

Childfree in the View of Islam (Qur'an and Hadith)

Fatimawali Fatimawali^{1*} Nurfauziah Mansur² & Zul Aini Rengur³

¹ Islamic Family Law Study Program State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia

² State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia

³ State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: Fatimawali E-mail fatimawali87@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

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Childfree is a couple's decision not to have children in their marriage. Couples who decide to be childfree usually assume that whether or not to have children is a personal right and human right that cannot be forced by anyone. The reason most often given by those who decide to become childfree is to suppress overpopulation. (Hanandita, 2022) However, there are also arguments that state that this childfree trend is present along with the political campaign of body or body politics which assumes that a woman's body is hers so that no one has the right to force anything on her, including conceiving and having children.

In the Qur'an, marriage and having children has been human nature since time immemorial, since the time before the apostolate of Muhammad SAW. This is mentioned and explained in QS. Ar-Ra'd verse 38.

There are many factors that cause married couples to consciously choose not to have children. Some of them are: 1. Economic Factors Today's youth feel insecure or worried that they will not be able to meet the living expenses of their children, which are felt to be many and burdensome. For those who choose to be childfree, financial maturity is a very important factor when they want to have children. So this is contrary to the common term we have heard so far, "lots of children, lots of fortune."

1. Introduction

Childfree is a couple's decision not to have children in their marriage. Couples who decide to be childfree usually assume that whether or not to have children is a personal right and human right that cannot be forced by anyone. This phenomenon is certainly interesting to study more deeply using a normative approach to Islamic law, because as is commonly known, in Islam, children are seen as a gift, and quite a few scholars even state that having children is the goal of marriage in Islam. Therefore, this study will discuss how Islam views childfree.

The term childfree began to develop in the late 20th century. Couples who decide to be childfree usually assume that whether or not to have children is a personal right and human right that cannot be forced by anyone. The reason most often given by those who decide to become childfree is to suppress overpopulation. (Hanandita, 2022). However, there is also an argument that states that this childfree trend comes along with the politics of the body campaign which assumes that a

¹Fatimawali is a Ph.D candidat of Islamic Family Law Study Program at Postgraduate School, State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia. This paper was presented at the 2nd International Conference on Islamic and Interdisciplinary Studies (ICIIS) 2023, as a presenter, held by the Postgraduate School State Islamic University Datokarama Palu, Indonesia.

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woman's body is hers so that no one has the right to force anything on her, including conceiving and having children. the presence of this childfree phenomenon is basically inseparable from the change in the community's perspective on marriage from what was originally an institutional nature to an individual marriage. (Patnani et al., 2021)

This paradigm shift then influences society's perspective on the importance of having children or not. In institutional marriages, having children is considered important because of social expectations and demands. Meanwhile, in individual marriages, the presence of children is not the main goal because the couple is more focused on fulfilling affection and self-development needs (Patnani et al., 2021). The childfree concept has been widely applied abroad, especially in developed countries. In fact, many people in developed countries such as Japan and Germany have chosen to be childfree.

2. Literature Review

Based on research conducted by Ari Handayani, the proportion of currently married women aged 15-49 who do not want children has fluctuated in recent years. In 2007 the percentage of currently married women aged 15-49 was 59%, then in 2012 it fell to 56% and in 2017 it rose again to 58%. The proportion of men who do not want children has also increased from 52% in the 2007 IDHS to 53% in the 2012 IDHS and has not changed in the 2017 IDHS. (Muhammad Khatibul Umam & Nano Romadlon Auliya Akbar, 2021)

In line with the data above, data from the world bank shows that the birth rate in Indonesia has decreased. In 2019 the crude birth rate per 1000 population in Indonesia was only 17.75. This data is reinforced by the results of the population census released by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) which shows a decrease in the population growth rate of 0.24% from 1.49% in 2000-2010 to 1.25% in 2010-2020. (The Childfree Phenomenon in Indonesia, n.d.) It should be noted that Indonesia is one of the pro-natalist countries that has levels.

In an article written by Susan Stobert and Anna Kemeny, it is stated that childfree is a term for a group of people who have a strong desire not to have children based on their own choice. This group chose the word childfree rather than childless because the word childless means more to lose something you want, while childfree is a life choice not to have the desired offspring. (Stobert & Kemeny, 2003)

3. Methodology

This study aims to find out the childfree law in Islam. This research is a literature research (literature research) in which researchers examine various written sources in the form of books and articles that support this research. The main sources used are the Koran, Hadith, and fiqh books, scientific journals, and other social books that support the theme of this research.

