

Child Free Movement in Indonesia in The Perspective of Islamic Law

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Abstract: *The childfree phenomenon, defined as the conscious decision by married couples not to have children, has emerged as a significant social trend in Indonesia since 2020, challenging traditional cultural and religious values particularly in Islamic teachings that emphasize procreation as a fundamental purpose of marriage. This study aims to analyze the childfree movement from the perspective of Islamic law, examining its compatibility with marriage purposes as defined in the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) and exploring the legal and social implications of this contemporary phenomenon. Using a qualitative normative legal analysis approach, this research examines primary sources including the KHI, relevant Quranic verses, and contemporary Islamic jurisprudence, while incorporating sociological analysis to understand driving factors. The research identifies both internal factors (psychological and lifestyle influences) and external factors (economic and environmental concerns) contributing to the childfree phenomenon. The childfree movement represents a complex intersection of modern lifestyle choices and traditional Islamic values, and while not explicitly prohibited, the practice is discouraged in Islamic law due to its conflict with fundamental marriage purposes and human lineage preservation.*

Keywords: *Childfree, Islamic Law, Marriage Purposes, Maqashid Syariah.*

Abstrak: Fenomena childfree, yang didefinisikan sebagai keputusan sadar pasangan suami istri untuk tidak memiliki anak, telah muncul sebagai tren sosial yang signifikan di Indonesia sejak 2020, menantang nilai-nilai budaya dan agama tradisional, terutama dalam ajaran Islam yang menekankan reproduksi sebagai tujuan fundamental pernikahan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis gerakan childfree dari perspektif hukum Islam, memeriksa kesesuaiannya dengan tujuan pernikahan sebagaimana didefinisikan dalam Kompilasi Hukum Islam (KHI), serta mengeksplorasi implikasi hukum dan sosial dari fenomena kontemporer ini. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan analisis hukum normatif kualitatif, penelitian ini mengkaji sumber-sumber primer termasuk KHI, ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an yang relevan, dan fiqh Islam kontemporer, sambil memasukkan analisis sosiologis untuk memahami faktor-faktor pendorong. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi faktor internal (pengaruh psikologis dan gaya hidup) serta faktor eksternal (keprihatinan ekonomi dan lingkungan) yang berkontribusi pada fenomena childfree. Gerakan childfree mewakili perpotongan kompleks antara pilihan gaya hidup modern dan nilai-nilai Islam tradisional, dan meskipun tidak secara eksplisit dilarang, praktik ini tidak dianjurkan dalam hukum Islam karena bertentangan dengan tujuan dasar pernikahan dan pelestarian keturunan manusia.

Kata kunci: childfree, hukum islam, tujuan pernikahan, maqashid syari'ah.

Introduction

The phenomenon of *childfree*, or the conscious decision not to have children, has become a global discourse that continues to attract academic and public attention. In recent decades, many couples in different parts of the world, especially in Western countries such as Germany, Italy, and the United States, have chosen to remain childfree for various reasons, ranging from economic considerations, career orientation, health factors, to personal lifestyle preferences. Studies have shown that in countries like Germany and Japan, this phenomenon has even contributed to demographic crises such as declining fertility rates and the growing proportion of elderly populations, which in turn creates social and economic challenges related

to labor shortages and pension burdens.¹

In Indonesia, the discourse on childfree has only emerged prominently in the past decade, marked by the increasing openness of young couples in urban areas who openly declare their decision to live without children. Although the proportion is still small compared to Western countries, the increasing number of Indonesian couples choosing to be childfree indicates a paradigm shift that is worth analyzing. This trend is particularly interesting because it takes place in a society that is not only religious—where more than 87% of the population embraces Islam—but also strongly upholds traditional family values that regard children as blessings, heirs, and social security in old age.

From a cultural and historical perspective, Indonesian society has long considered the presence of children as a determinant of family success. In some local traditions, the absence of children in a marriage is even regarded as a deficiency or social stigma. For example, in Javanese and Bugis-Makassar culture, having many children is traditionally associated with social status and familial pride.² This cultural view reinforces the importance of offspring not only as a continuation of lineage but also as a form of social and economic support for parents.

