



## Marriage decline rate phenomenon in indonesia and its relevance to marriage encouragement in islam

Arwa Sya'ima <sup>a,1,\*</sup>, Widiyanto <sup>b,2</sup>, Zainal Arifin <sup>c,3</sup>

<sup>\*a</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia; <sup>b</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta, Indonesia; <sup>c</sup> Al-Ahgaff University, Yemen

<sup>1</sup> [arwasyauma99@gmail.com](mailto:arwasyauma99@gmail.com); <sup>2</sup> [widiyanto@stitmadani.ac.id](mailto:widiyanto@stitmadani.ac.id); <sup>3</sup> [zainalarifin1606@gmail.com](mailto:zainalarifin1606@gmail.com)

\*Correspondent Author

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### ABSTRACT

This research examines the phenomenon of declining marriage rates in Indonesia and its relevance to the recommendation of marriage in the perspective of the Qur'an and Hadith. Data from the Central Statistics Agency shows a decrease in marriages over the last 6 years by 438,916 marriages. The causes are social, economic, and psychological factors, such as a free lifestyle, a focus on career advancement, unstable financial conditions, pursuing education, divorce trauma, egocentrism, and despair in finding a partner. A review of QS. An-Nur (24): 32-33 and Hadith Bukhari No. 5066 shows that the recommendation to marry aims to channel desire through the means permitted by Allah and to avoid the act of fornication. Delaying marriage in Indonesia does not contradict the recommendation to marry as long as the youth can refrain from the act of fornication. However, marriage has a more noble meaning than just the release of desire, which is the realization of *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, *rahmah*, and the perfection of half of one's religion. It is suggested that policymakers assist the younger generation who delay marriage by providing them with provision, training, capital, and post-marriage guidance.

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### Introduction

In the perspective of Islam, the Quran and Hadith provide clear guidance on the importance of marriage for young adults who have reached maturity and are socially, economically, and psychologically capable. As stated in Surah An-Nur (24:32), 'And marry those among you who are single...' (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2022), and in a Hadith narrated by Imam Bukhari, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ emphasized marriage as a recommended Sunnah to be followed. He said, 'O young men, whoever among you can afford to get married, let him do so, for it is more effective in lowering the gaze and guarding one's chastity...' (Muhammad bin Ismail, 2001).

However, in reality, there is a noticeable decline in marriage rates, which has become a serious concern not only in Indonesia but also in various parts of the world. Data released by the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) shows a decrease in marriages over the past six years by 438,916 marriages (Central Bureau of Statistics Indonesia, 2023).

In Indonesia, the decline in marriages is attributed to various complex social, economic, and psychological factors. Socially, there has been a shift in societal attitudes toward long-term commitments in marriage, as well as the ideal age and stability required to start a family (Sudrajat, 2014). Additionally, economic factors play a significant role; the rising cost of living and the difficulty in finding stable employment are obstacles for young people to enter married

life. Psychological factors, such as marriage trauma and high self-assessment, also contribute to the decline in marriage rates (Mahfuzhatillah, 2018).

The Quran and Hadith are the primary sources of Islamic law. However, other factors can influence the interpretation and application of Islamic law. This concept illustrates that Islam is a universal religion applicable to all people, not limited by time or place, allowing for relevance in legal rulings. This includes marriage, where marriage law is examined from various perspectives, highlighting the relevance of Islamic law (Taufiq & Syarkawi, 2022).

Several previous studies have discussed the encouragement to marry from the perspective of the Quran and Hadith. Among them are 'Revitalizing the Encouragement to Marry Through Hadith,' an analytical descriptive study concluding that marriage is the most appropriate solution to fulfill human sexual desires, as it transforms what is forbidden into an act of worship that earns rewards (Arisman, 2022). 'Interpretation of Surah An-Nur 24:32 Regarding the Encouragement to Marry (A Hermeneutic Ma'na Cum Maghza Analysis),' a qualitative study using the hermeneutic Ma'na Cum Maghza theory, explains that the primary purpose of Surah An-Nur (24:32-33) is not to encourage marriage for those in poverty but rather to liberate slaves and servants, to encourage greater respect for the less fortunate, and to encourage marriage for those who are able (Winkeh & Muh. Muadz, 2021). 'Study of Factors Influencing the Delay of Marriage in Early Adult Women,' a quantitative descriptive study using a Likert scale and accidental sampling technique, identifies six factors causing the delay of marriage, including the desire to live freely (Mahfuzhatillah, 2018).

