



## The Perspective of Gender and Islamic Law on Waithood Phenomenon in The Millennial Generation

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### Abstract

The recommendation to get married is clearly explained in the *naş shara'*, but in reality at this time many teenagers who are considered mature and ready to get married are reluctant to get married and prefer to delay being single. This phenomenon has recently become widespread and is used as a principle by many teenagers in various parts of the world to Indonesia and is known as waithood. In the context of millennial adolescents today, the reasons that become factors for choosing waithood are so diverse that it is interesting to study and review their correlation with Islamic studies and gender issues. This research is a library research with a normative-sociological approach by analyzing the phenomenon of the idea of waithood through gender studies and Islamic law. The results of this study indicate that there are many factors, concepts and goals of waithood carried out by millennial adolescents today that contradict Islamic principles which clearly recommend getting married immediately if you are able and there is a connection to gender issues in the case of women who prefer waithood to not getting married, as well as gender inequality which is being called for by the UN program Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which is not only on the issue of roles in marriage but even on many other factors so that the shift in the meaning of marriage and the decision to have children is no longer considered an obligation, but a choice that can be made by women.

Keywords: Waithood phenomenon; Millennial generation; Gender; Islamic law

### Abstrak

Anjuran menikah sudah jelas diterangkan di dalam *naş syara'*, namun kenyataannya pada masa ini banyak remaja yang dianggap sudah matang dan siap menikah justru enggan untuk menikah dan lebih memilih menunda hingga melajang, fenomena ini belakangan marak terjadi dan dijadikan prinsip oleh banyak remaja di berbagai belahan dunia hingga Indonesia dan dikenal dengan istilah waithood. Dalam konteks remaja milenial saat ini alasan yang menjadi faktor memilih waithood sangat beragam sehingga menarik untuk diteliti dan ditinjau kolerasinya dengan kajian Islam dan isu gender. Penelitian ini berupa kajian pustaka (library research) dengan pendekatan normatif-sosiologis dengan menganalisis fenomena gagasan waithood melalui kajian gender dan hukum Islam. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa terdapat banyak faktor, konsep hingga tujuan waithood yang dilakukan oleh remaja milenial saat ini yang bertentangan dengan prinsip Islam yang dengan jelas menganjurkan untuk segera menikah jika sudah mampu dan adanya keterkaitan isu gender pada kasus wanita yang lebih memilih waithood hingga tidak menikah, seperti halnya ketimpangan gender yang tengah marak diserukan program dari PBB yakni Transforming Our World : The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development yang tidak hanya pada persoalan peran dalam pernikahan bahkan pada banyak faktor lainnya sehingga pergeseran makna pernikahan dan keputusan untuk memiliki anak kini tidak lagi dianggap sebagai sebuah kewajiban, melainkan sebuah pilihan yang dapat dilakukan oleh perempuan.

Kata Kunci: Fenomena waithood; Generasi milenial; Gender; Hukum Islam.

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## INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a natural need for every human being, through legal marriage the union of men and women becomes honorable as human status as a perfect and honorable creature. The unity of household life is fostered to create peace, tranquility and reciprocal affection from the wife, husband and child. Likewise, children born from a legal marriage can beautify household life and are a continuation of human

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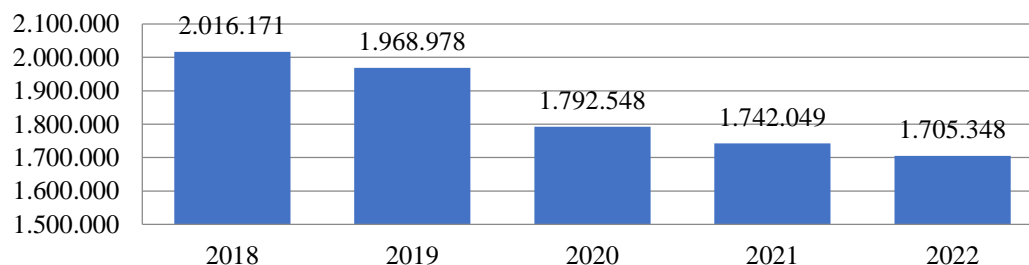
life purely and honorably. Marriage is also the beginning of the creation of social life in order to create a family that is *sakinah*, *mawaddah* and *warahmah* with home conditions full of grace and love.<sup>1</sup> There are many recommendations for marriage in the texts of *shara'* both in the Qur'an and Hadith, because marriage is the longest form of worship which is highly recommended to be hastened for servants of God who are ready and able to do so, because it is feared that if you continue to delay marriage, you will fall into an immoral behavior in promiscuity, Allah says:

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

Meaning: "And marry those who are alone and those who are fit for marriage among you both of your female servants and your male servants. And if you do not have enough money, Allah will provide for you by His bounty. And Allah is All-Wise, All-Knowing"<sup>2</sup>

However, the phenomenon that has become a thought among academics lately is the rise of waithood thinking among Muslim teenagers in Indonesia, as evidenced by the number of individuals who until middle age and adulthood remain single and unmarried, Many Indonesian teenagers are facing this phenomenon. The majority of those delaying marriage are women, most of whom have to help with family finances or face the difficult realities of married life until waithood or unmarried. According to data released by the Central Bureau of Statistics (BSP), it can be identified that there is a decrease in the number of marriages that occur in Indonesia from year to year, recorded at only 1.71 million cases in 2022. This figure was recorded to be 2.11% lower than in the previous year, which was 1.74 million cases under the statistics:<sup>3</sup>

### Number of Marriages in Indonesia 2018-2022



The factors behind this phenomenon vary both for educational purposes, have not found a mate, economy, free life and so on. Waithood is a western term that means postponement of marriage, this term was originally mentioned by western researcher Dianne Singerman from American University, through her research conducted in 2007 she explained: Waithood is negotiating their prolonged adolescence and remain single for long periods of time to marry.<sup>4</sup> According to his understanding, waithood is the concept of being single to delay marriage (delayed marriage) for a while. The findings obtained by Diane Singerman

<sup>1</sup> Tenggo Subangun Harahap, "TINJAUAN MAQASID SYARI'AH TERHADAP PENCATATAN PEKAWINAN," *AL-SYAKHSHIYYAH: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam Dan Kemanusiaan* 5, no. 1 (2023): 38-56.

<sup>2</sup> Kementerian Agama RI, 2019, *al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf al-Qur'an. Q.s. an-Nur(24): 32

<sup>3</sup> Sarnita Sadya, "Terdapat 1,71 Juta Pernikahan Di Indonesia Pada 2022," *DataIndonesia.id*, 2023, <https://dataIndonesia.id/varia/detail/terdapat-171-juta-pernikahan-di-indonesia-pada-2022>.

<sup>4</sup> Diane Singerman, "The Economic Imperatives of Marriage: Emerging Practices and Identities among Youth in the Middle East," no. 6 (2007).

in her research that this phenomenon is increasingly prevalent in the world today, and the perpetrators are found in many countries such as Egypt, Jordan, China, America, Morocco to Indonesia and are predicted to continue to increase until 2050. Even in Yogyakarta according to research conducted by Nancy Smith-Hefner she found anxiety in many students about being told to get married immediately when in fact young women said they wanted to finish their education and start a good career before getting married. This has spread even in Indonesia, a country where only 2% of women in their late 40s are estimated to be unmarried.<sup>5</sup>

This idea is not the teaching of the Prophet Muhammad who advocated to hasten and not delay marriage, in many hadiths the prophet strongly recommended to hasten marriage if it is ready, including the hadiths:

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ قَالَ لَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ: يَا مَعْشَرَ الشَّبَابِ، مَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ مِنْكُمْ الْبَاءَةَ فَلْيَتَزَوَّجْ فَإِنَّهُ أَغْضُ لِلْبَصْرِ وَأَخْصَنُ لِلْفَرْجِ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَعَلَيْهِ بِالصَّوْمِ؛ فَإِنَّهُ لَهُ وَجَاءٌ.

Translation: "O young man, whoever among you is ready to provide for the needs of the household then he should get married. verily that can subdue the gaze from immoral things in order to keep his private parts. If he cannot afford to get married, then at least he should fast; indeed, fasting can reduce lustful desires."<sup>6</sup>

From the Hadith, it can be seen that hastening marriage is highly recommended in Islam because in essence the almighty God created his servants in a paired condition of two different types so that both of them feel peaceful and full of love as a form of worship to Allah alone, getting married means opening the longest gate of worship during life. However, the meaning of the Hadith does not necessarily evenly distribute the command to marry to all groups because there are certain circumstances that are not recommended for marriage, therefore the law of marriage is not only one but five, namely sunnah, sunnah abandoned, makruh, haram and obligatory.<sup>7</sup> In addition, there are also examples of some previous scholars who did not marry and remained single until their deaths such as Imam Nawawi, Imam Tobari, Ibn Taymiyyah and others. Therefore, it is deemed necessary to reflect on the study of the global waithood phenomenon in Islamic law so that it can be taken into consideration for Muslim teenagers and references in terms of their willingness to get married.