In the context of Islamic law, the importance of having children is emphasized in several foundational texts. The Qur'an often mentions children as a form of divine gift and a source of joy (QS. Al-Kahfi [18]: 46; QS. Asy-Syura [42]: 49–50).³ In Hadith, the Prophet Muhammad encouraged Muslims to marry fertile women with the hope that the Muslim community would grow in number (HR. Abu Dawud). In Indonesia, these teachings are codified in the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI), which functions as a guideline for the administration of Islamic family law. Article 3 of the KHI explicitly states that marriage aims to establish a harmonious family (*sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah*), which in its classical interpretation is inseparable from the presence of children as the consummation of marriage. Thus, the childfree phenomenon, at first glance, appears contradictory to the objectives of marriage formulated in the KHI.

Several previous studies in Indonesia have examined this issue, although from different perspectives. For instance,⁴ explored the childfree discourse in Indonesian media and found that the debate often revolves around the tension between modern individual rights and collective religious-cultural values. Analyzed childfree from the perspective of women's rights, showing that the decision is often linked to women's autonomy over their bodies and lives.⁵ On the other hand, a study emphasized the role of economic uncertainty and urban lifestyle as key factors

¹ Michaela Kreyenfeld and Dirk Konietzka, eds., *Childlessness in Europe: Contexts, Causes, and Consequences*, Demographic Research Monographs (Springer International Publishing, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-44667-7>; Rania Salem and Sarah Shah, "Economic Rationales for Kin Marriage: Assessing the Evidence Using Egyptian Panel Data," *Demographic Research* 41 (August 2019): 545–78, <https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2019.41.19>.

² Christian Pelras, *The Bugis* (1997), <http://archive.org/details/the-bugis-wiley-blackwell-1997>; Hildred Geertz, *The Javanese Family: A Study of Kinship and Socialization* (Free Press of Glencoe, 1961).

³ TafsirWeb, "Surat Asy-Syura Ayat 49 Arab, Latin, Terjemah Dan Tafsir," accessed September 7, 2025, <https://tafsirweb.com/9139-surat-asy-syura-ayat-49.html>; TafsirWeb, "Surat Al-Kahfi Ayat 46 Arab, Latin, Terjemah Dan Tafsir," accessed September 7, 2025, <https://tafsirweb.com/4872-surat-al-kahfi-ayat-46.html>.

⁴ Mashita Phitaloka Fandia Purwaningtyas et al., "Debating Childfree: The Contestation of 'Childfree' Discourses in Instagram," *Jurnal ASPIKOM* 9, no. 1 (2025): 13–28, <https://doi.org/10.24329/aspikom.v9i1.1439>; Fathimah Pertiwi et al., *Childfree: Religious Perspective as Cultural Values in Indonesia*, 8, no. 1 (2023): 1–20, <https://ejournal.uinsaid.ac.id/index.php/buana-gender/article/view/6605>.

⁵ Erfaniah Zuhriah et al., "Childfree, the Digital Era, and Islamic Law: Views of Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, and Gender Activists in Malang, Indonesia," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 7, no. 3 (2023): 1606–26, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v7i3.17753>; Faculty of Communication, Universitas Pancasila et al., "Childfree, an Existentialist Feminist Perspective: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Youtube Cretivox Content 'Mending Punya Anak Atau Tidak Punya Anak???'", *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS* 06, no. 12 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijmra/v6-i12-84>.

influencing the choice of being childfree.⁶

However, despite the growing body of research, studies that specifically examine the childfree phenomenon in relation to Islamic family law and particularly the interpretation of KHI provisions remain very limited. Most existing research only looks at the sociological, psychological, or feminist dimensions, without delving into the normative legal framework that guides the Muslim community in Indonesia. Moreover, research on the reinterpretation of the objectives of marriage within the framework of Islamic law to respond to contemporary issues such as childfree is still rare.⁷

This gap demonstrates the urgency of this study. On the one hand, the childfree phenomenon can be understood as a legitimate lifestyle choice in line with the principle of personal freedom and human rights. On the other hand, this choice potentially contradicts the traditional objectives of marriage in Islamic law, which emphasize procreation. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by offering a normative-juridical analysis of the childfree phenomenon within the framework of the Compilation of Islamic Law, while also considering the social motivations and implications of such a choice in Indonesian society.

