

Marriage is scary in the digital era

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Abstract. Marriage is a noble bond that unites a man and a woman in a household relationship. Before the bond is established, the person who wants to become a partner should be adjusted to what was recommended by Rasulullah SAW, namely in terms of religion, wealth, lineage and beauty. This is done to avoid household conflicts that might occur in the future. As time went by, the marriage rate experienced a very drastic decline, this was triggered by the emergence of a sense of concern among the public due to news that presented household conditions that were not conducive and full of suffering. This study begins with an argument regarding the shift in understanding of the meaning of marriage. This article is intended to examine and analyze the decline in marriage rates due to the Marriage is Scary trend, the factors causing divorce and the implications for society's perception of marriage in the digital era. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method, namely data sources obtained through books, journals, articles and news on several social media related to the research focus. The research results show that the marriage is scary trend has a big influence on Gen Z's mindset regarding marriage. We can see this from the decreasing number of marriages in the last five years due to Gen Z choosing to focus on career development and education rather than the desire to get married.

Keywords: Marriage is scary, digital era

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is something that every individual eagerly anticipates when they reach adulthood. However, the advancement of time demands that each individual strive for perfection in various aspects of life, including the household. The numerous criteria that must be met in a person who is to be made a partner cause difficulties for individuals in finding a partner who meets those criteria. (RI, 2019) In fact, Islam itself has taught how to choose a good partner, namely by looking at their religion, wealth, beauty, and lineage. (Sunari et al., 2023) If those four things are deemed good and worthy, then one is entitled to be chosen. However, in this digital era, there are many additional criteria that one must meet to be considered suitable as a partner by others, (Diyah, 2019) In terms of his character, personality, nature, thinking, way of controlling his emotions, and so on. Those criteria are certainly difficult for someone to meet; not all of them can be found in one person. That is what affects the number of marriages in Indonesia from year to year (Maryani et al., 2024).

Abdullah Saeed in his research titled "Islamic Thought: An Introduction" mentions that marriage in Islam is not only a social bond formed between two individuals but also a noble worship with a sacred purpose of creating a household that is *sakinah, mawadah warahmah*. This clearly proves that the bond of marriage in Islam not only contains social values but also strong spiritual values. (Saeed, 2006) Considering the purpose of the marriage bond, two individuals who feel they have a strong intention to marry must be well-prepared to undertake their responsibilities after the marriage bond is established. (Dewi et al., 2023) They must be mature in terms of age, (Yusri et al., 2020) financial and also their mindset. So that after getting married, they are truly ready to fulfill their duties as a husband or wife. In addition, they must also understand the boundaries of behaviors that should be practiced or avoided, in order to create a harmonious household and prevent conflicts from arising in their marriage (Bastiar, 2018).

This research aims to deeply examine aspects related to marriage and societal perspectives on marriage in this digital era, considering the trend of "marriage is scary" among the younger generation. This is very necessary considering the sophistication of technology presented by humans, which can influence a person's mindset regarding the essence of the marriage bond in accordance with Islamic values as taught in the Qur'an and Sunnah. (Santoso, 2016) Therefore, it is also necessary to renew the mindset of society regarding the noble values of marriage so that they remain relevant and effective in this era of disruption. This research aims to provide an understanding of the impact of the "marriage is scary" trend on the

perceptions of the younger generation regarding the meaning of marriage and to identify the factors that cause the younger generation to fear marriage, which in turn affects the declining marriage rates.

