IMPLICATIONS OF THE 'MARRIAGE IS SCARY' TREND ON TIKTOK ON MUSLIM TEENAGERS' VIEWS ON MARRIAGE

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Abstract

The growing phenomenon of "Marriage is Scary" on social media, particularly on TikTok, has influenced Muslim teenagers in Medan Johor's views on marriage. The trend highlights fear and ambivalence towards marriage with negative narratives that focus on the burdens and challenges of marriage. This study aims to explore the impact of these trends on Muslim teenagers' perceptions, as well as the relevance of religious understanding and the role of social media in shaping attitudes towards marriage. The method used is juridical sociological with a qualitative approach, collecting data through interviews, questionnaires and observation. The Legal Benefit Theory in this study shows that law can serve as an instrument that not only protects individuals from the impact of misperceptions, but also ensures social welfare in the long run. The results show that this trend has an impact on the decline in teenagers' interest in marriage, the increase in hedonistic behavior and individualism, and the shift in family values. On the other hand, a strong religious understanding can be a protective factor against these negative influences. In conclusion, it is important for families, schools and religious communities to improve media literacy and provide contextualized religious guidance to strengthen the understanding of marriage in Islam as an act of worship that brings blessings, as well as to counterbalance the negative narratives that develop on social media.

Keywords: Marriage is Scary, Muslim Teenagers, Social Media

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology, especially social media, has brought about significant changes in the way individuals view various aspects of life, including marriage.(Dewi dkk., 2023) Social media has become not only a means of communication and entertainment, but also a major platform for sharing ideas, experiences and even shaping collective perceptions on social and cultural issues.(Suhendra & Selly Pratiwi, 2024) In the context of marriage, social media plays an important role in creating trends, shaping expectations and influencing the views of individuals, especially the younger generation, on the concept and values of marriage.

According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2024 quoted from Kumparan, as many as 69.75% of young people in Indonesia are recorded as not having a legal partner, this figure shows a significant jump compared to 2015 which only reached 55.79%. In contrast, the number of young people who have married has shrunk, from 42.64% in 2015 to lower in 2024. Similar trends are also observed in various other countries, not just in Indonesia. Meanwhile, according to a report by Bank of America in 2023, around 71% of individuals from Generation Z choose to postpone marriage to pursue economic stability first. On the other hand, The Knot (2023) also found that more than half of the Gen Z population who have plans to get married will wait until they are financially secure before taking the leap.

Apps like TikTok often feature a variety of content related to marriage, from the happy moments of the wedding party, to the challenges of life after marriage, to various doctrines or opinions that are packaged in an interesting and entertaining way. Phenomena such as "Marriage is scary" on TikTok, for example, show how couples share their experiences of the difficulties and pressures they face in marriage, which often differs from the idealized image commonly presented in traditional media, which portrays marriage as scary and fraught with emotional, financial and social risks. This trend features experiences or stories about household failures, couple conflicts, and the fear of taking on the huge responsibilities of marriage..(Asy'ari & Amelia, 2024)

For social media users, exposure to such content can be a double-edged sword.(Situmorang, 2024) On the one hand, such content can educate and open discussions about the realities of marriage, helping them to prepare more thoroughly. On the other hand, certain trends or narratives on social media can create unbalanced perceptions, such as excessive fear of marriage, unrealistic expectations, or even disregard for religious and cultural values that should be the foundation of building a household. (Kinapti, 2024), social media algorithms are often.(Arjuna dkk., 2024) This can create a perception bias, where teens only see certain sides of marriage, without considering a more holistic perspective. As a result, they may start to question traditional values that have been taught by family and religion, or be overly influenced by trends that do not fit the context of their lives.