The novelty of this research lies in its interdisciplinary approach, combining normative analysis of Islamic law with sociological insights into contemporary lifestyle changes. Unlike previous studies that predominantly focus on the social or gender aspects, this study places the KHI at the center of analysis and questions whether the objectives of marriage as stipulated in the KHI require contextual reinterpretation. Furthermore, this research seeks to explore how Indonesian Muslim couples reconcile their personal choice of being childfree with the religious and cultural expectations that surround them.

By doing so, this study not only contributes to academic discussions on Islamic law and social change but also provides practical insights for policymakers, religious leaders, and society at large in understanding and responding to the increasingly visible childfree phenomenon in Indonesia.

Research Method

This study employs a qualitative research method with a library research approach. The research relies on secondary data sources such as books, journal articles, official documents, online media reports, and previous research related to the phenomenon of childfree, Islamic family law, and social change in Indonesia. The main legal references used in this study are Law Number 1 of 1974 on Marriage, the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI), and the Qur'an and Hadith, which serve as the primary sources of Islamic law. The analysis is conducted using a normative-juridical approach combined with a sociological perspective. The normative-juridical approach is applied to examine how the provisions of Islamic law, particularly those contained in the KHI, regulate the purpose of marriage and how they address the phenomenon of childfree. Meanwhile, the sociological approach is used to explore the social dynamics, cultural shifts, and motivations behind the decision of some Indonesian Muslim couples to adopt a childfree lifestyle. Data were collected through documentation techniques by reviewing relevant literature and analyzed using content analysis to interpret the legal texts and social discourses critically. This method allows the researcher to identify the tension between the normative purpose of marriage in Islamic law and the contemporary practice of childfree, as

⁶ Raafi Herdiansyah Putra et al., "Perceptions and Decision-Making Regarding Childfree Choices Among College Students in Indonesia: A Study at Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung," *JISPO Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik* 14, no. 1 (2024): 1–22, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jispo.v14i1.35426>.

⁷ Muhammad Abdul Latief et al., "The Childfree Phenomenon and Its Impact on Family Resilience: An Islamic Legal Perspective," *Samara: Journal of Islamic Law and Family Studies* 2, no. 2 (2024): 57–66, <https://ojs.stai-bls.ac.id/index.php/sajilfas/article/view/224>; Yuliatin Yuli et al., "The Childfree Phenomenon: An Examination of the Interplay Between Traditional and Religious Values in the Malay Community of Jambi," *ADHKI: JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC FAMILY LAW* 7, no. 1 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.37876/adhki.v7i1.134>.

well as to provide possible reinterpretations and contextualization of the KHI provisions in responding to this modern phenomenon.⁸

Results and Discussion

Based on the background of the problems that have been presented, this study seeks to analyze the phenomenon of childfree in Indonesia from the perspective of the purpose of marriage in the Compilation of Islamic Law. The problem of childfree in Indonesia is complex because it clashes with the norms and social values of religion embraced by the majority of Indonesian people, while the phenomenon of childfree originating from the West is considered contradictory to the traditional family values of the majority of Indonesian families which are influenced by cultural values and Islam as the majority religion.

The most common example taken when talking about the phenomenon of childfree in Indonesia is the decision of an influencer named Gita Savitri Devi and her partner who announced that they were both childfree. This reaped pro and con reactions from the public who at that time were not familiar with this term. The pros and cons debate on childfree does not only involve the general public but also academics, religious leaders, as well as gender activists and activists.⁹ Pro-childfree opinions are widely expressed by activists and human rights and gender activists who consider that childfree is part of the individual's right to make life choices.¹⁰ On the other hand, the opposing opinion against the childfree act has been expressed by religious leaders and ordinary people who argue that this action is contrary to the principle of *maqashid sharia*, namely protecting offspring (*hifdzu an nasl*) and is not in accordance with the purpose of marriage in Islam and traditional family values in society.