Based on the above studies, it can be observed that no research has yet addressed the phenomenon of declining marriage rates in Indonesia in relation to the relevance of the encouragement to marry as per the Quran and Hadith. Therefore, this study will examine two issues: what is the phenomenon of declining marriage rates in Indonesia? And how relevant is the encouragement to marry in relation to this phenomenon from the perspective of the Quran and Hadith?

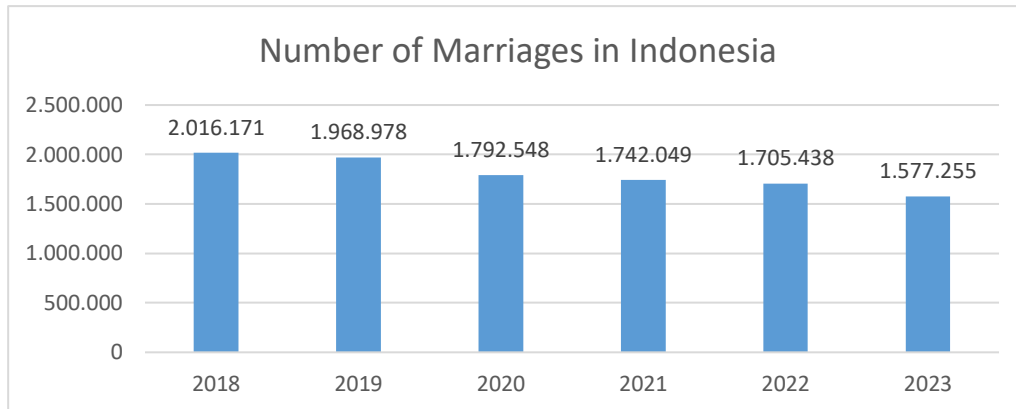
## Method

This research is qualitative, utilizing a literature study as the primary data source. Data collection techniques involve documentation by exploring literature on Quranic verses and Hadiths related to the encouragement of marriage. Supporting sources for this research include references relevant to the research theme, such as books, articles, and internet sources. Data processing involves defining key terms from the verses and Hadiths, tracing the circumstances of the revelation (Asbab Nuzul) of the verses, analyzing the context of the verses (Munasabah), and understanding the reasons behind the Hadiths (Sabab Wurud). The study further develops and draws conclusions using both deductive and inductive reasoning methods.

## Result and Discussion

### The Decline of Marriage in Indonesia

Marriage is a natural law (sunnatullah) in which every human being is inherently created in pairs. In Indonesia, marriage is not only seen as a sacred bond between two individuals but also holds significant social and cultural meaning (Himawan, 2020). According to data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), the marriage rate in Indonesia has steadily declined in almost all regions over the past six years, with a decrease of 438,916 marriages. The details are as follows: 2,016,171 marriages in 2018, 1,968,978 marriages in 2019, 1,792,548 marriages in 2020, 1,742,049 marriages in 2021, 1,705,438 marriages in 2022, and 2023 recorded the lowest number of marriages in Indonesia's history, with only 1,577,255 marriages (Central Bureau of Statistics Indonesia, 2023).



**Figure 1. BPS Data: Decline in Marriages in Indonesia**

The decline in marriage rates in Indonesia is influenced by various social and economic factors. One significant factor is the desire for a more liberated lifestyle, where individuals are reluctant to commit to the responsibilities of marriage and prefer to engage in activities and hobbies without interference from others. Many young people also prioritize career advancement, as achieving career success requires intense focus, dedication, and time, leading them to delay marriage (Mahfuzhatillah, 2018). Additionally, financial instability plays a crucial role; delaying marriage allows individuals to build better financial stability, which can contribute to a more secure future for their potential families (Nurviana & Hendriani, 2021). Pursuing education is another factor, as there is an increasing awareness that education is a long-term investment that benefits various aspects of life, including marriage and child-rearing. Thus, postponing marriage is seen as a wise step towards a better family life (Riska & Khasanah, 2023).

Psychological factors also contribute to the decline in marriage. Divorce trauma, for example, creates fear and anxiety about the possibility of a failed marriage. Egocentrism and narcissism, where individuals set excessively high standards for themselves and seek a perfect partner, also play a role (Mahfuzhatillah, 2018). Additionally, despair caused by repeated failures in the process of ta'aruf (Islamic courtship) and the belief that one is destined to remain single can lead to the decision to delay or avoid marriage altogether (Ashri, 2019).