The "marriage is scary" trend on TikTok has its own appeal to teenagers because it is relatable, funny, and often touches on sensitive issues that are rarely discussed openly. However, this kind of narrative also has the potential to create negative perceptions of the institution of marriage, especially among Muslim teenagers who are in the phase of searching for identity and forming life values. In Islam, marriage has an important position as a sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, which not only brings blessings but is also a way to achieve tranquility (sakinah), love (mawaddah), and mercy (rahmah).(Sugitanata & Karimullah, 2023) Therefore, when scary narratives about marriage dominate, it is feared that there will be a clash between religious doctrine and social reality presented by the media. Medan Johor, as one of the urban areas with a high internet penetration rate, Muslim teenagers are intensively exposed to social media content, including TikTok. This phenomenon is a serious concern because adolescents are a group that is very vulnerable to external influences, especially from the media they consume every day. Many of them do not have a strong filter to filter information that is in accordance with their religious and cultural values.

In researching the "Marriage is Scary" phenomenon that is rampant on social media, the Legal Benefit Theory is one of the most relevant approaches to use. This theory emphasizes that the law should provide the maximum benefit for the welfare of individuals and society collectively. The "Marriage is Scary" trend, which presents marriage as something full of emotional, financial and social risks, has spread a negative narrative that has a wide impact, especially among Muslim teenagers.

This narrative not only instills fear of marriage, but also has the potential to hinder the main purpose of marriage in Islam, which is to preserve offspring and create sakinah, mawaddah and rahmah in the household. In addition, this trend can encourage individualism, decrease marriage rates, and increase the potential for promiscuity, which is contrary to religious and cultural values. This phenomenon contradicts the principles of Maslahat Theory, which in Islam emphasizes that marriage is not just a burden, but a path to blessings and prosperity. The concerns raised by this trend are often unproven, as many couples actually experience increased economic well-being and peace of mind after marriage.

In this context, marriage law, both in Islam and positive law in Indonesia, plays an important

role in creating real benefits by maintaining family stability, protecting children's rights, and building the value of togetherness and social responsibility. Marriage is not only a bond between two individuals, but also a foundation that sustains the welfare of the wider community. Therefore, media literacy efforts and regulation of content that shapes negative perceptions of marriage need to be improved. With a balanced education on the benefits of marriage and the Islamic values that support it, Muslim youth can have a more objective understanding and not be easily influenced by negative narratives that develop on social media. Thus, the application of the Legal Benefit Theory in this study shows that the law can serve as an instrument that not only protects individuals from the impact of misperceptions, but also ensures social welfare in the long run.

The problem formulation in this study focuses on two main aspects. First, how the "Marriage is Scary" trend on social media affects Muslim teenagers' perceptions   marriage. This phenomenon needs to be studied more deeply because the narratives that develop on social media can shape public opinion and even influence individual decisions in viewing marriage, both positively and negatively. Secondly, this research also seeks to answer how the Maslahat Theory in Islam can be a foundation in overcoming the negative stigma towards marriage. In Islam, marriage is seen as a form of blessing that not only brings emotional happiness but can also improve the welfare of individuals and society. Therefore, this theory needs to be studied further to see how the concept of maslahat can be a solution in overcoming the negative stigma of marriage rebuild a more objective understanding of marriage, so as not to get caught up in the fear narratives circulating on social media.

This study aims to analyze the impact of the "Marriage is Scary" trend on the mindset and attitude of Muslim teenagers in Medan Johor regarding marriage. By understanding how social media influences their perceptions, this research can provide greater insight into the factors that lead to the fear of marriage. In addition, this research also aims to explore the concept of Maslahat Theory in Islam as a solution to counteract the negative perceptions. By prioritizing the principle of maslahat, this study seeks to show that marriage not only brings responsibilities and challenges, but also offers blessings, stability and prosperity for individuals and society. Through this study, it is hoped that the younger generation can have a more balanced understanding of marriage, so that they are not easily influenced by social media trends that may not fully reflect reality.