The implications that may arise if this trend continues, in addition to shifting social and religious values, is the potential demographic crisis that the country can experience as has happened in several countries such as Japan, Germany, and Hongkong where the country is experiencing problems due to the lower birth rate, the absence of new generations along with the aging population. Lately, the birth rate in Indonesia has decreased. This is accompanied by a decrease in the number of marriages. Childfree is likely one of the reasons, because the more this trend develops, the more people start to think and consider life without children. Although actually, before this term was known, there were already people who chose not to have children. But once the term childfree becomes the consumption of the general public, then people who initially think that children are already a part of life, they may consider not having children because it looks more fun.¹¹

There are several problems that need to be studied in depth in this study. First, how the childfree phenomenon developed in Indonesia, as well as the factors that affect it. Second, the provisions on the purpose of marriage as stated in the Compilation of Islamic Law, especially related to the existence of offspring as one of the fundamental aspects in the institution of Islamic marriage. Third, how is the position of the childfree decision or the choice to consciously not have children reviewed from the perspective of Islamic marriage law in Indonesia and the juridical implications of the childfree decision on the validity of marriage within the framework of Islamic marriage law in Indonesia, as well as how to contextualize the interpretation of the provisions in the KHI to respond to this contemporary social phenomenon.

⁸ Peter Mahmud Marzuki, *Penelitian Hukum* (Kencana, 2005); Mestika Zed, *Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan* (Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia, 2004).

⁹ Devita Syaharani, "Pendapatan netizen terkait childfree oleh Gita Savitri Devi," *Maliki Interdisciplinary Journal* 2, no. 10 (2024): 623–30, <https://urj.uin-malang.ac.id/index.php/mij/article/view/8260>.

¹⁰ Wijdatun Nabila et al., "A Feminist Study of the Childfree Trend in Generation Z: A Normative Review," *Solo International Collaboration and Publication of Social Sciences and Humanities* 2, no. 02 (2024): 143–58, <https://doi.org/10.61455/sicopus.v2i02.142>.

¹¹ Muhammad Indarta and Imanuddin Abil Fida, "Childfree Dalam Perspektif Islam Dan Sosiologi," *USRAH: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 4, no. 1 (2023): 46–67, <https://doi.org/10.46773/usrah.v4i1.633>.

This research is important to provide normative clarity and contribution to the development of Indonesian Islamic family law that is adaptive to social changes without overriding fundamental principles in Islamic law.

The Childfree Phenomenon in Indonesia, Factors, and Development

The term childfree has been known in Western civilization since the 1500s AD, which is used to describe a married couple who consciously and deliberately choose not to have children. The term childfree is used specifically to describe the condition of not having children voluntarily. Childfree is a well-known expression in the feminist movement, and refers to a woman's decision to choose her career path or become a stylish woman with an ideal body type. Childfree is aimed at a person or couple who really does not want a child, either in terms of life, place or situation.¹² In Indonesia itself, childfree is a new term that began to be known to the public in 2020, from the statement of an influencer who decided to be childfree so that it reaped pros and cons in society. Although this movement has existed for a long time in the West, it is still considered taboo in Indonesia because it is contrary to the religious and cultural norms of the majority.

Since the emergence of this term in Indonesia in 2020, the percentage of women or couples who are childfree has increased. Although the number was suppressed at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic and the percentage decreased again in the following year, it is undeniable that the increase in the childfree phenomenon has made a considerable contribution to the total fertility rate (TFR) in Indonesia.¹³ It is also undeniable, every couple who decides not to have children, must have different motivations and experiences. The influence of cultural shifts in the social environment of society and the shift in thinking towards a more modern direction are also factors that many couples decide to be childfree. In the perspective of sociology, there has emerged a philosophical shift with respect to society's view of heredity. It can be said that some residents who refer to childfree have the view and consider that having children is a burden for them so that it requires more in-depth planning both physically, mentally, and financially.¹⁴

The factors that cause the appearance of this phenomenon consist of internal factors and external factors. There are internal factors such as psychological factors and lifestyle factors. Psychic factors arise due to psychological influences on a person's mentality that affect their outlook on marriage and having offspring. In terms of lifestyle, the patterns of Indonesian people in managing households today are very diverse. Some still follow the traditional values of the Indonesian family, while others tend to follow the Western cultural household system. Cultural influences, which are now very easy to mix in the modern era, are one of the factors in the increasing phenomenon of childfree in Indonesia.¹⁵

Meanwhile, the external factors behind some childfree actions include economic factors and environmental factors.¹⁶ Economically, the existence of material responsibilities when

¹² Haris Wijayanto Wijayanto et al., "Tinjauan Hukum Islam Terhadap Fenomena Childfree," *Jurnal Hikmatina* 6, no. 2 (2024): 73–80.

