



Analysis of Family Law Fiqh on the Phenomenon of Unmarried Adult Individuals in Medan Tembung District

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the phenomenon of unmarried adults in Medan Tembung District and examine it from the perspective of Islamic family jurisprudence (fiqh al-usrah). The research employed a qualitative method using empirical and normative juridical approaches. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews with unmarried adults, religious leaders, and Islamic religious counselors at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) of Medan Tembung District, as well as documentation. The findings reveal that the primary factors contributing to delayed marriage include economic conditions, educational attainment, employment, psychological readiness, and changing life orientations. These conditions are further influenced by social transformation, where financial stability is considered a prerequisite before establishing a family. From the perspective of Islamic family jurisprudence, postponing marriage is permissible as long as it is based on legitimate reasons, particularly the inability to fulfill the rights and obligations of marriage. Islamic family law views the legal status of marriage as conditional, depending on an individual's capability and the principle of *maslahah* (public benefit). This study contributes to the development of Islamic family law by integrating empirical social realities with normative fiqh analysis, thereby providing valuable insights for society and relevant institutions in understanding the phenomenon of unmarried adults.

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INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of increasing the number of unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District is an interesting issue to be studied from the perspective of family law fiqh. This condition is influenced by various factors, such as educational demands, economic readiness, career orientation, and changes in people's mindset towards the meaning of marriage (Mardani, 2021, pp. 21–30). In Islamic fiqh, marriage is an institution that is organized to protect offspring (*hifz al-nasl*), honor (*hifz al-'ird*), and create a life of *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah* (Wahbah al-Zuhaili, 2011, pp. 6516–6521). However, reality shows that some individuals choose to postpone or not get married even though they have reached adulthood. This decision raises various social, psychological, and religious consequences that need to be analyzed based on the principles of family law fiqh (Amir Syarifuddin, 2020, pp. 40–47). Therefore, a comprehensive study is needed to understand the causative factors, implications, and relevance of fiqh provisions in answering the phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District so that they can provide solutions in accordance with the values of Islamic law (Mardani, 2021, pp. 28–30).

The phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District needs to be analyzed based on the provisions of positive law and Islamic law. In the Indonesian legal system, marriage is seen as a bond of birth and mind between a man and a woman to form a happy and eternal family based on the One Godhead as affirmed in Article 1 of Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage as amended by Law Number 16 of 2019. However, laws and regulations do not require every citizen who

has reached adulthood to get married, so the decision to postpone or not marry is part of a person's civil rights. However, from the perspective of family law fiqh, marriage has an important position as a means of maintaining religion, descent, and honor, and even the law can change according to individual conditions.

Based on the development of population and social data in Indonesia, the number of unmarried adults has shown a tendency to increase in recent years. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) through the 2020 People's Welfare Statistics and Population Census shows an increase in the proportion of the unmarried population in the productive age group, especially in urban areas. These conditions are influenced by various factors, including an increase in education levels, career demands, economic conditions, lifestyle changes, and individual preferences in determining the time of marriage (BPS, 2024). On the other hand, data from the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registration (Ditjen Dukcapil) of the Ministry of Home Affairs also shows that the age group of 25-39 years old with unmarried status is still large enough to be a concern in family development planning and social resilience (Directorate General of Dukcapil of the Ministry of Home Affairs, 2024). This national phenomenon is relevant to be studied at the local level, including in Medan Tembung District, in order to determine the compatibility between the empirical conditions of the community and the provisions of family law fiqh.

In Medan Tembung District, there is a tendency to increase the number of individuals who have entered adulthood but are not married. This condition is influenced by various factors, such as economic limitations, focus on completing education, career priorities, high standards in choosing a partner, and changes in people's mindset towards marriage. On the other hand, society still views marriage as a social and religious obligation, so unmarried individuals often receive social pressure and stigma. Much research has been done on unmarried individuals, but the majority have focused on sociological, psychological, demographic, or economic aspects. For example, Anita Rahmawati's (2022) research examined the factors that cause career women to delay marriage and found that education, career, and economic independence were the dominant factors. The study does not discuss how family law fiqh views the decision to postpone marriage.