4. Results and Discussion

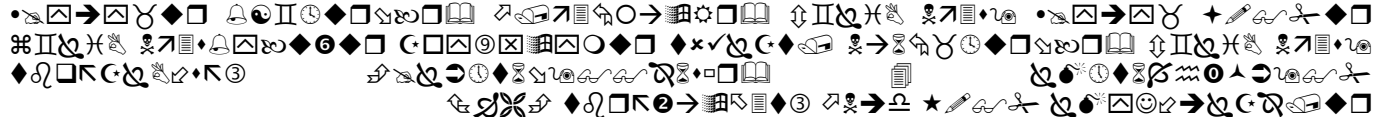
In the Qur'an, marriage and having children has been human nature since time immemorial, since the time before the apostolate of Muhammad SAW. This is mentioned and explained in QS. Ar-Ra'd verse 38 which means:



"And indeed We sent several Messengers before you and We gave them wives and offspring. and there is no right for a Messenger to bring about a verse (miracle) except with Allah's permission. for each era there is a (certain) book.

Understanding of the conception of offspring as one of the goals of marriage can also be seen from the word of Allah in QS. An-Nahl verse 72 is:

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“Allah made for you wives from your own kind and made for you from your wives children and grandchildren, and gave you good provisions. So why do they believe in falsehood and deny Allah's blessings?

In Islam, childfree is defined as 'azl because this is substantially the same as the choice of childfree in terms of both rejecting the child's existence before it has the potential to exist. (Muntoha, n.d.) According to Imam al-Ghazali, azl is legally permissible, it is not makruh, let alone haram. 'Azl is an act that falls into the category of tarkul afdhal or abandons primacy but does not reach the unlawful law. Imam Al-Ghazali stated in his book Ihya 'Ulumuddin: "I am of the opinion that 'azl law is not makruh with the meaning of makruh tahrīm or makrūh tanzīh, because to determine the prohibition of something can only be done on the basis of the text or qiyās in the text, even though there is no text or the origin or source of qiyās which can be used as an argument for making 'azl. Precisely what exists is the origin of qiyās that allows it, that is not married at all. Because everything is just an act of abandoning virtue, not an act of prohibiting it. (Muntoha: 2022)

There are many factors that cause married couples to consciously choose not to have children. Some of them are :

1. Economic Factors Today's youth feel unsure or worried that they will not be able to meet the living expenses of their children which they feel are many and burdensome. For those who choose to be childfree, financial maturity is a very important factor when they want to have children. So this is contrary to the common term we have heard so far, "lots of children, lots of fortune". For them, sustenance in the form of materials to support their children does not just come, but must be prepared from the start. (Haganta, Karunia. Firas Array, 2022)
2. Mental Factors Being a parent is certainly not an easy thing, there are many things that must be prepared by humans when they are about to become parents. Mental readiness is the most important thing for humans to become parents. Why is that ? because a healthy mentality is the support for a happy life for both parents and children. Not a few couples who choose childfree are motivated by childhood trauma caused by toxic parenting and family lifestyles. (Mayssara A. Abo Hassanin Supervised, 2014)
3. Personal Factors and Personal Experience Not a few feel that the presence of children will be a burden and an obstacle to career success for both husband and wife. Apart from that, there are also those who admit that they don't like children, feeling that their presence will only make their lives difficult. There are even those who argue that the desire to be childfree is due to having a traumatic experience in childhood so that they are worried that they will not be able to be good parents. (Mayssara A. Abo Hassanin Supervised, 2014)
4. Cultural Factors: So far, the presence of children has been vital in Indonesian culture, so their presence is eagerly awaited. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for a culture that considers the presence of children to be significant to burden married couples with questions that seem to be cornering when they never have children, so that in the end they decide to choose childfree so that people will no longer ask questions or make small talk.
5. Overpopulation Cinta Laura Kiehl or popularly known as Cinta Laura, revealed that her reason for choosing childfree was because of overpopulation. According to Cinta Laura, the earth is already very full of people, so to be able to stabilize the population, adoption could be an option not to "increase" the burden on the earth which comes from the consequences of procreation. (Haganta, Karunia. Firas Array, 2022)

Islam is a religion that is rahmatan lil'alamin, in which various things in life are regulated from the smallest things to the largest. Islam exists as an answer to the problems faced by mankind from time to time. To find out the Islamic response to childfree law, humanity can study various texts and the thoughts of the faqihs in interpreting childfree. One of the purposes of marriage as prescribed by Islam is to have children. This descent is interpreted as having biological children from a marriage between a man and a woman.

5. Conclusion

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that textually there is no text in the text that prohibits the choice to be childfree. Having children is a recommendation in Islam, not an obligation. So childfree is not a prohibited act, because every married couple has the right to plan and organize their domestic life, including having children.

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