¹³ Farrencia Nallanie and Fhelincia Nathanto, "Childfree Di Indonesia, Fenomena Atau Viral Sesaat?," *Journal Syntax Idea* Vol. 6 No. 06 (June 2024): 2663–73.

¹⁴ Wijayanto et al., "Tinjauan Hukum Islam Terhadap Fenomena Childfree."

¹⁵ Yusdani Yusdani and Januariansyah Arfaizar, "Re-interpretasi Teks Al-Qur'an dalam Budaya Patriarkhi Telisik Epistemologi Feminis Egaliterianisme Asma Barlas," *Jurnal Semiotika-Q: Kajian Ilmu al-Quran dan Tafsir* 2, no. 2 (2022): 160–81, <https://doi.org/10.19109/jsq.v2i2.13955>; Nurmala Hak et al., "Pergeseran Makna Esensi Pernikahan Di Kecamatan Pedamaran Kabupaten Ogan Komering Ilir Provinsi Sumatera Selatan – Studi Kasus Sosiologi Hukum Keluarga," *Al-Mabsut : Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Sosial* 16, no. 2 (2022): 169–84, <https://doi.org/10.56997/almabsut.v16i2.686>.

¹⁶ Yuni Safira H. Hasyim and Nunung Susfita, "Tinjauan Hukum Keluarga Islam Tentang Fenomena Childfree dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Ketahanan Keluarga," *Mahkamah : Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam* 8, no. 1 (2023): 54–70, <https://doi.org/10.24235/mahkamah.v8i1.13068>.

having children in a couple's life often causes couples to decide not to have children in their married life. In addition, there are also couples who are childfree for environmental reasons. The increasing human population on earth causes a lot of damage caused by human actions, to minimize this, childfree adherents decided not to increase the human population which is feared to damage existing natural resources.¹⁷

In addition to the above factors, according to Victoria Tunggono, an author of a book entitled *childfree and happy*, stated that the reasons for a person to do childfree are different. The reasons for married couples to have childfree based on the findings of the data are:

First, the reason why married couples adhere to childfree is personal happiness (personal happiness) because in their marriage the husband and wife couple are more focused on happiness together, so that togetherness and happiness in the couple are more intensive to pay attention to each other. Second, the next reason is psychological or mental factors, meaning the unpreparedness and concern of the married couple for their responsibility as parents to educate children due to the limitations that the couple has psychologically.¹⁸

Third, the philosophical factor, meaning that childfree adherents have not found a logical or philosophical reason to have children in marriage, for them children are not a must-have thing in every marriage because there is no clear reason. Fourth, economic reasons mean that couples choose childfree because they consider that having children is a material burden for the couple and the choice to choose this childfree to be free from these dependents and choose to use their personal money for the needs of life and pleasure of the partner. This is also influenced by the many material responsibilities of childfree adherents.¹⁹

Fifth, physical reasons mean that the childfree couple considers that the child is a responsibility that requires a lot of free time and energy so that they do not feel ready for it to take care of the child in their daily life during their lives. Sixth, the reason for the worsening environment that affects the sustainability of human life. In addition, the number of human resources is increasing so that it is not balanced with depleted natural resources and pollution caused by humans.²⁰

Purpose of Marriage According to Laws and Compilations of Islamic Law

Marriage as mentioned in article 1 of Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage aims to form an eternal family based on the One Godhead. In the explanation of the article, it is stated that "As a country based on Pancasila, where the first precept is the Oneness of Wholeness, marriage has a very close relationship with religion/spirituality so that marriage not only has an important role. Forming a family that is closely related to offspring, which is also the purpose of marriage, maintenance and education are the rights and obligations of parents."²¹

¹⁷ Yusdani Yusdani et al., "Development of Islamic Law in Indonesia: Explore Traces, Legacy and Contributions Ahmad Azhar Basyir's Thoughts," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam* 9, no. 1 (2025): 204–28, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v9i1.17079>.