Another study by Muhammad Fadhil (2023) analyzed the phenomenon of late marriage from the perspective of the sociology of the Islamic family. The results of the study show that changes in cultural values and increasing standards in choosing partners are the main causes of the increase in the age of marriage. However, the study focuses more on social analysis and has not examined the legal status of unmarried individuals based on the rules of fiqh and maqāṣid al-shari'ah. Research on marriage in Islamic law generally discusses the age limit for marriage, prevention of child marriage, marriage dispensation, and the factors that cause marriage delay from a sociological or psychological perspective. Meanwhile, research that specifically examines the phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals through the perspective of family law fiqh is still relatively limited, especially those that link the provisions of fiqh with the social reality of the community at the sub-district level.

In addition, most previous research has focused on the empirical aspects of the causes of unmarried marriage without analyzing the legal status, considerations of maqāṣid al-syari'ah, and its implications in Islamic family law. Therefore, the research gap of this research lies in the absence of a study that integrates normative analysis of family law fiqh with the factual conditions of unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District. The novelty of this research is the presentation of the analysis of family law fiqh on this phenomenon by combining normative and empirical approaches, resulting in a more comprehensive understanding of the legal position, causal factors, and its relevance to the dynamics of modern society at the local level.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Marriage in Family Law Fiqh

In Islam, marriage is a strong contract (*mītsāqan ghalīẓan*) to create a family that is *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*. Marriage is not only seen as a relationship between a man and a woman, but also as a worship aimed at preserving religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), offspring (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*), honor (*ḥifẓ al-'ird*), and

the benefit of the ummah. According to Wahbah al-Zuhaili (2011), the law of marriage is dynamic, that is, it can be mandatory, sunnah, mubah, makruh, or haram according to individual conditions. This opinion is strengthened by Amir Syarifuddin (2020) who states that the law of marriage in Islam depends on a person's ability to fulfill the rights and obligations of the household.

Factors That Cause Unmarried Adults

The phenomenon of increasing unmarried adult individuals is influenced by various social and economic factors. The Central Statistics Agency (2024) shows an increase in the number of people of productive age who are unmarried, especially in urban areas. These conditions are influenced by increasing levels of education, career demands, lifestyle changes, and economic considerations. In addition, the Directorate General of Dukcapil of the Ministry of Home Affairs (2024) also noted that the age group of 25-39 years old who are not married is still large enough to be a concern in family development. Thus, the decision to postpone marriage is influenced not only by personal factors, but also by changes in the social structure of modern society.

Maqasid al-Syari'ah's Perspective on Marriage Postponement

In the perspective of maqāṣid al-syarī'ah, the main purpose of marriage is to safeguard the welfare of human beings through the protection of religion, soul, offspring, intellect, and property. Therefore, postponing marriage can be justified if it is done to achieve greater benefits, such as completing education, getting a permanent job, or preparing for economic skills. On the other hand, if the postponement of marriage actually causes harm or opens up opportunities for acts that are prohibited by the Shari'a, then the law can change according to individual conditions. This approach shows that family law fiqh is flexible and contextual in responding to the dynamics of society.

Previous Research

Research by Anita Rahmawati (2022) found that career women postpone marriage due to education, career, and economic independence factors. However, the research focuses more on sociological aspects without examining the legal status from the perspective of family law fiqh. Furthermore, Muhammad Fadhil (2023) explained that cultural changes and increasing standards in choosing a partner are the main causes of the increase in marriage age. The research has also not linked this phenomenon to the concept of maqāṣid al-syarī'ah or the law of marriage in fiqh.

