



Childfree: A Field Research in X District

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ABSTRACT

The issue of child labor in Indonesia is covered in this article. To be child-free is for a husband and wife to have mutually agreed not to procreate while they are married. Just hearing the term "child-free" can make some people uncomfortable. Additionally, there is a tiny subset of society that has normalised and even engaged in this behavior, particularly among the well-to-do. Since bearing children and exercising reproductive rights in Islam are fundamental to the purpose of marriage, it is intriguing to examine this research from a scientific perspective. Childfree is the topic of this essay, which seeks to investigate the opinions and reactions of various Islamic groups in X District. Field research is utilized in this study to gather qualitative data. This study aims to examine the perspectives and reactions of Islamic organizations in X District about child-free activities. Several Islamic groups in X District were surveyed to get the necessary data. Then, descriptive analysis is used to examine the data. Based on the research, we know that (1) childfree is a phenomenon of contemporary issues that elicits mixed reactions (some people favor it, some don't), and (2) childfree is a form of radical feminism. Childfree, according to Islamic groups in X District Regency like Hidayatullah, Indonesian Islamic Da'wah Institute, Mubamadiyah, and Nahdlatul Ulama, is immoral since it contradicts Islamic teachings about marriage and the nature of human sexuality.

Keywords: *Childfree, Radical Feminism, Islamic Community Organizations*



INTRODUCTION

The 1930s American childless phenomenon was caused by the Great Depression and Malaise Crisis, which devastated economies worldwide (Merriam-Webster, 1996, p. 521; Chrastil, 2019, p. 85). Due to the economic slump and societal psychological strain, many Americans choose not to have children out of fear for their future (Frejka, 2017, p. 1). The childfree trend doubled from 10% in the mid-1970s to 20% in the 2000s (Frejka, 2017, p. 1). According to Sutherland (1995, p. 276), adults often say they opted not to have children freely because it was their choice. Systemic trends like more women entering the workforce and local ones like a desire for independence and personal agency may be reasons (Asrohah & Idayatni, 2020, p. 52). The 1970s feminist movement, wider reproductive choices, and more female labour force participation increased the voluntary childless population.

Indonesians are increasingly interested in children or not (Echols & Shadily, 1992, p. 129). After "Youtuber" Gita Savitri raised awareness, this issue became a major topic. Reproductive rights cause a chain reaction of beneficial and bad social repercussions. In a debriefing, Gita Savitri was asked about his future child's personality. The Gita advises against having children since life becomes more difficult and uncertain, making one feel like a failed child. Cinta Laura said, like Gita, that she would rather adopt a child than have her own due to the world's high population density in a YouTube interview with Anang Hermansyah. (2022, Etno Widyastuti).

Indonesia's crude birth rate per thousand inhabitants was 17.75 in 2019, according to World Bank data. A BPS census reveals population growth has slowed, supporting the findings. Population growth slowed to 1.25% from 2010 to 2020 from 1.49% from 2000 to 2010. Statistics indicate Indonesia's birth rate dropping. The emergence of the childfree movement supports this; many people choose not to have children owing to economical, environmental, or psychological issues, or even out of dread of having a family in today's violent society. Many organisations in conservative Indonesia denounce childlessness, even if it does not mean there are no risks (Humaniora, 2022).

Childfree is controversial in Indonesia because most people marry to start a family. Tanaka & Johnson, referenced by Miwa et al., report that Indonesia has a high birth rate (2.26



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per 100,000) and a high regard for marriage and children (93%). The Indonesians believe having children is beneficial. Social benefits include peace and social status, economic benefits like income and old age security, cultural benefits like heirs, religious benefits like a mandate from God, and psychological benefits like family satisfaction. In this age of fast digitisation, childfree activities are relatively new to society, therefore studying them is interesting. Research on childfree patterns has been conducted by Eva Fadhilah (Fadhilah, 2021, pp. 71-80), Miwa Patnani et al. (Patnani et al., 2021, pp. 117-129), Uswatul Khasanah, Muhammad Rosyid Ridho (Khasanah & Ridho, 2021, pp. 104-128), and others.