Based on the discussion above, it can be understood that the factors contributing to the decline in marriage are not permanent but rather temporary, as individuals prepare for a better life in terms of social and economic stability. These factors reflect a desire to become more responsible and ready for the commitments and consequences of marriage before entering into it.

### **Relevance of the Recommendation to Marry from the Perspective of the Qur'an and Hadith**

The Recommendation to Marry in the Qur'an (QS. An-Nur 24:32-33)

وَأَنْكِحُوا الْأَيَامَىٰ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَأَمَائِكُمْ إِنْ يَكُونُوا فُقَرَاءَ يُغْنِهِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

The translation is: "And marry those among you who are single and the righteous among your male and female servants. If they are poor, Allah will enrich them out of His bounty. Allah is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing" (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2022).

وَلْيَسْتَغْفِرِ الَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ نِكَاحًا حَتَّىٰ يُغْنِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَالَّذِينَ يَبْتَغُونَ الْكِتَابَ مِمَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَكَاتِبُوهُمْ إِنْ عَلِمْتُمْ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا وَآتُوهُمْ مِّنْ مَّالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آتَاكُمْ وَلَا تُكْرِهُوا فَتِيَّتَكُمْ عَلَى الْبِعَاءِ إِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ تَحْصُنَا لَنَنْتَعِزَّ بِعَرْضِ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَنْ يُكْرِهْنَهُنَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِكْرَاهِهِنَّ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

The translation is: "And let those who cannot find the means to marry keep themselves chaste until Allah enriches them out of His bounty. And if any of those whom your right hands possess desire a contract (of emancipation), make a contract with them if you know there is good in them. And give them something out of the wealth of Allah which He has bestowed upon you. Do not compel your slave girls to prostitution if they desire chastity, seeking the fleeting gains of this world. But if anyone compels them, then after such compulsion, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful (to them)" (Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2022).

(a) Lexical Meaning

The key terms in QS. An-Nur (24): 32 are Ankihu, Ayama, Shalihin, and Fuqara. The word Ankihu is an imperative form derived from the root word Nakaha-Yankihu-Nikahan, which means "to marry." Ayama is the plural form of Aimun, referring to unmarried men and women, whether they are virgins or previously married (widowers/widows) (Al-Sabuni, 1981). Shalihin is the plural form of shalih, referring to those who are righteous in their religion and character (Al-Sa'di Abdurrahman bin Nashiruddin, 2022). Fuqara is the plural form of faqir, which denotes individuals who possess no wealth at all (Manzur, 1994).

The key terms in QS. An-Nur (24): 33 are Iffah and Al-Bigha'. Iffah means self-restraint and guarding oneself from immoral acts, specifically from what is forbidden, with no allowance for engaging in adultery (Al-Samarqandi, 1993). Al-Bigha' is a verbal noun (mashdar) from the root word bagha, which means to force a woman into committing adultery (Al-Sabuni, 1981).

(b) Makkiyah and Madaniyah

Surah An-Nur (24) is a Madaniyah surah, meaning it was revealed in Madinah after the Prophet Muhammad migrated from Makkah to Madinah (Al-Syaukani, 2007). This classification is supported by the understanding that Madaniyah surahs often emphasize the technical aspects of marriage (Ar-Razi, 1981).

(c) Sabab Nuzul (Context of Revelation)

The Sabab Nuzul of QS. An-Nur (24): 32 is considered a macro sabab nuzul, focusing on the linguistic situation concerning whom the command is addressed (khitob). The widely accepted opinion is that the command in this verse is directed at the guardians of marriage (As-Suyuthi, 2017).

The Sabab Nuzul of QS. An-Nur (24): 33 includes both micro and macro contexts. The micro sabab nuzul involves a complaint made by two slave girls of Abdullah bin Ubay to the Prophet Muhammad (As-Suyuthi, 2017). The macro sabab nuzul refers to the pre-Islamic custom of forcing slave girls into prostitution for profit, with the earnings being taken by their masters (Al-Maraghi, 1946).

(d) Munasabah (Contextual Linkage)

Munasabah refers to the connection between verses and surahs, creating a cohesive and meaningful discourse with a clear purpose (El-yunusi & Hamidah, 2022).