¹⁸ Ikhwanuddin Harahap et al., "Understanding The Rise of Childfree Marriage: Avoiding Toxic Family, Being Happy and Well Without Children Despite Contradiction With Maqashid al-Sharia," *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 10, no. 1 (2025): 303–29, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jhi.v10i1.9984>; Wahyu Utamidewi et al., "When Spouse Decide To Be Childfree: Are They Happy Without Child?," *Proceedings of International Conference on Communication Science* 2, no. 1 (2022): 915–24, <https://doi.org/10.29303/iccsproceeding.v2i1.118>.

¹⁹ Siti Nurjanah and Iffatin Nur, "Childfree: Between the Sacredness of Religion, Law and the Reality of Society," *Al-Adalah* 19, no. 1 (2022): 1–28, <https://doi.org/10.24042/adalah.v19i1.11962>.

²⁰ Fitriyani Fitriyani et al., "Fenomena Childfree Sebagai Prinsip Hidup Wanita Karir Permodalan Nasional Madani Jakarta," *Usroh: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 7, no. 2 (2023): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.19109/ujhki.v7i2.18879>.

²¹ Yusdani et al., "Islam Dan Gender: Analisis Sosiologi Dan Antropologi," *EDUCATE: Journal of Education and Culture* 2, no. 03 (2024): 442–50, <https://doi.org/10.61493/educate.v2i03.133>; Yusdani and Arfaizar, "Re-interpretasi Teks Al-Qur'an dalam Budaya Patriarkhi Telisik Epistemologi Feminis Egaliterianisme Asma Barlas."

According to the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) in articles 2 and 3, it is stated that marriage according to Islamic law is a strong bond (*mitsaqan ghalidza*) to obey the commands of Allah and its implementation is worship, which has the purpose of forming a household that is *sakinah*, *mawaddah* and *rahmah*. The purpose stated in the KHI is taken and based on surah Ar Rum verse 21 where it is explained that humans were created in pairs so that they can feel at peace with each other (*sakinah*), and make between humans a sense of love (*mawaddah*), and a sense of affection (*rahmah*).²² From this verse, scholars conclude that the purpose of marriage in Islam includes:

1. Meet basic human needs. Marriage aims to meet basic human needs. These needs consist of emotional needs, biological, mutual need, and so on.
2. Gain peace of mind. By marriage, a husband or wife can complement each other. If they feel compatible, both will provide support, be it moral or material support, appreciation, and affection that will provide peace of life for both partners.
3. Maintain morals. By marrying, a Muslim will avoid the sin of adultery, as the Prophet Muhammad PBUH said, "Women are married for four things: because of their wealth, their position, their beauty, and because of their religion. Marry a woman for her religion, and you will not be harmed." (H.R. Bukhari and Muslim).
4. Increase the worship of Allah SWT. Acts that were previously haram before marriage, after the marriage took place, became worship for the husband or wife.
5. Obtaining pious and pious descendants. One of the deeds that does not end up being rewarded even though a Muslim has died is a pious or pious descendant. By getting married, one can educate a generation of Muslims who believe and fear Allah SWT, which is a saving of rewards and lasting good deeds.²³

The laws and regulations, in this case Law No. 1 of 1974, have explicitly explained that one of the purposes of marriage is to form a family that is closely related to the descendants. While KHI does not explicitly mention that obtaining offspring is the goal of marriage, but KHI explains that the purpose of marriage is to form a family that is *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*.

Childfree Decisions in the Perspective of Islamic Law

The decision of a married couple not to have children or called childfree has several underlying reasons, including in terms of mental or trauma faced by a person that causes him to dislike children, physical problems due to illness so that a person decides not to have children, other reasons are unpreparedness to educate children, an unsustainable economy, fear that it will interfere with his career, And it is also caused by the environment, namely he does not want to add to the burden of the earth that is already crowded with the birth of a child.²⁴

In Islamic family law, it is viewed that having children in marriage is one of the main goals in forming an eternal family based on the One Godhead. So that the existence of offspring and the regulation of the number of children in marriage are one of the concepts in realizing a family that is *sakinah*, *mawaddah* and *rahmah*, so that childfree decisions in marriage are not allowed.²⁵ Moreover, marriage as a teaching that is sharia by Allah SWT, in it contains the

²² Fifien Alfini et al., "Pandangan Islam Terhadap Keputusan Hidup Tanpa Anak Setelah Menikah," *Sosio Religi: Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Umum* 21, no. 1 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.17509/sosio>.