Childfree living research in Indonesia is controversial since most Indonesians believe marriage is about having children. According to Miwa et al., Tanaka & Johnson noted that Indonesia is one of the countries that encourages childbirth. Childfree is divisive in Indonesia since it goes against the popular assumption that most people marry to start a family. Tanaka & Johnson, referenced by Miwa et al., report that Indonesia has a high birth rate (2.26 per 100,000) and a high regard for marriage and children (93%). The Indonesians believe having children is beneficial. Social benefits include peace and social status, economic benefits like income and old age security, cultural benefits like heirs, religious benefits like a mandate from God, and psychological benefits like family satisfaction. In this age of fast digitisation, childfree activities are relatively new to society, therefore studying them is interesting.

Eva Fadhilah, Miwa Patnani, Bagus Takwin, Winarini Wilman Mansoer, Uswatul Khasanah, Muhammad Rosyid Ridho, and others have also studied childfree patterns or related topics. Given Indonesia's birth rate of 2.26, 93% of Indonesians marry for children. The Indonesians believe having children is beneficial. Social benefits include peace and social status, economic benefits like income and old age security, cultural benefits like heirs, religious benefits like a mandate from God, and psychological benefits like family satisfaction.

In this age of fast digitisation, childfree activities are relatively new to society, therefore studying them is interesting. Eva Fadhilah, Miwa Patnani, Bagus Takwin, Winarini Wilman Mansoer, Uswatul Khasanah, Muhammad Rosyid Ridho, and others have also studied childfree patterns or related topics. This literature review will have two childfree sections: Islamic law analysis and broad sciences like psychology and others. This will help identify author research similarities and differences. Various Islamic analyses supplement these portions. This study



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examines how Islamic mass organisations in X District see Childfree and adds to the literature.

Childfree research by Miwa Patnani, Bagus Takwin, and Winarini Wilman Mansoer is reviewed with psychology and other fields. The inconsistent findings in this study's assessment of infertility in marriage may be due to couples' different values of having children. This study found that marriage still involves having children. God gives us kids to improve life, help parents, and make married couples happier. In their writings, Nuria Febri Sinta Rahayu and Fatimah Aulia Rahmah claim that some feminist-affiliated Indonesians who are married adhere to childfreeness to a lesser extent than the general population. Sitti Muliya Rizka, Taat Kurnita Yeni Ningsih, Mutmainnah, and Yuhasriati found that being childless means being financially and biologically capable but unable to have a family. BPS reported a lower crude birth rate per 1,000 people in 2019, which is consistent with World Bank data showing a declining birth rate in Indonesia.

Eva Fadhilah's research on the Qur'an and Sunnah's normative approach shows that bearing children is not mandatory in Islam. A wider body of study examines Islamic law and childfree practices. Every married couple has the freedom to arrange and govern their family life, including having children, so being childfree is not illegal. A believer in Allah SWT may consider this option as a poor use of His provision for His followers, even if the Quran does not forbid childlessness. This study also examines childfreeness through the prism of Islamic women's reproductive rights, following Uswatul Khasanah and Muhammad Rosyid Ridho. Islam addresses husband-wife reproductive rights. This study used takhrij and Sarah hadith to analyse childfree, as did M. Irfan Farraz Haecal, Hidayatul Fikra, and Wahyudin Darmalaksana. Finally, childfree includes makruh, which Islamic law allows to become mubah in the event of *'illat*.

In their childfree research, Abdul Hadi, Husnul Khotimah, Sadari, and Abdul Hadi clarify the differences between childless (not wanting children) and childfree (not having children for health reasons). The essay concludes that being childfree is forbidden in Islam based on fiqh due to the lack of clear grounds and the apparent use of worldly matters like careers, jobs, and finances. According to Islamic traditions, children are generous, can receive favours in this world and the next, are more religious, intercede, and have a noble position in heaven. M. Riyan Hidayat described Aty Munshihah's views: (1) childfree turns off native



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regeneration in the new version. (2) Economics can impact a child's deadly behaviour. (3) Childfree violates Islamic law's *hifz nasl* and *nafs*, which declare that offspring maintain the population.