**Munasabah Between Surahs.** The connection with the preceding surah, QS. Al-Mu'minun (23): 5, lies in the praise of those who guard their chastity. QS. An-Nur (24) then elaborates on how to protect one's chastity by avoiding adultery (Zuhaili, 2018). The connection with the following surah, Al-Furqan (25), is similar to that between Al-Maidah (5) and Al-An'am (6), as it involves the completion of Allah's decree, affirming that He is the Creator and Owner of the heavens and the earth (As-Suyuthi, 2002).

**Munasabah Between Verses.** The connection with the preceding verses, QS. An-Nur (24): 30-31, emphasizes Allah's prohibition of all acts that lead to adultery, both directly and indirectly (Eko Zulfikar, 2020). In verse 32, Allah commands guardians to marry off those under their care who are single and capable of marriage, and to assist them financially. Marriage is seen as the most effective solution for maintaining personal dignity and protecting believers from falling into sin.

The connection with the following verse, QS. An-Nur (24): 33, provides a solution for those who are not yet financially or otherwise prepared for marriage. They are encouraged to remain patient and guard their chastity until Allah grants them the means to marry, reinforcing the

promise that Allah will provide, thus removing any need for despair or anxiety (Al-Biq'a'i, n.d.).

#### 1) The Recommendation to Marry in Hadith Bukhari No. 5006 in the Book of Marriage

حَدَّثَنَا عُمَرُ بْنُ حَفْصٍ بْنُ غِيَاثٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي، حَدَّثَنَا الْأَعْمَشُ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي عُمَارَةُ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ يَرِيدٍ، قَالَ: دَخَلْتُ مَعَ عَلْقَمَةَ، وَالْأَسْوَدَ عَلَى عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، فَقَالَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ: كُنَّا مَعَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ شَبَابًا لَا نَحْدُ شَيْئًا، فَقَالَ لَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «يَا مَعْشَرَ الشَّبَابِ، مَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ الْبَاءَةَ فَلْيَتَزَوَّجْ، فَإِنَّهُ أَغْضُ لِلْبَصَرِ وَأَحْصَنُ لِلْفَرْجِ، وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَعَلَيْهِ بِالصَّوْمِ فَإِنَّهُ لَهُ وَجَاءٌ

'Umar ibn Ḥafsh ibn Ghiyāṣ narrated to us, my father narrated to us, al-A'masy narrated to us, 'Umārah narrated to me, from 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Yazīd, who said: I went to 'Abdullah, along with 'Alqamah and al-Aswad. 'Abdullah said: We, the young men who had nothing, sat with the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him). He said to us: 'O young men, whoever among you is able to marry, let him marry, for it helps lower the gaze and protect the private parts. And whoever is not able to marry, let him fast, for fasting serves as a shield for him.'" (Muhammad bin Ismail, 2001).

#### (a) Takhrij Hadith

This hadith is classified as a hadith with a single chain of narrators (ahad) at each level, with 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud being the sole narrator. In terms of form, this hadith is categorized as a qauli hadith, which corresponds to what the Prophet Muhammad said and begins with the phrase "Qaala lanaa Rasulullah" (The Messenger of Allah said to us). Regarding attribution, this hadith is considered marfu' because it is directly attributed to the Prophet and takes the form of qaala. Thus, it can be concluded that this hadith falls under the category of marfu' qauli haqiqi (Sanusi, 2012).

#### (b) Sabab Wurud

Imam Bukhari states that the sabab wurud (context of revelation) of this hadith is when 'Abdullah was still young, and the Prophet sat with him, knowing that 'Abdullah had no wealth. The Prophet then advised about the importance of marriage (Muhammad bin Ismail, 2001). Al-Baghawi adds that the context of this hadith is when the Prophet spoke with a young man from the Quraysh who was not yet married, after which he mentioned this hadith (Burhanuddin Ibn Hamzah, n.d.).

#### (c) Meaning of Key Words

The key terms in this hadith include al-Syabab, al-Ba'ah, Aghaddu, and Ahsanu. Al-Syabab refers to youth, a stage in life where the desire for the opposite sex is strong, and most young people struggle to control it (Al-Husain bin Muhammad bin Said, 2007). Al-Ba'ah means the ability to marry, referring to both physical and economic readiness. Aghaddu means to restrain, particularly restraining and lowering the gaze from looking at the opposite sex (Muhammad bin Shalih, 2006). Ahsanu means to guard or protect oneself, particularly from indecent acts, by fasting (Ahmad bin Faris bin Zakaria, 1994).