The article also details the gendered relevance of Waithood, a phenomenon that reflects significant shifts in social norms. Waithood liberates women from traditional expectations regarding marriage and domestic roles, providing space to understand changes in women's identity and economic independence. These connections also include a new understanding of marriage as a personal choice, rather than a social obligation. Mental health issues are involved, with Waithood considered a response to the psychological pressures of strict gender norms. This life choice not only reflected freedom of choice, but also became a platform for female empowerment, with some individuals engaging in gender activism.<sup>8</sup> As such, Waithood marks an important evolution in gender relations, encouraging further study of how women portray and shape their identities in a changing society.

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<sup>5</sup> Remarks before the article of Nancy Smith-Hefner, "Being single in your 30s isn't bad luck, it's a global phenomenon," <https://qz.com/1443640/being-single-in-your-30s-isnt-bad-luck-its-a-global-phenomenon>, akses 26 Maret 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Bukhari, *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, (Riyadh, Baitul Afkar Al-Dauliyyah: 1998) Hlm. 1005, hadis nomor 5066, "Kitāb an-Nikāḥ", "Bāb Man lam yastathi' al-Bāah fal yaṣum."

<sup>7</sup> Mustofa al-Bagho Mustofa al-Khin, *Al-Fiqh al-Manhaji 'Ala Mazhab al-Imam al-Syafi'i* (Beirut: Dar al-Qalam, 1992).

<sup>8</sup> Agus Pratiwi et al., "Kesetaraan Gender, Disabilitas Dan Inklusi Sosial Dalam Praktik," *Pengalaman Riset Dan Advokasi Mitra: Knowledge Sector Initiative*, 2022, 1-192.

In this discussion, the author lists several previous studies that the author can make reference to this research, because the studies in question have similarities so that it is necessary to look for gaps in differences so that novelty is found in this research and from one side to negate plagiarism in a study. Of course, the research in question has also been read and studied so that the originality of this research can be seen clearly by the readers. As the researchers read, there are several research studies that generally discuss the postponement of marriage as the author examines, but they are not substantially the same as the author's research which focuses on the phenomenon of global waithood among Muslim teenagers in the world for the later studies that have similar objects with this research.

There is research belonging to Andika, Ahmad Yani, and friends in the form of a scientific article with the title "Fenomena Waithood di Indonesia: Sebuah Studi Integrasi antara Nilai-Nilai Keislaman dan Sosial Kemanusiaan".<sup>9</sup> In this research work, it discusses the social trend of waithood more to the social values of humanity in society and the view of feminism as one of the factors in the development of waithood. This research is descriptive research through explaining the characteristics and nature of the phenomenon under study. The data collected through interviews and online media because it is field research. while the analytical instrument used is to examine through societal reviews and Islamic legal principles.

Article written by Rani Wulandari with the title "Waithood: Tren Penundaan Pernikahan pada Perempuan di Sulawesi Selatan".<sup>10</sup> In his research, the author explains that in South Sulawesi young people are being affected by the principle of waithood where teenagers are reluctant to hasten themselves to get married and postpone it to an age that is no longer young and many even desire not to get married at all. This phenomenon is based on many factors, among which the most common is due to the economic demands shouldered by millennial teenagers in order to support their families, which is called the sandwich generation. The millennial teenagers who decide to be withood are among women as a result of research conducted by Rani Wulandari through interviews with 10 women aged 30 years and over, all of whom are unmarried. From these interviews, which are used as the results of this study, it is revealed that women who choose waithood generally know this principle through social media such as Tik-Tok, whatsapp, instagram and so on which are western cultures and have entered Indonesia recently, while the factors behind this phenomenon vary from economic problems, mental readiness, focus on taking care of the family, want to live freely, focus on completing education and pursuing dreams and so on.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The study that the author tries to uncover in this research is in the form of a literature review by reviewing the linkage of gender issues to the phenomenon of waithood that has been rife lately with thematic analysis to identify patterns related to gender roles in waithood decision making and reviewing the context of related nash and the views of fiqh scholars on the phenomenon of waithood (delaying marriage) because basically Islam recommends hastening marriage if you are ready physically and mentally. The method used is qualitative using gender and normative-sociological approaches such as analyzing ideas, procedures, legal rules, and positive legal laws.

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<sup>9</sup> Andika Andika et al., "Fenomena Waithood Di Indonesia: Sebuah Studi Integrasi Antara Nilai-Nilai Keislaman Dan Sosial Kemanusiaan," *Jurnal Riset Agama* 1, no. 3 (2021): 1-10, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jra.v1i3.15090>.

<sup>10</sup> Rani Wulandari, "Waithood: Tren Penundaan Pernikahan Pada Perempuan Di Sulawesi Selatan," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial* 6, no. 1 (2023): 52-67.