Marriage

Marriage is a life alliance between a man and a woman that is specifically legalized in the written laws of the Indonesian nation. (Sakirman, 2016) This rule is stipulated in Law No. 1 of 1974 on Marriage. (Triwulan Tutik, 2006) Compilation of Islamic law and some verses in the Civil Code. The definition of marriage is not explicitly stated in the Civil Code, but only mentions the principles of marriage. Some examples include viewing marriage merely as civil relationships, as mentioned in Article 26. Whereas Article 27 states that a husband must have only one wife, commonly referred to as the principle of monogamy. In household life, the husband and wife must be united in managing household affairs and must be faithful to each other, as stipulated in Article 103 of the Indonesian Civil Code. (Nurhayani, 2015) Regarding the definition of marriage itself, it has been explicitly stated in Article 1, paragraph 2 of the Marriage Law: "Marriage is a noble bond between a man and a woman who are positioned as husband and wife to achieve a happy family in this world and the hereafter based on the provisions of Allah SWT." (Nomor, 1 C.E.)

Before conducting the marriage contract, it is very important for the prospective bride and groom to know the condition of the person they are going to marry. In Islam, this is commonly referred to as Ta'aruf. (A. Lestari & Hildawati, 2019) This aims to determine whether someone is compatible with him in various aspects, both financial and emotional. (Kamaluddin, 2022) It is very important to balance the situation between the two so that after the marriage, both are free from social disparities and significant differences to avoid conflicts in the household they build. (Kurnia et al., 2021) Balance here is usually referred to as kafa'ah, which means balance in terms of religion, wealth, lineage, and also physical beauty. (Chania & Mukri, 2021) However, if someone is determined to marry someone who is not of the same status as themselves in terms of wealth, beauty, and lineage, as long as the person in question does not differ in belief from them, then they are allowed to marry that person with the approval and blessing of both parents. However, if the issue of inequality lies in religion, or in other words, if they belong to different religions, then it is better for them to marry someone who shares the same belief, as interfaith marriage is considered haram. (Ahmad Muzakki & Himami Hafshawati, 2021)

Digital Era

The digital era is an era where the attention of the majority of the world's population is focused on gadgets as tools to access social media. (Budiantoro, 2017) Social media provides information to the public about conditions around the world. It also makes it easier for them to access knowledge about life beyond their environment without any limitations. (Zainal Fatoni, 2021) This is what then leads to mistakes in interpreting and following misleading information. (Prisgunanto, 2018) A careful attitude is essential to filter any information obtained from social media. The era of digitalization gives hope to society for speed, convenience, comfort, and significant added value in meeting the general needs of people's lives. (Ardinata et al., 2022)

The advancements offered by technology have influenced the mindset of society regarding the existence of marriage and have led to interpretations that do not align with the true essence and purpose of marriage. This can be seen from the mindset of people who are reluctant to marry simply because of their fear of building a household with the wrong person, which they worry could lead to discomfort and disharmony in the household. (Wea, 2020) In fact, the marriage law itself clearly states that the purpose of marriage is to create a family that is *sakinah mawadah warahmah* with someone who understands the true meaning of love. (Lisnawati, 2022) Islam has never taught its followers to view all humans as equal, but rather teaches that *taqwa* is what distinguishes one person from another. This means that what is seen on social media in the form of domestic disputes does not happen in every household in the world. Everyone surely has different ways of dealing with household conflicts. Therefore, it is essential to have someone who understands Islamic values so that they can choose a wise attitude in accordance with Islamic teachings when facing household problems.

METHODS

The method used in this research is a qualitative descriptive method, which involves observing the phenomena occurring in this era of disruption, specifically the trend "Marriage is Scary" that is currently trending among the younger generation, where this trend has resulted in a decrease in marriage rates in Indonesia. The researcher observes the phenomenon through existing social media and records each case along with the factors causing the phenomenon to occur. Additionally, the researchers also used a normative

approach by aligning the phenomenon with various literature sources from books, articles, and journals previously compiled by other researchers. The data sources used come from primary data sources, namely news articles related to the research focus found on Google search engines and related phenomena presented on social media platforms like TikTok and YouTube. Additionally, secondary data sources were also utilized, including books, journals, and articles related to the research focus. All the obtained data sources are systematically organized and several necessary data for this research are extracted, then analyzed in detail to be included in the research results.