Drawing from QS. An-Nur (24): 32-33, there are two main messages regarding the recommendation to marry: A directive for those who are single and mentally and spiritually capable to marry in order to maintain personal honor and prevent immoral acts, and to remain patient and fast if they are not yet able to marry. A directive for guardians to assist and arrange marriages for those under their care if they are unable to do so themselves.

This aligns with the hadith's perspective on marriage: The Prophet (peace be upon him) commands young men who are physically and financially capable to marry. The Prophet offers a solution for those who are physically capable but not financially ready, by advising them to fast as it serves as a barrier against desires and helps prevent immoral behavior.

#### Relevance of Marriage Recommendations in Islam

QS. An-Nur (24): 32-33 and the hadith about the recommendation to marry share common relevance regarding the purpose of marriage. The primary goal of marriage, as outlined in both



the Quranic verses and the hadith, is to channel one's desires in a manner approved by Allah and to avoid immoral acts such as zina. This is summarized in the following table:

Table 1. Recommendations for Marriage in the Qur'an and Hadith	
QS. An-Nur (24): 32-33	Hadith Bukhari No. 5066
No leniency for committing zina under any circumstances	One should lower and control their gaze from looking at the opposite sex
Guardians should help their wards to marry and not obstruct marriage due to economic constraints	Recommendation to marry for those who are physically and economically capable
One should be patient until Allah provides for them in terms of dowry and maintenance	One should fast if they are not economically capable of marrying

From the table above, the relevance of the recommendation to marry, when examined from the purpose of marriage in different conditions, can be summarized as follows: No Permissibility for Zinā: Under any condition, there is no allowance for engaging in zinā (fornication or adultery). Normal Condition: One should lower their gaze and avoid looking at the opposite sex. Prepared Physically and Economically: One should get married. Economically Unprepared: One should be patient and fast, and guardians who are capable should assist in marrying off their charges.

Based on these points, the decline in marriage rates in Indonesia does not contradict the Islamic recommendation to marry. The delay in marriage observed is not related to the purpose of marriage as a means of lawful sexual gratification (biological factors), but rather to social, economic, and psychological factors. This indicates the relevance between the recommendation to marry and the phenomenon of declining marriage rates in Indonesia, as long as unlawful sexual gratification does not occur, delaying marriage is permissible.

On the other hand, it is important to note that marriage is not solely for satisfying sexual desires or fulfilling biological instincts, as this would reduce marriage to merely a social necessity with easier alternatives available.

Engaging in zinā, whether voluntary or paid, results from a limited understanding of the purpose of marriage. This is because those who engage in zinā are not burdened with the responsibilities before and after sexual relations, as their primary goal is merely to fulfill sexual desires. In contrast, marriage entails responsibilities from the moment of the marriage contract until death separates the couple.

Such a perspective undermines the sanctity and purpose of marriage, which is meant to be a source of tranquility, love, and mercy (*sakinah mawaddah warahmah*) and a means to complete half of one's faith. Moreover, it degrades human dignity by equating the fulfillment of sexual instincts with animalistic behavior, lacking the etiquette and responsibilities that follow sexual relations.

## Conclusion

The decline in marriage in Indonesia caused by socio-economic and psychological factors does not fundamentally contradict the recommendation for marriage, as this decline is not permanent but rather temporary. Indonesian youth choose to postpone marriage to better prepare for marital life by enhancing their psychological and economic readiness.

The recommendation for marriage in QS. An-Nur (24) and Hadith Bukhari No. 5006 shows its relevance to the phenomenon of declining marriage in Indonesia. As long as youth can avoid zina, it is acceptable to postpone marriage. However, when sexual desires become uncontrollable, immediate marriage is advisable. If economic constraints are a barrier, guardians should assist these youths in getting married. Fulfillment of sexual desires through lawful marriage carries a more noble meaning than merely satisfying sexual urges, as this

tarnishes the sanctity of marriage and eliminates its spiritual significance. The noble purpose of marriage is to achieve *sakinah mawaddah wa rahmah* and to complete half of one's religion, which aligns with Allah's creation of humans as His vicegerents on earth. In conclusion, the author advises policymakers to support youth who delay marriage due to socio-economic and psychological factors. Such support can be provided both before and after marriage, including pre-marital training, financial assistance, and post-marital guidance to prevent marital failure. It is also possible that the decline in marriage could become permanent, not just a delay for better preparation but an actual decision not to marry at all. This would be detrimental to the Muslim community and the government, affecting the continuity of future generations and the failure to uphold the mandate of being vicegerents on earth, for which Allah created humans.

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