Data collection techniques were carried out by participatory observation, and document analysis by examining more deeply the readings and literature on changes in marriage patterns among the younger generation, factors that influence the decision to delay marriage and gender theories that are relevant to the context of this research.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Waithood Terminology and Its Scope According To Western Researchers**The term "waithood" was first coined in late 2007 by researcher Diane Singerman, a professor at American University in Washington, D.C., in her study of Middle Eastern youth entitled *The Economic Imperatives of Marriage: Emerging Practices and Identities among Youth in the Middle East*.<sup>11</sup> The term refers to the practice of delaying marriage as a principle held by millennial youth for long periods of time for various reasons. This phenomenon is not new, especially in developed countries where education is available to girls and women. From a sociological perspective, faith is one of the characteristics of postmodern society, people try to break the old way of thinking and revise some of the rules of modernity, they are open to new perspectives including in terms of marriage. The findings obtained by Diane Singerman in her research that this phenomenon is increasingly widespread in the world today, and the perpetrators are found in many countries such as Egypt, Jordan, China, America, Morocco to Africa and Indonesia, and is predicted to continue to increase until 2050.

The severity of the impact of waithood on the lives of young Africans is impacted by each individual's character, abilities and life skills. This is based on family background, level of education and access to resources. Young men and women experience waithood in different ways, with waithood for men involving pressure to find gainful employment, resources to own a home and start a family. The frustration caused by waithood has even prompted young men to take to the streets in protest against various governments in Africa. In 2012, unemployment prompted many young Senegalese men to take to the streets to protest against President Abdoulaye Wade due to high unemployment rates.<sup>12</sup>

## **FACTORS BEHIND THE EMERGENCE OF THE PHENOMENON OF WAITHOOD**

Waithood is a phenomenon that initially occurred in America and Japan, this is because social life in that country is very free in terms of channeling sexual desires in particular. In contrast to Indonesia, which in fact has a majority Muslim society that prohibits free sex without the bonds of marriage, of course this is contrary to Islamic teachings, because for Muslim communities who do waithood, of course, sexual desire cannot be channeled. In addition, among the factors for the emergence of the waithood trend among teenagers is due to the widespread use of the internet today which results in the acquisition of more and more information, be it an education or other than that, so that people are increasingly literate in reality and determine the way of life according

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<sup>11</sup> Diane Singerman, "The Economic Imperatives of Marriage: Emerging Practices and Identities among Youth in the Middle East." 54.

<sup>12</sup> Henry Akwuebu, *The Waithood Phenomenon in Africa. Impacts and Sustainable Solutions*, (Grin: Research and Public Policy, 2016). Hlm. 5.

to their wishes without caring about the surrounding environment. The factors behind millennial teenagers choosing to postpone marriage for a long period of time include:<sup>13</sup>

Want to focus and establish a career: Many people may choose to delay marriage to focus on their career. They may want to achieve financial stability and career success before entering the marriage phase. Inadequate financial factors: Inadequate or unstable financial conditions can be a barrier to marriage. Some individuals may choose to wait until they feel more financially secure before deciding to get married. Mental readiness: Marriage requires emotional and mental readiness. Some people may delay marriage because they feel they are not fully prepared to deal with the responsibilities and complex dynamics of the relationship. Focus on meeting family needs: Some people may delay marriage to meet family needs or care for other family members before they decide to form their own family. Especially if the position in the family is as the financial backbone, especially women. In many cases, women have the burden of responsibility for the future of their younger siblings, including paying school bills and household needs. This situation is called the sandwich generation.<sup>14</sup> This makes not a few women forget for a moment the priority of getting married. In addition to the desire to make their family happy first, their status as a sandwich generation makes them worry about their financial life if they get married. Have not found a suitable partner: Some individuals may not have found a life partner that matches their expectations and values. High criteria in choosing a partner may lead to delays in getting married. Still want to live freely: Some people may prefer to enjoy personal freedom and independence before entering into a marriage commitment. They want to explore their own lives before sharing their lives with a partner.

All these factors can interact and influence one's decision to wait before getting married. Each individual may have a different combination of factors, and their influence may vary depending on the cultural, social and individual context. All of these factors can interact and influence one's decision to wait until marriage. In addition, this phenomenon also intersects with gender issues where one example generally occurs in career women who are busy with work beside to increasing gender equality between men and women which makes women more assertive with their own principles and life choices, one of which is by being waithood or even not getting married.<sup>15</sup> Each individual may have a different combination of factors, and their influence may vary depending on the cultural, social and individual context.

Furthermore, the concept of waithood, or the decision to delay marriage, is multifaceted and highly individualized. In many cultures, societal expectations have historically placed significant pressure on individuals to marry by a certain age. However, changing cultural norms and increasing acceptance of diverse life paths have allowed more people to choose to delay marriage without the stigma that might have existed in the past. Career aspirations play a significant role, particularly for women. As more women pursue higher education and demanding careers, they often prioritize professional development over settling down. This shift is supported by increasing gender equality,

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<sup>13</sup> Rani Wulandari, "Waithood: Tren Penundaan Pernikahan Pada Perempuan Di Sulawesi Selatan", EMIK: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial," 6 (2023): 52-67.