Research by Aulia and Rahman (2024) concludes that economic stability and employment are the dominant factors in an individual's decision to postpone marriage. However, the research still focuses on the empirical aspect. In contrast to previous studies, this study integrates empirical analysis with the perspective of family law fiqh so that it is able to explain not only the causative factors, but also the legal position of marriage postponement based on the principle of individual benefits and abilities.

Frame of Mind

Based on previous theories and research, the phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals is influenced by economic, educational, occupational, psychological readiness, and changes in life orientation. These factors are then analyzed using the perspective of family law fiqh to determine the legal position of postponement of marriage based on individual ability, fulfillment of rights and obligations, as well as the principles of maqāṣid al-syarī'ah. Thus, this study seeks to connect the social reality of society with Islamic legal norms so as to produce a more comprehensive analysis.

METHOD

This study uses field research with a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District (Sugiyono, 2023, pp. 9-12). The approach used is a normative juridical approach and an empirical juridical approach, namely examining the provisions of family law fiqh and comparing it with the reality that occurs in society (Moleong, 2021, pp. 6-10). The research subjects included unmarried adult individuals, religious leaders, Islamic religious extension workers, and KUA officials of Medan Tembung District who were selected by purposive sampling (Sugiyono, 2023, p. 133). The data source consists of primary data through interviews

and observations, as well as secondary data in the form of the Qur'an, hadiths, fiqh books, laws and regulations, books, and scientific journals (Moleong, 2021, pp. 157–159). Data collection techniques are carried out through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation (Creswell & Creswell, 2023, pp. 180–186). Data analysis uses the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2020, pp. 8–12). The validity of the data was tested by source triangulation, technique triangulation, and member checking to ensure the credibility of the research results (Sugiyono, 2023, pp. 368–376).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study presents the results of field findings regarding the phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District and analyzes them based on the perspective of family law fiqh. The discussion began by identifying the factors that cause individuals to postpone or not have a marriage, the social conditions behind it, and their implications for social life. Furthermore, the empirical findings were analyzed using the concept of family law fiqh to determine the compatibility between social reality and the provisions of Islamic law regarding marriage. This analysis is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the legal position of unmarried adult individuals and their relevance to the dynamics of community life in Medan Tembung District.

The phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District is reviewed from the causative factors, social conditions, and implications in people's lives

Based on field research conducted in Medan Tembung District, researchers conducted interviews with several unmarried adult individuals, religious leaders, and Islamic religious extension workers at the Religious Affairs Office (KUA) of Medan Tembung District. In addition, researchers also observed the social conditions of the community to obtain more comprehensive data on the phenomenon. The first interview was conducted with Mr. AR (31 years old), a private employee who until the time of the research was not married. When asked about the reason for not being married, he explained that economic conditions are the main factor. According to him, the increasing cost of living makes him choose to prepare his financial condition first before building a household.

"I actually already have a desire to get married, but I feel that I am not financially ready enough. I want to be able to meet the needs of my family well when I get married so that I don't cause problems after marriage."

This statement is strengthened by the results of researchers' observations in the field. The researchers found that most of the unmarried informants were individuals who were still trying to get a permanent job or increase their income. On several occasions, informants also said that the high cost of housing and household needs were the main considerations in postponing marriage. The next interview was conducted with Sister NS (29 years old), an honorary teacher. She revealed that in addition to economic factors, her unfixed employment status caused her to choose to postpone marriage.

"If you get married, of course there must be responsibility. I want to have a more stable job first so that I can have peace of mind when building a family."

The results of the observation show that this view is not only owned by NS, but also by several other informants who are in the productive age range. The researcher observed that most of the respondents had an orientation to achieve job stability before deciding to get married. This shows a change in people's mindset that makes economic readiness a priority over marriage age. In addition to economic factors, education and career development are also causes of unmarriedness. This was conveyed by Mr. MH (30 years old), a graduate student.

"I chose to finish my education first. In my opinion, after completing education, job opportunities will be better and better prepared to build a family."