Among the previous studies, namely research conducted by Riyan Riswandi, Cucu Surahman, and Risris Hari Nugraha in 2025 in a journal entitled "Analysis of Gen-Z Muslim Student Perspectives on the Marriage Is Scary Issue". Previous research discussed the perceptions of generation z Muslim students on a college campus in the city of Bandung regarding the issue of "marriage is scary". The results showed that various factors contribute to the fear of marriage, such as gender role dynamics, the risk of conflict and domestic violence, and the influence of the social environment.

Furthermore, research conducted by Abdul Qudus Al Faruq et al. in 2025 in a journal entitled "Marriage Is Scary Phenomenon In Indonesia: Analysis Of Quranic Response To Increases Marital Violence". Previous research discussed the Qur'anic perspective on gender harmony and its role in reducing violence and fostering harmonious households.

This research has significant differences compared to the two previous studies. This study focuses on the influence of the "Marriage is Scary" trend on social media, particularly TikTok, on Muslim teenagers' perceptions of marriage, using the Legal Benefit Theory approach. This study emphasizes how negative narratives about marriage can affect adolescents' understanding and contradict legal principles that should provide benefits to individuals and society. Meanwhile, research conducted by Riyan Riswandi, Cucu Surahman, and Risris Hari Nugraha focuses more on the perceptions of generation Z Muslim students on the issue of "Marriage is a problem".

Scary", by examining factors that contribute to the fear of marriage, such as gender role dynamics and the risk of household conflict, but does not specifically discuss social media as a major factor. Meanwhile, the research by Abdul Qudus Al Faruq et al. is more oriented towards analyzing the Qur'anic perspective on the phenomenon of increasing domestic violence, by looking at how gender harmony in Islam can be a solution to the problems that arise from the fear of marriage. Thus, this study has a more juridical- sociological approach than the previous two studies, by highlighting how the law can be a solution in dealing with changes in adolescents' perceptions due to social media trends·

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method in this study uses a juridical sociological (empirical law) approach, which aims to examine how the growing trend of "Marriage is Scary" on social media affects Muslim teenagers' perception of marriage. The sociological approach is used to understand the social impact of this phenomenon, by exploring the perspectives of teenagers, parents, and religious leaders through

interviews, questionnaires, and observation of social media content. The statutory approach is used to analyze the relevance of legal regulations related to marriage, both in the Indonesian legal system and Islamic law, by referring to the Marriage Law and the Compilation of Islamic Law. In addition, a conceptual approach was used to explain the concept of marriage in Islam and how it relates to the theory of legal expediency, which emphasizes the importance of providing benefits for the welfare of individuals and society through the application of law.

The data collected consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through direct interviews with respondents and observation of social media content, while secondary data was obtained from legal literature and related research. Data analysis techniques are carried out qualitatively by exploring the relationship between existing social phenomena and applicable law, and linking empirical findings with the theory of legal expediency to provide relevant solutions. Through this method, the research aims to provide a deeper understanding of the influence of negative trends on teenagers' perceptions of marriage and offer legal solutions that can strengthen the institution of marriage and maintain social welfare.

Data analysis techniques using thematic analysis to identify patterns of meaning and perception based on the theory of legal expediency, then data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and triangulation with legal data and religious norms.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION [Arial 10 bold font]
Adolescents' Understanding of Marriage in Islam

Muslim teenagers in Medan Johor's understanding of marriage in Islam tends to vary depending on their religious education background, exposure to cultural values, and the influence of their social environment. In general, they understand that Marriage is a form of worship that is highly recommended in Islam and has high spiritual value. Marriage is seen as a means to complete half of the religion, build a harmonious family, and achieve peace of mind (sakinah), love (mawaddah), and mercy (rahmah) as mentioned in the Qur'an (QS. Ar-Rum: 21)..(Umasangadji, 2023) This understanding is often taught through formal education such as schools or madrasas, religious studies, as well as non-formal learning from families and communities.