²³ Herlina Hanum Harahap and Bonanda Japattani Siregar, "Analisis Tujuan Pernikahan Menurut Hukum Islam Dan Undang-Undang No. 1 Tahun 1974 Tentang Perkawinan," *PROSIDING SEMINAR NASIONAL HASIL PENGABDIAN* 5, no. 1 (2022): 114–19.

²⁴ Zulfahmi Zulfahmi et al., "Fenomena Perkawinan Childfree Ditinjau Dari Hukum Islam," *Innovative: Journal Of Social Science Research* 4, no. 6 (2024): 7566–82, <https://doi.org/10.31004/innovative.v4i6.17333>.

²⁵ YUSDANI and Januariansyah Arfaizar, "Konstruksi Hukum Islam Tentang Pengangkatan Anak Dan Implikasi Sosialnya," *EDUCATE: Journal of Education and Culture* 3, no. 01 (2025): 512–20, <https://doi.org/10.61493/educate.v3i01.156>.

purpose and purpose of sharia (maqashid sharia) for the benefit of humans, one of the five points of sharia maqashid is to protect and protect human beings by maintaining offspring (hifdzu an nasl). The offspring in question is having children from a valid marriage between a man and a woman as understood from the postulates of the Qur'an surah An Nisa' verse 1 and surah Al A'raf verse 189 which reads:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

*O man, fear your Lord who created you from one self (Adam) and He created from him his mate (Eve). From both of them Allah multiplied many males and females. Fear Allah in whose name you ask each other and (maintain) family relations. Indeed, Allah is always watching over you. (Anna Nisa': 1).*²⁶

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّيْهَا حَمَلَتْ حَمْلًا خَفِيفًا فَمَرَّتْ بِهِ فَلَمَّا أَثْقَلَتْ دَعَوَا اللَّهَ رَبَّهُمَا لَئِنْ آتَيْنَا صَالِحًا لَنُكَوِّنَنَّ مِنَ الشَّكْرِينَ

*It is He who created you from one soul (Adam) and from it He made his partner so that he would be inclined and feel at peace with him. Then, after he interfered with her, she (his wife) conceived lightly. So, he passed it easily. Then, when he felt heavy, they begged Allah, their Lord, "Truly, if You had given us righteous children, we would have been among the grateful." (Al-A'raf: 189).*²⁷

The two verses above contain the meaning that a normal marriage that is in line with the sunnatullah is a marriage with the presence of children in it. In the second verse, it is also stated that children are something to be grateful for because they are sustenance from Allah as well as a mandate that must be maintained. So in accordance with the above verse, in order to achieve the purpose of marriage in accordance with Ar Rum verse 21 which has been adopted into the Compilation of Islamic Law, namely forming a family that is sakinah, mawaddah, and rahmah, a married couple must carry out family functions, one of which is the function of reproduction. Indirectly, it can be said that having children can support calm in the household because of the implementation of family functions.

Based on the explanation above, it can be understood that the phenomenon of childfree seems to contradict the purpose and purpose of marriage in Islam. In fact, it is really contrary to the culture of Indonesian society who believe that having children brings sustenance. Not only contrary to the noble values of the nation's culture, this becomes a little ambiguous when it occurs in the body of Muslims, considering that from the age of adolescence Muslims have been instilled with the understanding that marriage is one of the ways to perfect religion, the main purpose and purpose of marriage is to obtain and develop many and quality offspring (shaleh) that will prosper the earth, as the realization of the purpose and purpose of the shari'a (maqashid shari'ah).²⁸

Then, if we quote from the words of Imam Ghazali, childfree acts in marriage do not reach the haram category because there is no nash that expressly prohibits. However, this act can be categorized as makruh because it contradicts the teachings about the purpose and purpose

²⁶ TafsirWeb, "Surat An-Nisa Ayat 1 Arab, Latin, Terjemah Dan Tafsir," accessed September 7, 2025, <https://tafsirweb.com/1533-surat-an-nisa-ayat-1.html>.

