid that his life will be like his parents.<sup>18</sup>
- c. Unstable Economy. Financial problems are undeniable, they can make someone not ready or even afraid to get married.

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<sup>14</sup> R, Interview with the Community, Kelurahan Sei Renggas 28 Juli 2024.

<sup>15</sup> N, Interview with the Community, Kelurahan Sei Renggas 28 Juli 2024.

<sup>16</sup> Z, Interview with the Community, Kelurahan Sei Renggas, 28 Juli 2024.

<sup>17</sup> Hello Sehat. Satria Aji Purwoko, "Gamophobia, Takut Berlebihan Pada Pernikahan dan Komitmen". (03 Januari 2024). <https://hellosehat.com/mental/gangguan-kecemasan/> Diakses pada 15 August 2024.

<sup>18</sup> Clevanic Clinic, "Gamophobia (Fear of Commitment) : Causes & Treatment", (22 April 2022). <https://my-clevelandclinic-org.translate.goog/health> Diakses pada 15 August 2024.

- d. Because they want to focus on their career or education. Someone who is usually busy with work or studying will start to lose interest in getting married because they are focused on continuing to seek knowledge and seek wealth.
- e. Fear of losing their freedom in life. People who are used to living freely then think that if they get married, their life will start to be restricted and they will be afraid to get married.
- f. Carried away by the social media trend of "marriage is scary". This trend influences the way people think because there are many negative narratives about marriage. When someone continuously gets negative affirmations, it will increase their fear of getting married.<sup>19</sup>

## **2. The Views of Asahan Regency Ulama on the Law of Choosing Not to Marry**

Islamic Sharia makes marriage a recommendation. In the Koran and Hadith there are also recommendations for marriage. This is in accordance with the Word of Allah in the Quran Surah An-Nur verse 32:

Meaning: *"Marry those who are still single among you and also those who are worthy (to marry) of your servants, both men and women. If they are poor, Allah will empower them with His grace. Allah is All-Encompassing (His gifts) and All-Knowing."*

Allah recommends marriage and encourages it, and also orders humans to marry free people or slaves with the promise of providing sufficiency for the married person. However, if the desire to get married is there but you cannot afford it materially, then it is recommended to fast to be able to restrain your desire. This is also confirmed by the Hadith of the Prophet narrated by Bukhari and Muslim.

Meaning: *"O young men, whoever among you is able to marry, let him marry, for it is more effective in lowering the gaze and guarding one's chastity. And whoever is unable to marry, let him fast, for it is a protection against one's sins."*

The argument explains that if you are able to marry, then get married, and for those who are not able in terms of material, it is recommended to fast. From here it is known that the law of marriage is not always mandatory. Although it is recommended, Islam still gives legal tolerance to marry for certain reasons such as not being financially ready,

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<sup>19</sup> Romadhona. UMSIDA. *"Tren Marriage is Scary, 6 Faktornya Menurut Pakar Psikologi Umsida"*, (19 Agustus 2024). <https://umsida.ac.id/> Diakses pada 25 August 2024.



wanting to focus on education, or even having a health condition that does not allow for marriage.

Based on the results of interviews with people who choose not to marry, it can be seen that their causes or backgrounds are different. This certainly raises questions about how the law of marriage is for them. As we know, fear or worry is a natural thing in humans. The law of marriage is basically permissible, like eating but if you are hungry then it becomes obligatory. Likewise, getting married if you are afraid of committing adultery while you are established and healthy then the law is obligatory.

According to the opinion of Mr. Salman Abdullah Tanjung as the Chairman of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) of Asahan Regency, he explained that if someone is afraid of getting married so that they choose not to get married forever, then that is not allowed. As in the following Hadith:

Meaning: *Has told us Ahmad bin Yunus, has told us Ibrahim bin Sa'd, has told us [Ibn Shihab] he heard [Sa'id bin Al Musayyab] say: I heard [Sa'd bin Abu Waqqash] say: Rasulullah shallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam has forbidden 'Uthman bin Mazh'un to live celibate. And if he allows it, we will definitely castrate him.*<sup>20</sup>