However, the level of adolescents' understanding of this concept can be influenced by the personal experiences they have faced.(Widiastuti & Adiputra, 2022) Based on an interview with one Muslim teenager in Medan Johor, Fadhlan Putra Alfaruqy, he said that teenagers who have a good religious education background tend to have a deeper understanding of the values of marriage in Islam. They understand that marriage is not just an emotional bond between two individuals, but also a commitment that involves moral and spiritual responsibility to Allah SWT. In their view, marriage is a means to maintain personal honor, preserve offspring, and build an Islamic society. In contrast, adolescents who lack religious education or are in less religious social environments may have a more limited understanding or tend to be influenced by modern perspectives on marriage that are often promoted through social media. This perspective often accentuates the romantic and materialistic aspects of marriage, without emphasizing the spiritual and social responsibilities that come with it. In addition, social media trends that highlight the challenges or fears of marriage, such as the "Married Scary" phenomenon, may instill doubt or fear of marriage among adolescents.(F. P. Alfaruqy, komunikasi pribadi, 15 Januari 2025)

On the other hand, the family environment also plays a major role in shaping adolescents' understanding of marriage.(Andriyani, 2020) Families who apply Islamic values in their daily lives tend to instill the understanding that marriage is a mandate that must be lived. with patience, responsibility and gratitude. Conversely, families that experience frequent conflicts or view things as a burden can influence adolescents negative views of things, including marriage (Auliya, 2018) the local culture in Medan Johor, which is part of the Malay community with strong Islamic traditions, also influences adolescents' perceptions of marriage. Malay marriage customs, which are full of Islamic values, often serve as concrete examples for adolescents on the importance of maintaining honor and spiritual values in marriage. However, with the spread of globalization and the influence of social media, these traditional values sometimes clash with modern lifestyles that are more individualistic.

However, the results show that there are different levels of understanding. Adolescents who have better access to formal religious education or come from religious families tend to understand the purpose and responsibilities of marriage in depth. They realize the importance of spiritual, emotional and financial readiness before entering marriage, as taught in Islam. (Thoyib dkk., 2024) In contrast, adolescents who lack religious education or grow up in environments that are less supportive of Islamic values tend to have a superficial understanding. For this group, marriage is often only understood as a social formality without regard to the spiritual aspects and the great responsibility that comes with it..(Andri, 2020)

One Muslim teenager in Medan Johor Sub-district who agrees with the "Marriage is Scary" trend is Rizki Ashari Lubis, who currently works as a teacher. He stated that the reason he is afraid of getting married is because he feels unprepared physically, mentally, and materially. According to him, the cost of marriage is currently very high, especially due to the demands of the bride's family. In addition, unstable economic conditions, such as rising prices of basic necessities and limited employment opportunities, further add to the burden. She also expressed concern about being prepared for childcare, which she said requires extra energy, time and attention On the other hand, marriage is also considered as a phase that requires one to abandon most of their personal hobbies or habits in order to focus on their role as husband and father in the family.(R. A. Lubis, komunikasi pribadi, 20 April 2025)

Furthermore, Annisa Mutia, another teenager, also gave her views on this trend. She admitted that she felt afraid to get married because she often saw content on social media, especially TikTok, that displayed negative experiences in married life. In these contents, many narratives illustrate that husbands do not help their wives in caring for children, that wives are only ordered and burdened with household chores, and that the husband's obligation to provide physical and mental sustenance is often only fulfilled at the beginning of the marriage.(A. Mutia, komunikasi pribadi, 19 April 2025)

From this explanation, it can be concluded that the "Marriage is Scary" trend has succeeded in shaping a negative mindset among Muslim teenagers, especially through social media whose influence is very massive and continuously present in everyday life. Content that displays negative narratives about marriage, whether in the form of confessions, satire, or videos documenting household conflicts, has become daily consumption that slowly forms a new perception that marriage is synonymous with suffering, attachment, and loss of personal freedom. The fears expressed by Rizki and Annisa show how media narratives can replace reality with the perception that what is often seen and heard is the absolute truth. They feel that marriage is a big step that brings burden, not happiness

The Impact of the "Marriage is Scary" Trend on Perceptions of Marriage

The "Marriage is Scary" trend that is increasingly prevalent in various social media platforms and daily conversations has left a deep imprint on people's perception of marriage. Where once marriage was seen as the ultimate goal of a relationship and a symbol of eternal love, it is now being eroded and replaced by a more complex and even negative perception.