The results of observations show that some informants are still actively pursuing education or are taking training to improve work competence. This condition shows that education is seen as a long-term investment before entering domestic life. The researcher also conducted an interview with Ustaz HN, one

of the religious leaders in Medan Tembung District. He explained that in Islam, marriage is a highly recommended worship, but its implementation must be accompanied by physical and mental readiness.

"Postponing marriage does not mean that it is prohibited as long as there are justified reasons, for example, they are not able to provide for themselves or are not ready to take responsibility. But if someone is able to afford it, then it is better not to delay without a clear reason."

This information is strengthened through the observation of researchers in religious recitation and counseling activities. The researchers found that religious leaders always provide education about the importance of preparing before marriage, but at the same time also remind that marriage should not be postponed if all the requirements have been met. Based on the overall results of interviews and observations, it is possible to get an idea that the phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District is influenced by various factors, such as economic conditions, education, employment, mental readiness, and changes in life orientation. Field observations show that this phenomenon has become a fairly common social reality and reflects a change in people's perspective on the time considered ideal for marriage.

The results of the study show that economic factors are the most dominant reason behind the fact that adult individuals in Medan Tembung District have not yet married. Based on the results of interviews with AR and NS, it is known that financial readiness is the main consideration before building a household. The findings are reinforced by observations that show that most informants are still trying to get a more established job and increase their income before deciding to get married. This condition shows a change in community orientation that makes economic stability an indicator of readiness to form a family.

The findings are in line with previous research that states that economic conditions are one of the dominant factors in marriage delay. The study explains that the rising cost of living, housing needs, and the demands of meeting family needs cause many individuals to choose to postpone marriage until they have a stable income. Thus, the results of research in Medan Tembung District confirm that economic factors are still the main consideration in making decisions to get married.

In addition to economic factors, the results of the interview with MH show that education and career development also influence an individual's decision to be unmarried. The informant argued that completing education and career achievement was seen as a long-term investment to create a more prosperous home life. The results of the researcher's observations also show that some informants are still actively studying and participating in job training, so marriage is not yet a top priority.

The findings are in line with previous studies that have shown that rising levels of education and career opportunities have changed people's mindsets towards the ideal age of marriage. Marriage is no longer seen only as a stage of life that must be carried out immediately after entering adulthood, but must also take into account academic, professional, and psychological readiness. This shows that social changes have influenced people's perspectives on building families. The results of interviews with religious leaders also show that Islam does not prohibit a person from postponing marriage as long as there are justified reasons, such as not being able to provide for a living or not being ready to assume responsibilities as a husband or wife. This statement was strengthened through the results of observations on religious counseling activities at KUA Medan Tembung District which emphasized the importance of birth, mind, and economic readiness rather than simply considering age. This finding shows that the understanding of religious leaders in Medan Tembung District tends to place benefits as the basis for the implementation of marriage.

Overall, the results of this study show that the phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District is a consequence of changes in social, economic, and educational conditions of the community. In contrast to previous research that focused more on identifying causative factors, this study also describes how this reality is understood by religious leaders and society through the results of interviews and field observations. Thus, this study provides a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals as part of the social dynamics of modern society as well as being the basis for further analysis from the perspective of family law fiqh.

Fiqh Analysis of Family Law on the Phenomenon of Unmarried Adult Individuals

After obtaining data on the phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District, the researcher continued to interview religious leaders, Islamic religious extension workers, and

Islamic family law academics to find out how the phenomenon is viewed from the perspective of family law fiqh. The interview data was then strengthened by the results of observations during the study. The first interview was conducted with Ustaz HN, one of the religious leaders in Medan Tembung District. He explained that in family law fiqh, the law of marriage is not absolute, but depends on the condition of each individual. According to him, a person who already has physical, mental, and economic ability and is feared to fall into prohibited acts if he is not married, then the marriage law can become mandatory. On the other hand, if a person does not have the ability to fulfill the rights and obligations in the household, then postponing marriage is not an act that is contrary to the sharia.