<sup>14</sup> Remarks before Musahwi, Ini Fenomena Waithood, Perempuan Tunda Menikah karena Beban Sandwich Generation dan Trauma, konde.co 2023, <https://www.konde.co/2023/08/ini-fenomena-waithood-perempuan-tunda-menikah-karena-beban-sandwich-generation-dan-trauma.html/>, akses pada 03 Januari 2023.

<sup>15</sup> Rani Wulandari, "Waithood: Tren Penundaan Pernikahan Pada Perempuan Di Sulawesi Selatan", EMIK: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial,,"

which empowers women to make autonomous decisions about their lives, including the choice to remain single or delay marriage. The pursuit of personal goals, such as career advancement, travel, or personal growth, often takes precedence over traditional timelines for marriage. Economic factors are also crucial. The rising cost of living and the financial instability experienced by many young adults make the prospect of marriage and starting a family more daunting. Many individuals prefer to achieve a certain level of financial stability and security before committing to marriage. This practical consideration can significantly delay the age at which people feel ready to marry.

Additionally, the influence of modern technology and social media cannot be overlooked. The ways in which people meet and form relationships have transformed dramatically, with online dating and social media providing new platforms for connection. While these tools can facilitate finding a partner, they can also lead to a more extensive search for the "perfect" match, contributing to delays in marriage. Moreover, personal beliefs and values play a crucial role. Some individuals may choose to wait until they find a partner who shares their values and life goals. Others may prioritize self-discovery and personal development before entering a marital relationship. In conclusion, the decision to delay marriage is influenced by a complex interplay of cultural, social, economic, and individual factors. As societal norms continue to evolve and gender equality advances, the choice to wait before marrying is increasingly seen as a legitimate and respectable option. Each individual's unique circumstances and priorities will shape their approach to marriage, reflecting a broader trend towards more personalized and flexible life choices.

### **THE RELEVANCE OF GENDER ISSUES IN THE DECISION TO CHOOSE WAITHOOD FOR MILLENNIALS**

The interconnectedness of gender issues in the Waithood phenomenon highlights the gender roles and experiences that influence women's life choices in the context of an evolving society. This phenomenon reflects shifting social norms related to marriage and the traditional role of women in the family. Considering that so far women are often associated with the burden of being wives and mothers who are expected to take care of and do various household chores, even if they work outside the household, on the contrary, men's responsibility in taking care of the household is very small.<sup>16</sup> With the issue of gender inequality, which is not only on the issue of roles in marriage but even on many other factors, Indonesia is also calling for gender equality, as evidenced by signing one of the UN's programs, namely Transforming Women. signing one of the programs from the United Nations, namely Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the ratification of the Convention on the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) through Law Number 7 of 1984 concerning the Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.<sup>17</sup> All of which aim to realize a situation where both men and women have equal or balanced status and position to realize their roles and rights and potential in all fields of life.

The Waithood phenomenon actually reflects the development of social transformation in society. This transformation signifies a shift in the meaning of marriage and the decision to have

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<sup>16</sup> Fatimah Saguni, "Dinamika Gender Dalam Masyarakat," *Musawa: Journal for Gender Studies* 12, no. 2 (2020): 207-27, <https://doi.org/10.24239/msw.v12i2.667>.

<sup>17</sup> Sonny Dewi Judiasih, "Implementasi Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Beberapa Aspek Kehidupan Bermasyarakat Di Indonesia," *Acta Diurnal Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Kenotariatan Dan Ke-PPAT-An* 5, no. 2 (2022): 284-302, <https://doi.org/10.23920/acta.v5i2.904>.

children, which is no longer considered an obligation, but a choice that can be made by women. As part of a digital society, millennial women tend to have open minds in various aspects, including in terms of economics, politics, and responses to social change.<sup>18</sup> This concept of identity then became the basis for the Waithood movement which created a public space for women to self-actualize. In other words, the Waithood movement is part of women's efforts to control their lives, including their bodies and their destinies. According to Beri and Beri, the main reason women choose not to marry and focus on working is to gain financial security and enjoy the fruits of their educational labor.<sup>19</sup>