One of the most obvious impacts of this trend is the increasing average age of marriage. Many individuals, especially millennials and generation Z, choose to delay marriage or even decide not to get married at all. (Mranani, 2024) They prioritize their education, career, and independent life experience before deciding to commit to a marriage relationship. This shows a paradigm shift where marriage is no longer the only option or absolute life goal. addition, the "Marriage is Scary" trend also raises concerns marriage failure. The high divorce rate in various countries has made many people fear the possibility of experiencing the same. They worry about the conflicts, , and stresses that may arise in married life. (Group, 2024) This fear is further reinforced by the negative stories and experiences about marriage that are widely circulated on social media.

Negative perceptions of marriage also have an impact on how society views gender roles in the household. Whereas in the past gender roles in marriage tended to be more rigid and clearly defined, many couples are now choosing to divide household duties more evenly. However, on the other hand, there is also concern that the loss of clarity in gender roles could lead to conflict in relationships. This trend also raises questions about the importance of the institution of marriage in modern society. Some argue that marriage is no longer relevant and that couples can live together without being tied down. They underline the importance of individual freedom and independence in making life decisions.

Based on an interview with Mr. M. Jamiluddin, one of the religious leaders in Medan Johor sub-district, there are several factors that contribute to the emergence of the "Marriage is Scary" trend, including:(M. Jamiluddin, komunikasi pribadi, 20 Januari 2025).

1. **Changes in social values and norms**

Changes in social values and norms in modern societies have influenced the way individuals view the institution of marriage.(Rizqi, 2023) The values of individualism and freedom have taken precedence, especially among the younger generation, who place more emphasis on personal achievement, career and freedom in making life decisions. Independent living without the commitment of marriage is considered a more flexible option, free from the demands and responsibilities that come with marriage.

In addition, modernization and globalization bring new cultures that sometimes conflict with traditional values towards something, such as marriage.(Harniwati, 2024) For example, the view that one must have financial and emotional stability before marriage is gaining ground, so many individuals are choosing to delay or even avoid marriage. This change has implications for the growing fear of marriage, as long-term commitments are perceived to inhibit personal freedom and individual achievement.

2.   High expectations of marriage

In the modern era, expectations of marriage tend to increase along with the idealization of relationships often portrayed in popular media. Many individuals envision marriage as perfect and blissful, romantic, and conflict-free.(Ramadhani dkk., 2024) These expectations are often unrealistic, as in reality, marriage requires commitment, sacrifice, and the ability to solve problems with one's partner.

When these high expectations don't match reality, disappointment sets in and triggers negative perceptions of marriage. For example, newly married couples may be faced with economic challenges, immature communication, or differences of opinion that lead to conflict. Without mental preparedness and understanding, these issues can reinforce the notion that marriage is "scary" or full of risks

In addition, the social environment exacerbates this phenomenon. Pressure from family or society to marry at a certain age or achieve certain standards in married life-such as having a luxurious home, an established economic life, or the perfect partner-adds to the mental and psychological burden for individuals considering marriage.

3.   Social media influence

Social media plays a huge role in shaping perceptions of marriage in the digital age.(Izza, 2021) Platforms such as TikTok, Instagram and YouTube often showcase a seemingly perfect side of life - be it the happy moments of a wedding, an ideal family life or a romantic couple. This positive side then becomes an unrealistic and unattainable standard for most people.