He said:

"Fiqh does not force a person to marry just because of age. What is the measure is ability and benefit. If you are not able to provide for yourself or are not ready to take responsibility, then preparing yourself in advance is better than forcing yourself to get married."

This statement was strengthened through the researcher's observation at the sakinah family counseling activity held at KUA, Medan Tembung District. In this activity, religious extension workers provide more education about the importance of mental, economic, and spiritual readiness before entering domestic life. Researchers did not find any evidence that adulthood automatically becomes an obligation to get married immediately without considering individual readiness. Furthermore, the researcher interviewed the Islamic Religious Extension Officer of KUA Medan Tembung District. He explained that in the practice of coaching brides-to-be, many couples choose to postpone marriage because they want to prepare for economic and work conditions first. According to him, these conditions must be understood proportionately as long as they do not contradict the principles of sharia.

He stated:

"We always convey to the community that marriage is worship. However, the worship must also be carried out with readiness. Don't let the rush of marriage lead to maintenance problems, domestic conflicts, and even divorce."

The results of the researcher's observations show that the counseling material provided by KUA emphasizes more on the concept of the sakinah family, spousal responsibility, family economic management, and premarital education. This shows that readiness to build a household is one of the main concerns in community development. The researcher also conducted an interview with Dr. MA, a lecturer in Islamic Family Law, about the phenomenon of increasing unmarried adult individuals. According to him, family law fiqh provides space for a person to postpone marriage if there are justifiable reasons, such as completing education, improving economic conditions, or preparing themselves to be able to fulfill their rights and obligations in the household. However, if the delay is carried out without a clear reason to ignore the purpose of marriage in Islam, then it needs to be a concern.

He explained:

"Fiqh views each case differently. Not all unmarried people can be judged equally. The legal status depends largely on the circumstances of each individual and the extent to which the delay brings benefits or harms."

Based on the results of observations, researchers found that most of the unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District had rational reasons, especially related to economic readiness, education, and employment. However, there are still some people who think that someone who is over 30 years old should get married immediately. These differences in perspectives show that there is a dynamic between the understanding of fiqh which is contextual and the social perception that develops in society. Based on the overall results of interviews and observations, it can be understood that family law fiqh not only views marriage as a religious recommendation, but also emphasizes aspects of readiness, responsibility, and benefits. Therefore, the phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District cannot be assessed solely based on age factors, but must consider the objective conditions of each individual in accordance with the principles of family law fiqh. This field data further serves as the basis for a more in-depth analysis of the suitability of the phenomenon with the provisions of Islamic law.

The findings of this study also corroborate the results of Aulia and Rahman's (2024) research in the Samarah Journal which concluded that employment factors and economic stability are the main considerations for adult individuals in postponing marriage. However, this study has a difference because it not only identifies the causative factors empirically, but also relates them to the perspective of family

law fiqh. Based on the results of interviews with religious leaders and Islamic religious counselors, postponement of marriage is considered justified as long as it is based on considerations of benefits and readiness to carry out rights and obligations in the household. Thus, this study strengthens the findings of previous research while providing novelty in the form of normative analysis of family law fiqh on the phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District is influenced by various factors, including economic conditions, education, employment, mental readiness, and changes in people's life orientation. The results of interviews and observations show that the majority of informants choose to postpone marriage because they want to achieve economic stability and readiness to carry out responsibilities in the household. From the perspective of family law fiqh, this phenomenon cannot be assessed based solely on age, but must consider the ability, benefits, and readiness of individuals in fulfilling their rights and obligations as a husband or wife. Therefore, postponement of marriage is permissible as long as it is based on reasons justified by the Shari'a and does not cause harm. This study shows that family law fiqh has a contextual nature in responding to the social dynamics of modern society, so that it can be a normative foundation in understanding the phenomenon of unmarried adult individuals in Medan Tembung District.

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