Some aspects of the gender issue's relevance to the Waithood phenomenon also include Shifting Gender Role Norms that reflect changing social values related to gender roles, with women no longer bound by traditional expectations to marry and take care of the household. The choice to focus on a career or personal life to become more accepted and valued can also be an aspect of gender that is then women's economic independence reflected in women's drive to achieve economic independence. Women involved in Waithood often pursue careers and education to achieve financial stability, illustrating a change in family economic dynamics. It is also with the new understanding of marriage and children that women no longer see marriage and pregnancy or even children as the only path of achievement or identity.<sup>20</sup> This illustrates a new understanding of freedom of choice and women's right to determine the direction of their lives without being constrained by rigid social norms. The Waithood phenomenon can be a platform for gender activism, where women collectively challenge patriarchal norms and demand their rights. The choice to postpone marriage and focus on self-development shows a change in the power dynamics in gender relations with women being more courageous in making decisions to bear about their future. Overall, Waithood is a focal point for understanding the complex changes in gender dynamics and how women are taking a more active role in determining the direction of their lives.

### **THE CONCEPT OF WAITHOOD IN ISLAM**

The creation of humans by the creator in pairs, men and women. So that both feel peaceful and full of love as a form of worship to Allah alone. Getting married means opening the longest gate of worship during life, with the same person according to their respective missions and goals. Therefore, treading the path of marriage requires qualified knowledge, not only limited to biological age and material, both of which are not a guarantee of the durability of a marriage bond. However, it is rampant in millennial teenagers today the phenomenon of waithood, namely feeling comfortable being single and delaying marriage, this is based on several factors from each individual.

The Prophet clearly explains in his hadith about the recommendation to hasten marriage, because in marriage there is a lot of goodness and rejects the potential for sin and sinfulness. In a hadith the Prophet said:

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<sup>18</sup> Indah Ahdiah, "PERAN PERAN PEREMPUAN DALAM MASYARAKAT," *Jurnal Academia Fisip Untad* 05, no. 02 (2013): 1085-92.

<sup>19</sup> Nimisha Beri and Anoop Beri, "Perception of Single Women towards Marriage, Career and Education," *European Academic Research* 1, no. 6 (2013): 855-69.

<sup>20</sup> Muhammad Zainuddin Sunarto and Lutfatul Imamah, "Fenomena Childfree Dalam Perkawinan," *Jurnal Darussalam: Jurnal Pendidikan, Komunikasi Dan Pemikiran Hukum Islam* 14, no. 2 (2023): 181-202, <https://doi.org/10.30739/darussalam.v14i2.2142>.



حدثنا عمر بن حفص بن غياث: حدثنا أبي: حدثنا الأعمش قال: حدثني عمارة، عن عبد الرحمن بن يزيد قال: دخلت مع علقمة والأسود على عبد الله فقال عبد الله: كنا مع النبي ﷺ شابا لا نجد شيئا، فقال لنا رسول الله: يا معشر الشباب، من استطاع منكم الباءة فليتزوج فإنه أغض للبصر وأحصن للفرج ومن لم يستطع فعليه بالصوم؛ فإنه له وجاء.<sup>21</sup>

The above Hadīth is an ahad Hadīth narrated by Imam Bukhari with a marfu' chain of transmission. However, the Hadīth can be practiced by looking at the benefits and wisdom of the Prophet's recommendation. Besides Bukhari, this hadith was also narrated by other scholars of hadith narrators, namely ad-Darimi, Ahmad, Muslim, Tirmidhi, an-Nasai and Ibn Majah. The Prophet's call in the context of this hadith is addressed to young men because they are in a period of love with women, therefore it is recommended to get married immediately if they are able to avoid fitnah and sin. However, the mafhum mukhalafah of this hadith can also be obtained that it is not permissible to burden oneself with marriage if there is no ability, such as being sick, in debt, in a condition that can oppress the wife and so on. Therefore, the rulings on marriage have been formulated by the scholars into five.

Basically, Islam strongly encourages those who are ready to get married. However, due to various circumstances, the law of marriage can be divided into five types:<sup>22</sup> Wajib (Obligatory), for those who are able to marry and are in a situation where if they do not marry, they will fall into adultery. Sunnah, for one who wants to get married and has the means and money to fulfill the needs of his spouse and other needs. Makruh, for one who is unable to marry because he is unable to provide for his wife through spending or is possibly impotent. Haram, for one who wants to marry with the intention of hurting or wasting his wife. This prohibition also applies to those who cannot afford to pay for their wives, even if their desire is not urgent. Mubah, for those who are not pressured by anything that requires them to get married immediately or that forbids it.