On the other hand, content depicting negative experiences of marriage, such as domestic conflict, divorce or financial stress, is also widely circulated on social media.(Hasanah, 2024) Phenomena such as "Marriage Scary" on TikTok are examples of how social media can shape negative narratives about marriage, creating fear among young people. Social media algorithms that serve content according to users' interests also reinforce this perception, as people tend to view similar content repeatedly.

Social media creates an illusion of an idealized life that makes individuals often compare their real conditions to what they see on screen.(Arifin, 2020) The inability to meet these high standards creates anxiety and doubts about marriage.

4.   Changes in family dynamics

Family dynamics in the modern era are increasingly diverse along with changing lifestyles and social values.(Handyka, 2023) In the past, the traditional family was synonymous with clear-cut roles-husband and wife. as the breadwinner and the wife as the housekeeper - these roles have become more flexible. Many couples are choosing to work together and share household responsibilities equally. While this change is seen as positive, for some, it has led to confusion about role expectations in marriage.

In addition, a growing number of couples are deciding not to have children or to delay the arrival of children into the marriage.(Hadi, 2022) This trend, known as "childfree", is influenced by economic reasons, personal freedom, as well as concerns about the huge responsibility of raising children. For some individuals, these modern family dynamics make them view marriage as more complex and challenging.

Not only that, the high divorce rate in modern families also influences adolescents' and young people's negative perceptions of marriage.(Octaviani & Nurwati, 2020) Seeing the bitter experiences of their parents or close relatives makes them hesitant and afraid of repeating the same thing in the future. They eventually choose to avoid the commitment of marriage in order to maintain their emotional stability and freedom.

So from the interview with Mr. Rusli Nasution as a member of MUI Sumut, there are some negative impacts related to this "marriage is scary" trend:(R. Nasution, komunikasi pribadi, 24 Januari 2025).

Declining Marriage Rate

The "marriage is scary" trend that has emerged on social media can fuel fear of marriage, especially among the younger generation. Content that highlights the negative sides of marriage, such as household conflicts, economic burdens and unbalanced gender roles, is often amplified by viral narratives that capture the attention of many people. As a result, many individuals become skeptical and tend to delay or even avoid marriage.

This decline in marriage can have a significant impact on social and economic stability. In a social context, marriage is an institution that maintains order and building the foundation of the family as the smallest unit in society. As marriage declines, the risk of weakening family values increases, which in turn can affect the morality and harmony of society. Meanwhile, from an economic perspective, marriage often promotes financial stability through the division of economic roles between husband and wife and joint investment in family life. Without marriage, individual economic structures become more vulnerable, such as increased living costs due to a lack of economic collaboration within the household. In addition, low marriage rates can also have an impact on a country's population in the long run. Low birth rates due to delayed marriage can affect demographic development and labor availability in the future.

Increased number of children out of wedlock

The "marriage is scary" phenomenon can encourage couples to choose to live together without a legal marriage (cohabitation). This is often seen as a more flexible alternative and free from the responsibilities of formal marriage. However, this choice has serious consequences, one of which is the increasing number of children born out of wedlock. In Islam and most traditional cultures, children out of wedlock are not only seen as a violation of religious norms, but also have complex social repercussions. Children born out of wedlock often experience social stigma, discrimination and difficulties in obtaining legal rights such as birth registration, inheritance or family recognition. On the other hand, the absence of formal commitment in such relationships also increases the risk of unstable families, impacting the emotional and psychological development of children.

More broadly, this phenomenon has the potential to weaken the institution of marriage as the foundation of society. The values of responsibility, commitment and blessings in building a family are slowly eroding, replaced by a lifestyle that emphasizes individual freedom without considering the long-term impact on offspring and the social environment.