After reviewing several studies, the researcher will likely adopt a different approach in their present investigation. Especially in childfree, there are similarities with previous studies. Childfree has been studied extensively, with some studies adopting an Islamic legal perspective and others using psychology and other scientific fields. The researcher's focus on Islamic organisations' responses to childfree practices in Indonesia sets this study apart. Research object: X District Regency. Researchers will investigate new techniques to complete previous experiments.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses qualitative methods. Research has always used qualitative methodologies. This field study documents childfree practices in X District Islamic groups' viewpoints and answers. This study used mass organisations including Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, Hidayatullah, and the Indonesian Islamic Da'wah Institute. live peacefully with X District citizens while wielding power. This type of research is usually analysed using inductive methods (Azwar, 2010, 40). Drawing inferences about a phenomenon from its facts and projecting them to a larger scale. A researcher presented his conclusions based on conversational data from X District Islamic organisations. This paper's conclusion uses empirical methods to determine the social benefits of child-free activities and make them a reality (Sugiyono, 2008).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Childfree in Islamic Law

Islam views humans as parents and children, emphasising love. This *fitrah* should be suited for *maqasid syari'ah*, especially *hifz an-nasl*, to protect future generations (Saputra & Busyro, 2018, p. 43). Islamic law requires marriage to have offspring. Parents must also ensure their children's education and well-being. The Book of An-Nisa verse 9 states: "*Walyakhsyal-lazīna lau tarakū min khalfihim ḍi'āfan khāfū 'alaihim, falyattaqullāha walyaqūlū qaulan sadīdā*" (n). The verse's tone suggests that fertility is encouraged, but children need care and support to



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thrive. One strategy to improve children's education is to change birth spacing (Alimni et al., 2022, p. 224). A popular topic is the rise of childless marriages, in which the couple agrees not to have children. Some argue that each spouse has the right to express their opinions (Carmichael & Whittaker, 2007, pp. 111–143), whereas others disagree and cite various reasons. Childfree fiqh is an agreement that forbids having a child before or after conception. Thus, laws that forbid the development of a child before sperm is in the uterus might answer legal questions about the phrase "childfree" (Maeda et al., 2015, pp. 1–12).

Similar to other disciplines, fiqh rejects the idea of a child existing before sperm implant in a woman's uterus, abstains from marriage, sexual activity after marriage, and the "azl" method (Hamid Al-Ghazali, tt, p. 51) or semen discharge outside the vagina. They're like childfree options in that they reject a child's existence before it's even started. Mollen (2006), 269-282. That is why Imam al-Ghazali considers the commandment of 'azl permissible—not severe, but certainly not unlawful—just like the other three instances, which were small concerns of 'afdal, or neglect of virtues. Imam al-Ghazali says the law of 'azl is not makruh tahrim or tanzih. The only means to establish a prohibition is by qiyas on texts, even though no text or source can prove makruh 'azl. The qiyas that allows it stems from marriage abstinence, avoiding sexual activity after marriage, and not inzal, or sperm spilling after penile penetration. Since everything is renunciation of vice, not vice itself. No matter what happens after sperm are placed in a woman's uterus, a child may be born (Hamid Al-Ghazali, tt, p. 51).

According to Imam al-Ghazali, childfreedom is legal when azl is utilised, but destroying the reproductive system is haram. In *I'anatut-Thalibin*, Sayyid Abi Bakar says it's haram to use a valid abortion technology (Fadhilah, 2021, p. 78). Thus, Islamic law requires lawful illat before considering childfree. Childfreedom is allowed if the illat is dharuriyat, and their status greatly impacts this rule. A pregnant lady can abstain from having children if her life is at risk since it's an emergency. Another scenario is when a nation is in chaos and its residents have nowhere to go for food, clothing, or shelter. Since childfree has emergency benefits (masalahah dharuriyat), Fauzan (2022, p. 7) allows it. A decision to forgo children must be carefully considered. Reproductive rights include not having children or declining a pregnancy. If the couple is agreeable, they can debate and decide to be child-free at home. Women should discuss whether they follow through on their childlessness decisions. Child-free acts must be justified to avoid



harming both parties (Khasanah & Ridho, 2021, pp. 104-128).