²⁷ TafsirWeb, "Surat Al-A'raf Ayat 189 Arab, Latin, Terjemah Dan Tafsir," accessed September 7, 2025, <https://tafsirweb.com/2643-surat-al-araf-ayat-189.html>.

²⁸ Zulfahmi et al., "Fenomena Perkawinan Childfree Ditinjau Dari Hukum Islam."

of marriage in Islam. However, if the couple chooses childfree due to emergency reasons, namely when in the process (pregnancy or childbirth) it can threaten survival or threaten life, then the legal status of choosing not to have children changes from makruh to mubah (permissible) because of the *'illat* (cause) regarding women's reproductive rights.²⁹ If the original law of having a child is recommended according to the hadith of the Prophet, but by having a child more dominantly has the potential to cause damage and danger both to the child himself and the parents on the condition that the alleged potential danger is greater, for example it has been diagnosed by a medical expert that the danger of having a child is to the soul of a woman, then choosing not to have children is a *maslahah* according to *sadd al dzari'ah*. Any act that can lead to damage, both damage to soul, intellect and property, is not permissible (*sadd al-dzari'ah*).

Even though it is not to the degree of haram, childfree will still damage the dynamics of life in family and society. It can be imagined that if this childfree movement continues to expand, there will be a lot of potential lost. There will be various impacts such as the occurrence of a demographic crisis which, if it continues, it is not impossible for humans to experience extinction. Although it is undeniable, there are also positive impacts³⁰ such as being able to reduce the rate of human population, eliminate the selfish attitude of parents about the loss of children's responsibilities, reduce poverty rates, and reduce child mortality at an early age, but this can be overcome with other solutions that do not contradict human nature as living beings who are supposed to take care of offspring.

Conclusion

Islam is a religion that has given guidance to its people in facing all life problems including married life. The purpose of marriage in Islam as quoted from the Compilation of Islamic Law which is a guide to Islamic law in Indonesia is the realization of a family that is *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah* as in accordance with the Quran surah Ar Rum verse 21. One of the manifestations of *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah* is the existence of offspring in married life so that it is in accordance with the purpose of sharia (*maqashid sharia*) in an effort to maintain human life by maintaining offspring (*hifdzu an nasl*). From this explanation, it can be seen that the childfree movement is a movement that is contrary to the goals in Islam which is also contrary to the cultural values of the Indonesian people. Although this action is then understandable if the reason for his actions is an emergency reason that threatens danger, or causes more harm (*darurah*) than good (*maslahah*), it is undeniable that in addition to being punished makruh because it is contrary to the Islamic teachings regarding marriage and contrary to the culture of Indonesian society, this action can also have an impact on the sustainability of the human population if this movement continues to expand.

The suggestion that the author can give in responding to the childfree phenomenon in Indonesia is the need for a dialogue approach that respects religious and cultural values without judging individuals who choose childfree, to create a healthier discussion space in society. The development of a discussion platform that brings together religious, cultural, and individual perspectives to find constructive common ground can be a means to find solutions or common points between various pro and con opinions in this phenomenon. In addition, the development of a faith-based marriage counseling program that also discusses family planning and reproductive choices with a balanced approach between religious doctrine and modern social reality can provide more education to the community and can provide considerations that lead to decision choices about various problems and doubts faced by the community in the world of

²⁹ Citra Widyasari Salahuddin and Taufiq Hidayat, "Tinjauan Masalah Mursalah terhadap Fenomena Childfree," *DIKTUM: Jurnal Syariah dan Hukum* 20, no. 2 (2022): 399–414, <https://doi.org/10.35905/diktum.v20i2.2924>.

³⁰ Wijayanto et al., "Tinjauan Hukum Islam Terhadap Fenomena Childfree."

marriage, including the choice of having offspring. Its implementation can be through cooperation between the ministry of religion, family counseling institutions, and religious organizations to ensure legitimacy and acceptance in the community.

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