In the context of waithood with economic reasons or still focused on pursuing a career and education as long as he can still keep his genitals from falling into adultery as in the hadith above can still be considered good and it is not recommended to immediately get married, this situation is also widely practiced by previous scholars such as Imam Nawawi, Abu al-Qasim Mahmud ibn Umar az-Zamakhshari, Ibn Jarir Ath-Thabari and other scholars. Imam An-Nawawi once said in explaining the above hadith:

وَاحْتَلَفَ الْعُلَمَاءُ فِي الْمُرَادِ بِالْبَاءَةِ هُنَا عَلَى قَوْلَيْنِ يَرْجِعَانِ إِلَى مَعْنَى وَاحِدٍ أَصْحَبُهَا أَنَّ الْمُرَادَ مَعْنَاهَا اللَّعْوِيُّ وَهُوَ الْجِمَاعُ فَتَقْدِيرُهُ مِنَ اسْتِطَاعَ مِنْكُمْ الْجِمَاعَ لِشُدْرَتِهِ عَلَى مُؤْنِهِ وَهِيَ مُؤْنُ النِّكَاحِ فَلْيَتَزَوَّجْ (شرح النووي على مسلم (9/ 173)

Translation: "There is a difference of opinion among the scholars of hadith in the meaning of the word ba'ah, the difference leads to two similar meanings. The strongest of these meanings is intercourse. So the conclusion of the meaning of the Hadīth is that whoever is ready among you to have intercourse and face the financial and other consequences, then get married."<sup>23</sup>

However, unlike the scholars who remained single in ancient times who were preoccupied with worship and study and there was no urge to commit adultery (tabattul), which the prophet had also prohibited in a hadith, millennial youth may only be a few who can do so so that if explored more deeply, the root of the problem lies in several aspects. Among them, the wrong mindset in

<sup>21</sup> Bukhari, *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, (Riyadh, Baitul Afkar Al-Dauliyyah: 1998) Hlm. 1005, hadis nomor 5066, "*Kitāb al-Nikāḥ*," "*fi bāb Man lam yastathi' al-Bāah fal yašum.*"

<sup>22</sup> Sulaiman Rasyid, *Fiqh Islam* (Bandung: Sinar Baru Algensindo, 2010). Hlm. 374.

<sup>23</sup> Imam An-Nawawi, *Syarhu An-Nawawi 'Ala Muslim Juz 9* (Jakarta: Darus Sunnah, 2013). Hlm. 173

viewing the nature of marriage. Also, the stimulation of the phenomenon that marriage is hard. In addition, cases of divorce of young couples are blown up. The personal standards set by society, such as being rich and well-established, having a high income, being handsome, and coming from a respected family. This, in turn, affects the physical and psychological state of the couple, making them fearful of 'failure' and unhappiness in marriage.

Moreover, societal pressures and unrealistic personal standards set by society, such as being rich and well-established, having a high income, being handsome, and coming from a respected family, exacerbate the issue. These standards affect the physical and psychological state of young couples, making them fearful of 'failure' and unhappiness in marriage. This fear can be paralyzing, leading many to delay or avoid marriage altogether, believing they must first meet these high standards to be deemed ready for marriage. The perception that marriage is an insurmountable challenge is often fueled by media representations and anecdotal evidence of marital strife. While it is true that marriage requires effort and commitment, focusing exclusively on its difficulties creates a skewed perception. It is crucial to present a balanced view that acknowledges both the challenges and the joys of marriage, highlighting successful and harmonious marriages as models to aspire to.

The fear of divorce, heavily emphasized by stories of young couples who part ways, further contributes to this anxiety. While divorce is a reality and sometimes a necessary step, the overemphasis on its prevalence can discourage young people from taking the step towards marriage. It is important to contextualize these instances and provide education on conflict resolution, communication, and mutual respect within a marriage to mitigate these fears. To address these issues, a shift in mindset is necessary. Young people should be encouraged to see marriage not as a burden or a high-risk venture but as a natural and fulfilling part of life that, while requiring effort, also offers immense rewards. Religious and community leaders can play a significant role in this by promoting the true Islamic understanding of marriage, which values character, piety, and mutual support over material wealth and social status.

Educational programs that focus on the skills necessary for a successful marriage, such as communication, financial management, and conflict resolution, can empower young people to feel more prepared for marriage. These programs should also dispel myths and unrealistic expectations, presenting a more realistic and balanced view of married life. Moreover, communities can support young couples by providing mentorship and resources that help them navigate the early years of marriage. By fostering an environment that values and supports healthy marriages, society can reduce the fear and anxiety associated with it. In conclusion, the current hesitation among millennial youth to enter into marriage is influenced by a combination of unrealistic societal standards, fear of divorce, and a misunderstanding of the nature of marriage. Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach that includes re-education about the true purpose of marriage in Islam, providing practical support and education for young couples, and promoting positive role models and success stories of healthy marriages.