Factors Causing Childfree Practices Between Husband and Wife in Indonesia

Married couples choose childlessness for many reasons: The money A man's financial problems are similar to those of a slave owner, so he allows his slave girl to have "azl" sexual contact with him to prevent her from becoming a mother. c) Privacy and Health He works to keep his wife alive and healthy so she can have sexual contact with him. She's worried she'll die giving birth. a) Financial or economic: people often avoid having children because they fear working extra hours or working illegally (Meier, 2014, pp. 159-168). b) Making the false assumption: anticipating a girl makes people want to avoid having children because they think marrying a girl is disgraceful, like the foolish Arabs who slaughtered their own children. They believe men are superior to women. The concept that women are inferior to men has long prevailed. This society's attitudes confine women to the home (Hariyanto, 2016, p. 84). d) Fear: Phobias include anxiety and other mental illnesses. Phobia sufferers often fear certain items or situations. Phobias may also drive childlessness. Unmarried persons have many fears: Aphthophobia is a touch phobia, acrophobia is a disorder, or neatness phobia. Atelophobia is the fear of imperfection, atychiphobia is the fear of failure, ecophobia is the fear of the house, ephebiphobia is the fear of teenagers, gamophobia is the fear of marriage, tokophobia is the fear of pregnancy, obesophobia is the fear of weight gain, philophobia is the fear of love, pedophobia is the fear of children, and tokophobia is the fear of childbirth.

Childfree Perspectives on Radical Feminism

Childless couples and radical feminism (Kwon, 2005, p. 56). Female biology puts women lower than male biology since it originated in the reproductive system. The couple forgoes children out of concern for their future, but radical feminism is not the sole factor. According to Gita Savitri, we have no idea what the future holds, and that the world born into this world is so unthinkable that people decide not to have children. Despite her non-radical feminism, Gita Savitri's arguments include the reluctance to procreate. During reproduction, a woman's physique changes drastically (Medina, 2022, pp. 77-90). After having birth, the mother's vagina and abdomen will shift, and her breasts may droop strangely (alo doctor, 2022).

"Forced sex in marriage causes forced pregnancy," writes Andrea DwDworkin in "Woman Holding." Andrea later criticised practices that enslaved women by denying them



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reproductive power (Dworkin, 1974, p. 55). In the home, Andrea says, women are most exposed to violence, sexual assault, and economic exploitation. About 25% of pregnant women said their husbands physically attacked them. Without personal funds, women are more likely to be victims of domestic violence and less able to seek sanctuary. Andrea estimates that three-quarters of women are unmarried despite legal abortion and contraception. Many have noted that non-pregnant women can influence population fluctuations (Dworkin, 1974, p. 226).

Andrea believes pregnancy is oppressive after witnessing societal exploitation of pregnant women. Bogoch (2021, p. 96) states that the high expense of marriage and the stigmatisation of unmarried women depress young women. She appears in Hot Slit's Last Days. Andrea also stressed the importance of abortion in removing the injustice of forcing women to have unwanted children. A significant societal initiative is forcing unwanted women to have children (BOGOCH, 2021, p. 97). This is due to the domestic exploitation of women's bodies. Despite her usual views, Andrea supports abortion and contraception as ethically superior (Duberman, 2020, p. 9). The gender system exploits the body through pregnancy, according to Andrea Dworkin. Pregnant women feel like prisoners since their power and space are dwindling. Andrea Dworkin's simple theory states that women should not be limited in any manner, including their right to procreate, but a husband and wife must have a marital tie to have a say in the matter.

CONCLUSION

More Indonesians are not having children. Modern Childfree has spawned a variety of viewpoints; radical feminism supports it. Meanwhile, Islamic groups in X District Regency, including Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, and Hidayatullah, have said that child freedom violates the Al-Qur'an, Hadith, and marriage's purpose. Only X District Islamic groups' views on Indonesia's childfree phenomenon are important in this study. The author's limitation is that X District has not experienced childfree phenomena. Field data can help researchers understand X District's child-free cases.



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