Studies discussing the trend of "Marriage is Scary" in this era of disruption are still very rarely covered in journals and articles. However, there are many news sources that contain information about this phenomenon, and there is concrete data that has been measured and presented in the news by various authorities in the field. That is why the researchers focused on collecting these data and then aligning them with existing literature sources to develop and detail everything related to the focus of this research. It should be noted beforehand that the existing data has been analyzed and confirmed to be real data and data that corresponds to the actual situation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. The Trend of Marriage is Scary and It's Impact on Society's Perception of Marriage

News That Was Found	Impact	Source
The number of influencers experiencing family issues and domestic violence has led to the trend "Marriage is Scary" becoming popular on social media.	Changes in societal mindset regarding the meaning of marriage, leading them to postpone or even choose not to marry.	https://www.rri.co.id/hiburan/922805/trend-marriage-is-scary-viral-di-medsos-apa-dampaknya
When marriage is considered frightening, a population crisis is also feared.	The virality of the fear of marriage trend has resulted in a decline in marriage rates and a decrease in the human population.	https://www.kompasiana.com/ukmpuniversitasjember/66c113a6c925c40cf97095d2/tren-marriage-is-scary-ketika-pernikahan-dianggap-menakutkan
The trend "Marriage is Scary" raises the question of whether marriage is still a dream for Millennials and Generation Z.	This trend makes millennials and Generation Z feel anxious and hesitant to commit.	https://mubadalah.id/marriage-is-scary-apakah-pernikahan-masih-menjadi-impian-di-era-digital/

In this era of disruption, the meaning of marriage has undergone a significant shift among society, where it was once considered the ultimate goal of a person's life. If one is not married, life is deemed incomplete. Even the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) mentioned in his hadith that marriage is the completion of half of one's religion; if a person is not married, half of their religion is incomplete. (Fauziah, 2018) However, in the digital era, especially among the younger generation, marriage is no longer seen as the main goal. In fact, some of them believe that marriage will only bring problems and difficulties to their lives, making them reluctant to get married (Nurviana & Hendriani, 2021). The fear of marriage is referred to as the "Marriage is Scary" trend, which is currently prevalent on social media feeds. It features many depictions of someone's married life that are considered unfavorable and seem frightening, because the married life that is expected to bring happiness to the couple instead creates many unresolved problems, leading to the dissolution of the marriage bond.

The trend of fear of marriage occurs due to several supporting factors, including the emergence of fear of failure in their household if they choose the wrong life partner as depicted on social media, the desire to focus on career and education, and the focus on pursuing a decent life (Mahfuzhatillah, 2018). This trend, if allowed to continue existing on social media, can result in a shift in understanding the true meaning of marriage, leading to misconceptions among the public. This, in turn, may cause the younger generation to reconsider their intention to marry or even prefer to live single, resulting in a phenomenon of declining marriage rates and a decrease in the human population. In addition, the trend of "Marriage is Scary" can also lead to an increase in the number of couples living together without the bond of marriage. Therefore, this trend must be addressed immediately by providing the younger generation with an understanding of the true meaning of marriage as explained in the Quran, Surah Ar-Rum, verse 21, and also the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) about the essence of marriage, where marriage is a means to achieve tranquility and a happy life when based on faith and mutual understanding between partners (Kamisetuddhuha, 2021).

Table 2. The Decline in Marriage Rates in Indonesia

Cases Found	Causing Factors	Source
Marriage data published by BPS from 2014 to 2023.	The decrease in the number of marriages is caused by many young people postponing marriage.	https://kumparan.com/kumparannews/angka-pernikahan-di-indonesia-capai-titik-terendah-dalam-satu-dekade-terakhir-22ImwceW9RH
The decline in marriage rates and the increase in divorce rates.	The marriage rate has declined because many young people are postponing marriage. Meanwhile, the divorce rate has increased due to conflicts, financial issues, incompatibility between both parties, and domestic violence.	https://www.pramborsfm.com/news/angka-pernikahan-di-indonesia-terus-menurun-terendah-dalam-satu-dekade-terakhir
The global phenomenon of reluctance to marry.	Economic reasons are the main factor causing young people to be reluctant to marry and have children.	https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/lifestyle/20240307135225-33-520429/bukti-baru-warga-ri-malas-menikah-angka-perkawinan-merosot