In fact, these thoughts are the result of a misunderstanding of the meaning of marriage from an Islamic perspective. The root cause of this phenomenon is the entrenched capitalist economic system that influences the mindset of young people. Considering the most important thing in a marriage is based on material fulfillment alone, without putting religion and the science of marriage first. The benchmark in determining whether or not a marriage lasts, whether or not it is blessed,

is based only on the fulfillment of clothing, food and shelter. This error in thinking should be straightened out because marriage is the longest worship as well as the fulfillment of one's religion.

From an Islamic perspective, marriage is not merely a social contract or a means to achieve economic stability; it is a sacred bond and an act of worship that fulfills half of one's faith. The true essence of marriage in Islam encompasses spiritual, emotional, and moral dimensions, emphasizing mutual respect, compassion, and the shared journey towards spiritual growth and fulfillment.<sup>24</sup> Islam teaches that reliance solely on material considerations undermines the sanctity of marriage. The Qur'an and Hadith stress the importance of taqwa (God-consciousness), mutual support, and the nurturing of piety within the marital relationship.<sup>25</sup> Marriage in Islam is intended to be a partnership where both spouses help each other in their religious obligations and personal development, fostering a household that is harmonious and centered on faith. Furthermore, the emphasis on materialistic benchmarks for a successful marriage is a reflection of the capitalist values that prioritize economic gain over spiritual and moral well-being. This perspective often leads to the neglect of essential aspects such as love, trust, and companionship, which are crucial for a fulfilling and blessed marriage. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) advised choosing a spouse based on piety and good character rather than wealth or social status, highlighting the importance of religious and moral compatibility.

To rectify this misconception, it is essential to re-educate young people about the true purpose and significance of marriage in Islam. This involves fostering an understanding that marriage is not just about achieving financial stability but about building a partnership grounded in faith, love, and mutual support. Islamic teachings should be integrated into premarital counseling and education to emphasize the spiritual, emotional, and communal aspects of marriage. Communities and families also play a crucial role in supporting young people to view marriage through the lens of Islamic values rather than materialistic ones. By creating an environment that values spiritual growth and moral integrity, young people can be guided to make marriage decisions that align with their faith and lead to lasting and fulfilling relationships. In summary, the current misunderstanding of marriage among young people stems from the influence of capitalist values that prioritize material wealth over spiritual and moral considerations. To address this, there must be a concerted effort to realign the perception of marriage with Islamic teachings, emphasizing the importance of piety, mutual support, and the spiritual dimensions of this sacred bond.

## **CONCLUSION**

The phenomenon of waithood has recently become widespread among millennial teenagers in Indonesia. The concept of "waithood" was developed by political scientist Diane Singerman to describe the extended period of time between adolescence and full adulthood when young people wait to get a permanent job and get married. The phenomenon of youth in waiting requiring recognition of new gender and family roles is initially rife from various regions of the world, including the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the United States to Indonesia, which reveals that both voluntarily and involuntarily. Although from one side it is considered good because it prepares oneself in a mature and

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<sup>24</sup> Ibrahim Siregar and Suheri Sahputra Rangkuti, "Universalism of Islamic Scholarly Tradition: New Directions for Islamic Studies," *Islam Transformatif: Journal of Islamic Studies* 7, no. 2 (2023): 202-25, <http://ejournal.uinbukittinggi.ac.id/index.php/islam/article/view/8050>.

<sup>25</sup> Suheri Sahputra Rangkuti, "Dekonstruksi Epistemologi Muhammad Shahrur," *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 3, no. 2 December (2018): 133-46, <http://journal.iaincurup.ac.id/index.php/alistinbath/article/view/545>.

ready condition before entering the world of marriage, if examined from the concept of Islam, this is certainly not appropriate because Islam strongly recommends hastening marriage if you are able as explained in many texts of the Qur'an and hadith.

Changes in social norms around marriage and family can also have a significant impact on the idea of delaying marriage. For example, increased awareness of the importance of gender equality and individual autonomy in relationships may influence society's views on the appropriate time to marry. Research could explore how changes in these social norms affect the decision to delay marriage, as well as how gender perceptions of these norms differ. However, in Islam there are scholars who have actually practiced waithood in the past such as Imam Nawawi, Abu al-Qasim Mahmud ibn Umar az-Zamakhshari, Ibn Jarir Ath-Thabari and others, even Imam Nawawi explained that singleness is recommended in the state of someone who is learning knowledge. However, in contrast to previous scholars who were single and could maintain their sexual desires and desires with practices and remembrance, millennial adolescents, especially in Indonesia at this time, of course, if they choose waithood, they will still engage in promiscuity and extramarital intercourse, therefore waithood is not suitable if they still cannot restrain and curb the sexual urge. It is hoped that research can provide a deeper understanding of the influence of gender in the decision to delay marriage, as well as provide useful insights for the development of policies and intervention programs that are more responsive to the needs and aspirations of individuals of both sexes.

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