The meaning of this hadith is that if the Messenger of Allah had allowed Uthman bin Mazh'un to be single, the Prophet would have told him about it, but in reality the Messenger of Allah actually forbade him from marrying. However, in terms of worship that is fardhu kifayah, such as seeking knowledge and jihad, both are prioritized over marriage if it is feared that one will fall into adultery. Judging from the story of the tabattul ulama in the past, if there is something that causes someone not to marry, such as what was done by Imam Nawawi who died unmarried because of seeking knowledge, then that is permissible and not reprehensible.<sup>21</sup>

Then Mr. Salman Abdullah added that if someone is in despair because of this fear, they are not allowed not to marry, because despair is haram. As Allah says in surah Al Hijr verse 56:

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<sup>20</sup> Muhammad Nashiruddin Al Albani, *Shahih Sunan An - Nasa'i Jilid 2*, (Jakarta: Pustaka Azzam, 2006), h. 650.

<sup>21</sup> Muhammad Abror "Imam Nawawi, Ukama Besar yang Hidup Membujang " (27 Mei 2021). <https://nu.or.id/hikmah/> Diakses pada 16 August 2024.

Meaning: "except Luth's followers. "Indeed, we will definitely save them all."

If you have a reason for fear, treat it immediately, because it concerns psychological problems, so you need to see a psychologist or religious expert. For cases of trauma from bad past relationships, treatment is needed, don't give up hope. If they have been treated and then feel able to restrain themselves from falling into adultery, then it is permissible not to marry for a while until their fear slowly disappears. They are categorized as leaving something better and that includes delaying marriage. Moreover, with fear of marriage due to economic factors, the law of marriage for him is not obligatory, even falling into the haram category because he is not yet financially capable, which is feared to cause misery to his partner later. In accordance with the Quran Surah An Nur: 33.

Meaning: "And let those who do not have the means to marry keep themselves chaste until Allah enriches them out of His bounty. And if any of your slaves seek a contract of emancipation, grant it to them if you find goodness in them, and give them from the wealth of Allah which He has given you. And do not compel your slave girls into prostitution if they desire chastity, seeking the fleeting gains of worldly life. But if they are forced into it, then indeed, Allah is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful (to them) after they have been compelled." (Surah An-Nur 24:33)."

Almost the same opinion was expressed by Mr. Muhammad Suherman as the Head of KUA Kisaran Barat. He argued that marriage is already a command from Allah and the Messenger, so for those who are afraid, they must be given understanding and mental treatment because marriage actually does not need to be feared or worried about. There must be socialization from the surrounding, especially parents, to convince their children that human destiny is different. Not always what happens to their parents must also happen to their children. People who are not married have abnormal lives.<sup>22</sup> In the Islamic view, the fear of getting married is regardless of whatever the background is, it is still obligatory if one is financially capable and is worried about committing adultery if one does not get married. However, if one can restrain oneself from adultery and is not financially capable, then the law is makruh according to the opinion of the Shafi'iyyah, especially since one is not mentally ready to get married. It is permissible for one to not get married temporarily, but it is not permissible if one does not get married forever.

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<sup>22</sup> Muhammad Suherman, Interview with Religious Leaders/Head of KUA Kisaran Barat, Kisaran, 03 August 2024.

Marriage should not be taken lightly because marriage is a big matter. But marriage should not be something to be afraid of because if marriage is indeed dangerous for us, it is impossible for Allah to require us to marry. According to Mr. R. Munawwir as a religious figure in Sei Renggas, he explained that the law of marriage returns to the condition of the person, whether he has fallen into what is obligatory because he is afraid of committing adultery, or to what is sunnah, or even haram because he is not yet capable in any way and will definitely oppress his partner later. In accordance with the Word of Allah in the Quran Surah An Nur verses 32-33, Allah tells us to marry if we are able because marriage is one way to open the door to sustenance. Then in verse 33 Allah reminds us that if we are not able, then do not force them until they do bad things. For cases of fear due to trauma from bad experiences in the past, then we should not be afraid, but make it a life lesson, because not always what happens to others means us too. So it does not fall into the category of obligatory marriage for people who still have fear, because they are afraid of oppressing their partners later. The law of marriage for him is permissible, but he should not remain unmarried forever.<sup>23</sup>

The same opinion was also explained by Mr. Kamal as a religious figure in Sei Renggas. He argued that choosing to be alone or not getting married in the past scholars happened because they were drowning in their love for Allah, but in this day and age choosing not to get married is not a good thing. Back to yourself, if you can guarantee not getting married then you will not disobey Allah and get closer to Allah then for times like this not getting married is better when in the suspicion or thought that getting married will add to the problem. Although marriage is the sunnah of the Prophet, the law of marriage returns to the condition of the person. For those who still feel afraid in undergoing marriage, the law is permissible to get married on the condition that they can restrain themselves from disobeying Allah.<sup>24</sup>