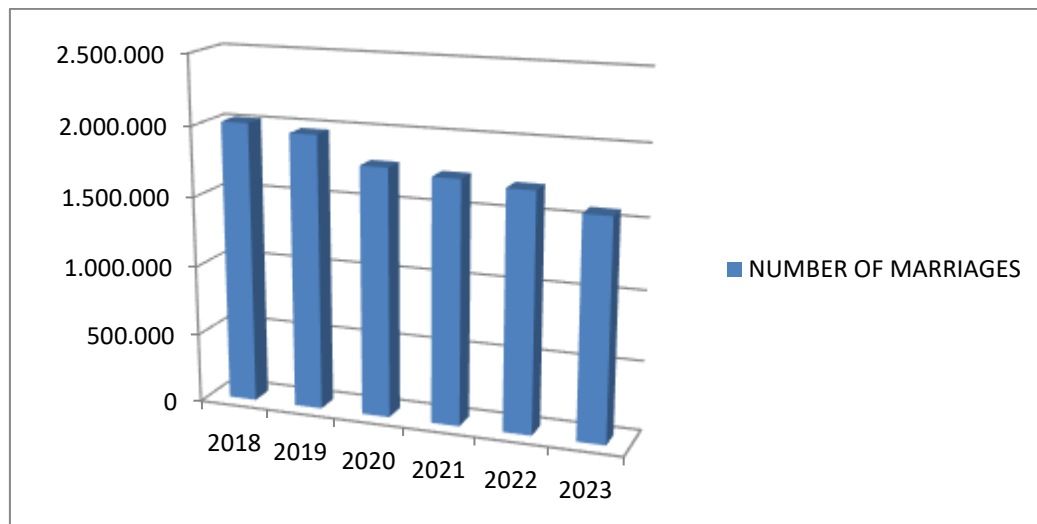


Figure 1. Data on Marriage Statistics for the Last Six Years

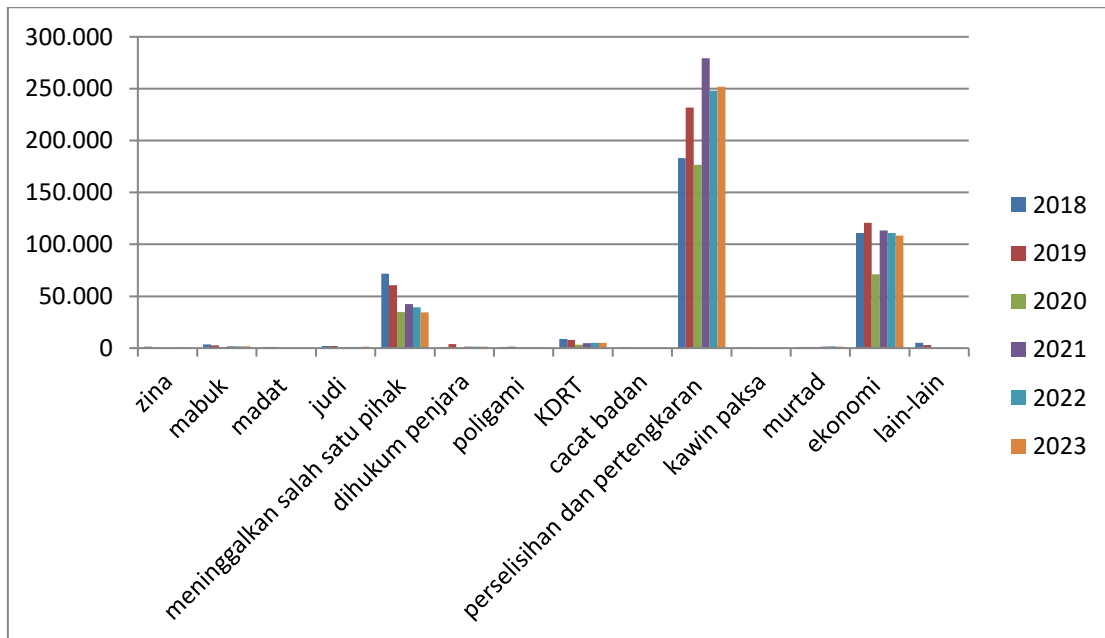
The Central Statistics Agency, commonly abbreviated as BPS, reported that the marriage rate in Indonesia has decreased over the past decade, with a significant decline observed in the last six years. The lowest point of this decline occurred in 2023, with 1,577,255 marriages. This number decreased by 128 thousand from the number of people who got married in 2022. This is driven by the many Indonesian youths who are postponing marriage. This happens because of the desire among young people to pursue success in education or career, self-development, and the decreasing pressure from the social environment to get married (Riska & Khasanah, 2023) and due to the policy of a minimum marriage age of 19 years, which is regulated under Law Number 16 of 2019. In contrast to the number of marriages, the number of divorces in Indonesia has been increasing over the past three years (Ningtias, 2022). This phenomenon occurs due to several underlying factors. These factors include household disputes that are very difficult to resolve, financial problems, cases of infidelity, and Domestic Violence or DV committed by one party. (Matondang, 2014).