Increased Hedonic Behavior and Individualism

The growing "Marriage is Scary" trend on social media has shaped a new mindset among the younger generation, where marriage is seen as something that curbs freedom and brings a lot of responsibility. Instead of seeing marriage as an important phase of life that brings blessings and maturity, many individuals are instead prioritizing self-indulgence and freedom. This encourages them to avoid the long-term commitment that comes with marriage and focus more on hedonistic lifestyles, such as excessive career pursuits, traveling for personal pleasure, and excessive material consumption, such as buying consumptive luxury goods.

This phenomenon can be seen in the rise of the "self-love" or "freedom lifestyle" trend that is widely promoted on social media. This lifestyle often emphasizes the freedom of individuals to enjoy life without being tied down by long-term commitments, such as marriage or building a family. This concept is not entirely wrong if understood positively, but when taken to the extreme, it can lead to an attitude of hedonism that reduces the meaning of life to the pursuit of material happiness and worldly pleasures.

In, the individualism that arises as a result of this trend tends to shift the values of togetherness in society. In Islam, marriage is one way to maintain relationships between individuals and build a harmonious social life through the formation of the family as the smallest unit in society. The family serves as the center of character building, moral values, and ethics that are passed down from generation to generation. However, with the rise of selfish individualism, the values of togetherness and responsibility within the family are eroding. Younger generations increasingly see commitments such as marriage as a burden that hinders their freedom to enjoy life.

In the long run, this phenomenon can lead to social imbalance. Relationships between individuals in society are becoming increasingly lax due to the lack of interactions based on family values and togetherness. Social solidarity, which is supposed to be a strong foundation in social life, is slowly weakening as individuals are more preoccupied with their personal affairs. When everyone is only oriented towards self-gratification, there is a tendency to ignore common interests and the values of gotong royong that have been the hallmark of Indonesian culture.

The growing "Marriage is Scary" trend on social media instills a fear of marriage, which has the potential to hinder this noble cause. The widespread narrative portrays marriage as a heavy burden, fraught with financial, emotional, and social risks, leading many young people to hesitate or even shy away from getting married. More than just an entertainment trend, this phenomenon has created a negative stigma towards the institution of marriage, especially among teenagers who are still in the stage of being married.

identity formation and life values. Content that portrays marriage as scary tends to only highlight the conflicts, disputes, or challenges within the household, without providing a balanced perspective on the benefits and happiness that can be derived from marriage. As a result, there is a misperception that marriage will only bring suffering, hinder freedom, or add to the burden of life, without considering that marriage is also a path to maturity, emotional stability, and blessings in Islam. Worse still, if this stigma continues to grow, it is feared that it will lead to a decline in marriage rates, an increase in individualistic lifestyles, and even encourage extramarital relationships that lack long-term commitment. If not addressed through balanced education and proper media literacy, this trend could cause the younger generation to lose faith in the values of marriage that have long been part of Islamic culture and teachings.

This can be linked to the concept of Sadz Adz-Dzari'ah, emphasizing that marriage aims to preserve offspring and prevent social decay. In Islam, marriage is not just a relationship between two individuals, but also has a broader dimension, namely as a means to create a harmonious family and maintain the sustainability of a good generation.[30] This is in line with Allah's words in Al-Baqarah: 30, which states that humans were created as caliphs on earth, so marriage is part of the effort to carry out this role with full responsibility. However, the "Marriage is Scary" trend that has developed on social media instills fear marriage, which has the potential to hinder this noble goal. The widespread narrative portrays marriage as a heavy burden, fraught with financial, emotional, and social risks, so many young people are hesitant or even reluctant to get married. If this perception continues to grow without balanced education, it is feared that there will be social changes that lead to increased individualism, uncontrolled postponement of marriage, and the phenomenon of extramarital relationships that are contrary to Islamic values.