Meanwhile, according to Mr. Mahmudin Lubis as a religious figure and Secretary General of MUI Asahan, he also has an opinion not far from the two previous opinions. He explained that carrying out marriage will bring peace and get offspring according to the Word of Allah in the Quran Surah Ar Rum verse 21:

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<sup>23</sup> R. Munawwir, Interview with Religious Leader, Kisaran, 17 Januari 2025.

<sup>24</sup> Kamal, Interview with Religious Leader, Kisaran, 17 Januari 2025.

Meaning: "Among His signs is that He created for you mates from yourselves, that you may find rest in them. He has placed between you love and mercy. Verily in this are signs for a people who give thought."

Then if the person who has trauma does not want to be treated immediately, how can his heart or soul be calm? Maintaining trauma will not make you happy.<sup>25</sup> He also said that when looking for a soul mate, try to follow religious rules, such as your religion, your lineage, your beauty and your wealth. Because these 4 criteria are the most ideal criteria.<sup>26</sup> People who choose not to marry (being single) can have negative impacts on themselves, including social sanctions, ridicule, and mockery from the surrounding environment, to causing disharmony between children and parents. Someone who decides to be single has become a separate social category that is attached to distinctive characteristics that are often negative or "abnormal" because they tend to be compared to someone who is married who is more viewed as a "normal" individual.

He added that it is permissible not to marry on the condition that it threatens life. Marriage is also recommended to be abandoned for someone who believes that he will be unjust and cause harm to women and is weak in terms of marriage costs. Marriage is forbidden by law for someone who believes that he will fall into adultery if he does not marry, but he also believes that he will be unjust to his wife.<sup>27</sup> According to Ulama' Syafi'iyah, marriage is considered a worldly deed, because it is determined to channel human lust, while deeds to Allah Ta'ala are more important than deeds for oneself. So the law of marriage when in certain circumstances such as not being able to financially, and indeed not wanting to get married, then the law is makruh. And if this disease can make him or his family's life threatened in the future, then it is permissible not to get married.

Based on research conducted on eight residents of Sei Renggas who are of marriageable age but remain unmarried, various factors contributing to the fear of

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<sup>25</sup> Mahmudin Lubis, interview with Religious Leader/Secretary of MUI Asaha, Kisaran, 12 August 2024.

<sup>26</sup> Lidin Solikhin, Skripsi, "Kriteria Memilih Pasangan Hidup Menurut Pemikiran Imam Ghazali" (Fakultas Syariah, Institut Agama Islam Imam Ghazali, Cilacap. 2021). h. 04

<sup>27</sup> Wahbah Zuhaili, *Al-Fiqh Al-Islam Wa Adillatuhu* Jilid 9 Penerjemah Abdul Hayyie al- Kattani (Jakarta: Darul Fikri, 2010).

marriage were identified. The primary causes of this fear include trauma from past negative relationship experiences, growing up in an unstable family environment, economic instability, prioritizing career or education, fear of losing freedom, and the influence of the social media trend "marriage is scary."

Social psychology theories can be used to explain this phenomenon. According to personality theory and psychosocial development<sup>28</sup>, individuals in the young adult stage (intimacy vs. isolation) tend to experience a dilemma between building intimate relationships and choosing to remain single due to fear of relationship failure. Individuals who have experienced trauma or emotional instability from past relationships often struggle to establish long-term commitments.

From an economic perspective, Becker's Human Capital Theory explains that the decision to marry can be influenced by financial factors. Someone who feels financially unprepared is more likely to postpone or even avoid marriage. This aligns with interview findings indicating that some informants fear marriage due to economic instability.<sup>29</sup>

Regarding the influence of social media, Gerbner's Cultivation Theory states that continuous exposure to negative narratives in the media can shape an individual's perception of a phenomenon. The widely spread "marriage is scary" trend on social media can significantly contribute to forming negative perceptions of marriage, as expressed by several informants.<sup>30</sup>

From an Islamic perspective, marriage is a Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad and is highly recommended, as stated in the Qur'an (Surah An-Nur, verse 32) and hadiths narrated by Bukhari and Muslim. However, Islam also provides flexibility for individuals who are not yet ready for marriage, particularly if there are factors that prevent them from fulfilling marital obligations properly.