It turns out that not only Indonesia is experiencing a decline in the existence of marriage. In South Korea, there is also a decrease in marriage rates. This phenomenon is evidenced by a report from the South Korean statistics agency, which states that only 27.5% of young women are willing to marry. This means that one in four South Korean women are willing to marry (Adhani & Aripudin, 2024). This phenomenon is driven by young people who postpone marriage or even have no desire to marry. Additionally, this phenomenon also occurs in China, (FARKHAH, 2024) which can be seen from the increasing prevalence of single lifestyles in this country. Most analysts believe that China's population will decline due to the reluctance of many young people to marry and the increasing number of couples who practice child-free living, meaning they have no desire to have children. The underlying factor behind both of these issues is

economic. They think that if they get married or have children, they will not be able to support themselves and their families, so they choose to live single for their entire lives or have a partner but not have children.

Table 3. Household Life Problems

Subject	Case found	Causing Factors	Source
The husband, with the initials FA, is a resident of Gampong Payatieng.	Domestic violence that ended in death.	The household situation is not harmonious and there are frequent disputes between husband and wife.	https://www.rmolaceh.id/masalah-rumah-tangga-wanita-di-peukan-badatewas-digorok-suami
A policewoman named Fadhilatun Nikmah.	Policewoman burns husband to death.	The perpetrator often plays online gambling, causing his wife to suffer from mental stress.	https://www.cantika.com/read/1878497/polwan-bakar-suami-ini-8-bahaya-judi-online-merusak-rumah-tangga-hingga-masalah-mental
A number of local artists.	Adultery	Low commitment, need for variety, high sexual desire, and other circumstances.	https://www.fimela.com/entertainment/read/5620067/5-kasus-perselingkuhan-selebritis-di-tahun-2024-terbaru-heri-horeh



Graphic 2. The Number of Divorce Rates and Their Contributing Factors

The decline in the number of marriages in Indonesia is triggered by the circulation of facts and news that depict disharmonious household lives, even giving the impression of suffering. This has resulted in a shift in people's mindset, from eagerly anticipating married life to fearing the prospect of marriage. (Cahyaningsih, 2024) Not without reason, but from a learning perspective, household conflicts often bring losses to one party and can even take someone's life at the hands of the person they love (Liyus & Wahyudi, 2020). These conflicts can occur due to differences of opinion between husband and wife, which then lead to disputes and eventually result in domestic violence within the household (Sholeh, 2021). In addition, another factor triggering the breakdown of households in the 5.0 era is online gambling, which is very difficult to avoid for those who are already addicted. They find it difficult to weigh whether online gambling brings more benefits or if it actually causes more problems (Zakfah & Sanubari, 2024). It's no wonder if a wife gets emotional because the money that should have been given to her as support is instead spent on online gambling, leaving their children and her at home without their needs being met.