In the context of Maslahat Theory, most of the narratives on social media illustrate that getting married will only add to the burden of life, both in terms of economic and social responsibilities. This view is reinforced by content that highlights the high cost of marriage. marriage, domestic pressures, and the fear of marriage failure are all presented in a humorous and personal way. Trends such as "Marriage is Scary" instill the perception that marriage brings more suffering than happiness, so many young people begin to think of marriage as something to be avoided or postponed as long as possible. In fact, in Islam, marriage is believed to bring blessings and sustenance, as explained in various arguments that emphasize that Allah will fulfill the needs of married couples. In QS. An- Nur: 32, Allah says: "And marry those who are alone among you, and those who are worthy (of marriage) of your male and female servants. If they are poor, Allah will enable them by His grace." This verse emphasizes that worrying about the financial aspect of marriage should not be a barrier, because sustenance comes from Allah, and marriage can actually be an opening door to blessings.

In addition, this narrative of fear of marriage is also contradicted by social reality, which shows that such concerns are often unproven. Many couples actually experience increased well-being after marriage, both in terms of economy and peace of mind. Research shows that married individuals tend to have better emotional stability than those who live alone. This is because marriage is not just a social institution, but also a form of cooperation between husband and wife in building a better life. Furthermore, the negative stigmatization of marriage on social media can have a serious impact on the mindset of the younger generation. If this perception continues without a more objective understanding, it is feared that significant social changes will occur, such as an increase in the number of cohabitation (living together without getting married), a decrease in the number of marriages, and the rise of individualistic lifestyles that are contrary to the concept of family in Islam. Therefore, it is important to revisit how social media shapes public opinion on marriage and examine these negative trends in more depth. This research aims to prove that the negative trends developing on social media need to be studied more objectively, so as not to create false perceptions that can harm the younger generation, especially Muslim teenagers. Through a more balanced approach, it is hoped that the younger generation can understand that marriage is not just a burden, but also a path to greater happiness, blessings and well-being in life

CONCLUSION

The understanding of Muslim adolescents in Medan Johor about marriage in Islam varies, influenced by religious education background, family environment, and exposure to social media.

Adolescents with a good understanding of religion tend to see marriage as a sacred act of worship that has noble goals, such as building a harmonious family and achieving a blessed life. Conversely, adolescents with a shallow understanding of religion are more susceptible to the influence of negative trends such as the *"Marriage* is *Scary"* trend on TikTok. This trend spreads a narrative of fear and ambivalence towards marriage, thus changing the way young people view the institution of marriage.

The *"Marriage is Scary"* phenomenon has various negative impacts, both individually and socially. First, declining marriage rates can affect social, economic and demographic stability in the long term. Second, the increasing number of children out of wedlock due to cohabitation without marriage has the potential to weaken the institution of the family and affect children's development psychologically and socially. Third, high levels of loneliness due to the delay or avoidance of marriage can lead to emotional crises, social isolation and mental health disorders.

For the family unit, a skewed view of marriage can reduce the effectiveness of parents in carrying out their function as value-setters and role models in family life, and potentially disrupt the continuity of the family's role as a moral and emotional foundation for children. Excessive fear of marriage also encourages a self-interested lifestyle, distancing the younger generation from the spirit of togetherness and a sense of social responsibility. On the other hand, for educational institutions, this situation reflects the lack of optimal integration between digital media skills and religious teachings in the learning curriculum, which should equip students with critical thinking skills and a proportional understanding of religious values. The absence of relevant and contextualized teaching methods in the face of a flood of destructive digital content widens the gap between the principles of religious teachings and the social realities accessed and believed by today's youth.

It requires the active role of various parties, such as families, educational institutions, religious leaders, and the government, to strengthen the younger generation's understanding of marriage from a religious and cultural perspective. Balanced and contextualized education should be promoted so that teenagers are able to filter information from social media wisely. Social media, as the main platform for spreading trends, should also be optimized to promote positive narratives about marriage. With the right approach, teenagers can understand marriage not as something scary, but rather as a life journey that is meaningful, brings blessings, and becomes the foundation for building a harmonious family and contributing to the balance and welfare of society as a whole.

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