This study shares both similarities and differences with previous research on the fear of marriage. Research by Widiyawati, Wiwid, indicates that individuals with negative relationship experiences tend to be more hesitant about marriage in the future. This

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<sup>28</sup> Sarwono Wirawan Sarlito, *Teori-Teori Psikologi* (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 1995).

<sup>29</sup> Mardani, *Fiqh Ekonomi Syariah* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2012).

<sup>30</sup> Nurul Aulia Dewi, "Dinamika Pemikiran Ekonomi : Konstruksi Pemikiran Sistem Ekonomi Abad Klasik Pertengahan Dan Kontemporer," *Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary Scientific Studies (IJOMSS)* 2, no. 1 (2024): 72–83.

finding aligns with the present study, which identifies past trauma as a key factor in marriage fears.<sup>31</sup> Research by Pamessangi et al. found that individuals raised in high-conflict family environments are more likely to fear marriage. This is consistent with one of the informants in this study, who grew up in a household affected by domestic violence.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, a study by Apriyanti, Dwi Anggun, highlights that social and economic changes, including increased female participation in higher education and the workforce, contribute to the rising number of individuals delaying or avoiding marriage. This finding is in line with this study, which reveals that some informants prioritize their careers and education over marriage.<sup>33</sup>

By comparing this study with previous research, it can be concluded that the factors contributing to the fear of marriage found in this study are similar to global findings but also have unique aspects influenced by Indonesia's cultural and religious context. The role of social media in shaping negative perceptions of marriage is a particularly interesting finding that enriches the academic discourse on this phenomenon.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reveal that the fear of marriage among individuals in Asahan Regency is influenced by multiple factors, including past relationship trauma, experiences of growing up in a disharmonious family, economic instability, career and educational priorities, fear of losing personal freedom, and the influence of social media trends that depict marriage as burdensome. Additionally, the perspectives of religious scholars indicate that while marriage is highly encouraged in Islam, its ruling varies depending on an individual's condition. Marriage is obligatory for those who fear falling into immoral behavior, recommended for those who are prepared, permissible for those with apprehensions, discouraged for those unready, and prohibited if it leads to harm. Scholars emphasize that avoiding marriage indefinitely without a valid reason is not

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<sup>31</sup> Wiwid Widiyawati, "Strategi Komunikasi Penyuluh Agama Islam Dalam Pencegahan Pernikahan Dini Di Kecamatan Trimurjo Kabupaten Lampung Tengah," *Jurnal Hukum Islam*, no. February (2024): 4-6.

<sup>32</sup> Andi Arif Pamessangi et al., "Edukasi Pencegahan Pernikahan Dini Melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam," *Madaniya* 5, no. 2 (2024): 718-27, <https://doi.org/10.53696/27214834.820>.

<sup>33</sup> Dwi Anggun Apriyanti, "Perlindungan Perempuan Dan Pernikahan Di Bawah Umur," *PAMPAS: Journal of Criminal Law* 2, no. 1 (2021): 115-24, <https://doi.org/10.22437/pampas.v2i1.12676>.

justified in Islam, but they acknowledge the need for religious, psychological, and social support for individuals struggling with the fear of marriage.

One of the strengths of this research is its comprehensive approach, which combines empirical data with a sociological and legal analysis. The study not only identifies the personal and societal factors contributing to the fear of marriage but also integrates Islamic jurisprudence to provide a well-rounded perspective. By conducting in-depth interviews with both unmarried individuals and religious scholars, the research offers a balanced view that captures both personal experiences and theological interpretations. Moreover, the study highlights actionable solutions involving policymakers, religious scholars, and the community, making it a valuable resource for addressing marriage-related anxieties in Asahan Regency.

Despite its contributions, this study has certain limitations. The research is limited to a specific geographical area, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to other regions with different cultural and religious dynamics. Additionally, the sample size, while informative, may not fully represent the diverse experiences of individuals who fear marriage. Future research could benefit from a broader scope, incorporating quantitative data to complement qualitative findings and exploring the role of psychological interventions in alleviating marriage-related fears. By addressing these limitations, future studies can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon across different social contexts.

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