The next household conflict was triggered by infidelity. (PG & Chyntia, 2023) Not only does it happen among ordinary people, but it also occurs among public figures. In fact, if we look at the domestic

lives of these celebrities, they seem perfect, as they are financially well-off, physically attractive, and come from esteemed families. However, the desire to cheat does not consider who the perpetrator is or their circumstances. If someone fundamentally never feels enough and is ungrateful, then cheating is a natural thing for them, especially if they think of themselves as visual beings who need other sensations to enjoy life, making cheating a choice for them. Moreover, if the marriage they are in is considered disharmonious and often involves arguments, they tend to approach someone of the opposite sex to pour out all their feelings, which then turns into mutual affection, triggering the desire to cheat. (Nursyifa & Hayati, 2020) Nevertheless, as humans who cannot escape from desires, the main key needed to avoid infidelity is to strengthen faith and cultivate gratitude for what we have received, (Sari et al., 2023) If the partner we have is less than perfect, then we as partners must complement that imperfection. (Lubis, 2012)

CONCLUSION

Marriage is a sacred bond, where every action taken by a married couple after the marriage is considered an act of worship, which applies not only in this world but also in the hereafter. Every adult who is capable of getting married should do so promptly to anticipate and mitigate any negative consequences that may arise from delaying marriage. Considering the rapid advancements in various fields of life, young people who are ready to marry are faced with two choices: to marry immediately with the aim of completing half of their religion or to postpone marriage to ensure their happiness. However, based on existing data and facts, many young people choose to postpone marriage. This can be seen from the BPS report on marriage rates over the past decade, which shows a decline in the number of marriages in Indonesia from 2014 to 2023. This happens due to several underlying factors, including: changes in the mindset of young people regarding the true nature of marriage, the trend of reluctance to marry that is prevalent in various countries, and the fear among young people about domestic life as presented in various social media.

The theories used in this research have successfully addressed all issues related to the research focus chosen by the researcher regarding the decline in marriage rates due to the trend "Marriage is Scary" in the digital era and its impact on societal attitudes towards marriage. The research concepts used are tailored to the needs of writing this article. The data sources used in this research are based on case findings available in search engines on Google, Tik-Tok, and Instagram. Additionally, the data obtained is aligned with various other scientific works related to the focus of this research. The purpose of writing this article is to address the issues regarding the causes and effects of the Marriage is Scary trend occurring in various parts of the world, especially in Indonesia, in this modern era. This article is expected to serve as a reference for readers to delve into the Marriage is Scary trend in the era of disruption. This article is presented to enrich the body of knowledge in the field of Islamic family law related to the shifting meaning of marriage occurring in this digital era.

There are still various shortcomings in the writing of this article, both in terms of writing style and the content of the research. This is due to the lack of data sources that explain how a young person can develop a reluctance to marry, which then becomes the main factor causing the decline in the existence of marriage, whether it arises from within themselves or from other factors beyond their control. This needs to be investigated further to uncover the actual facts that align with the existing conditions and to determine the next steps to address the issue. In addition, another limitation of this research is the difficulty in finding data on the efforts made by the government and other layers of society to address the phenomenon of marriage reluctance. This aspect is crucial for researchers to develop further in order to provide readers with guidance on the next steps to ensure that the desire to marry does not fade away from individuals. If this issue is left unaddressed, it is clear that the social life of society will experience imbalances in various aspects of life. Therefore, the researcher advises the next writer to complete the missing parts of this article, so that the knowledge regarding the focus of this research can be perfectly fulfilled.

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