



Childfree in Islamic Perspective

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Abstract. This research aims to understand more deeply the Islamic view regarding the Childfree phenomenon. This trend, which has pros and cons among society, is important to study in more depth. This study also aims to find out Childfree law from an Islamic perspective by conducting library research by examining various written sources in the form of books, articles and journals that support this article. The data collection method used is documentation techniques, namely data is collected from various relevant literatures. The results obtained from this research are based on the Al-Qur'an, hadith and the views of Childfree scholars which are not permitted because they conflict with *Maqashid Syariah*, (*hifz al-din, hifz al-nasab and also hifz al-maal*). So, Childfree can be concluded to be contrary to human nature and of course it can be said to be contrary to Islam. However, if the legal *illat* meets the provisions or category of *dharuriyat*, then Childfree can be punished in the permissible category.

Keywords: Childfree, Al-Qur'an, Hadith, Maqashid Syariah

1. INTRODUCTION

It is a reality that every two people who marry will be faced with a new phase where most of them will later give birth to children to maintain and continue their lineage. Getting married and having children is one of the most important things in social and cultural life and traditions in society, because marriage is a cycle of permanent relationships between men and women that is valid according to religion and law and is bound by certain rules. However, recently a thought movement has gone viral on social media which says that marriage does not require having children or offspring, another term is called 'Childfree'.

Childfree is a couple's choice between husband and wife who decide not to have children in accordance with mutual wishes and agreements. Childfree itself is not a new term, many married couples in big cities have this stance, but this phenomenon has only emerged in the last few years and has become a trending topic on social media in

Indonesia. The term Childfree emerged in a Euro-American context in the late 20th century as an alternative that represented a move to move beyond the negativity inherent in the idea of being Childless. In addition, childfree is defined in the literature as the decision, desire and plan not to have children (Bimha, P. Z. J., & Chadwick, R., 2016).

This of course reaps pros and cons among the community, because of course it contradicts the culture, norms and religion that apply in society. The existence of the Childfree trend has resulted in a lot of controversy from various circles of society because this is certainly something that is considered unnatural and outside human nature. If viewed from a human rights perspective, making the choice not to have children or offspring after marriage is indeed something that is not wrong, because every individual has the right to decide about things in their own lives, and of course must respect and respect other people's principles of life. another by not blaspheming or worse still spreading hate speech. However, it is also necessary to provide an understanding of the Childfree trend when viewed from an Islamic perspective and perspective.

Islam places great emphasis on the importance of the family as the basic unit in society. Marriage and procreation are considered blessings, and Allah created humans as creatures who willed to reproduce. Therefore, the decision not to have children in the Islamic view can be considered as going against human nature and the purpose of marriage. Islam encourages marriage and having children as part of the main duties and responsibilities of Muslims. The Qur'an and Hadith emphasize the importance of procreating and raising offspring.

2. METHOD

This research study aims to understand more deeply the Islamic view regarding the Childfree phenomenon. The research approach used in this writing is a qualitative approach using the literature study method. The data collection method used is documentation techniques, namely data is collected from various library sources that are relevant to the research theme. Data analysis was carried out descriptively with the aim of finding information that was relevant and related to the research theme. The steps taken in this research included selecting a research topic, collecting data from

library sources, analyzing data, preparing a research report, and presenting research results.

This study also aims to find out the law of Childfree from an Islamic perspective by conducting library research or literature research where the researcher examines various written sources in the form of books, articles and journals that support this article. The main sources used are the Al-Quran, hadith and supporting opinions of scholars. The data analysis technique in this research is descriptive qualitative where the researcher carries out a comprehensive study of existing reading sources then collects them and compiles them into an article.

The research instruments applied are various library sources in the form of online or offline media, such as books, journals, articles and so on. The validity of the data taken is guaranteed, because through the selection of library sources that are relevant to the research theme, data selection and verification have been carried out to ensure accuracy and validity that can be accounted for. It is hoped that this article will produce accurate results and information and can be used as a reference in the context of Childfree according to Islamic views.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In general, couples who do not have children are categorized into two parts, namely the first where the couple does not have children or offspring due to an urgent cause such as infertility, HIV, or other health problems. Meanwhile, they actually have a desire for that right (Patnani, M., Takwin, B., & Mansoer, W. W., 2021).

Second, couples who voluntarily decide not to have children even though they are actually very capable and have the potential to have children (Neal, J. W., & Neal, Z. P., 2021).

According to the Islamic view, there are several purposes in marriage, one of which is marriage as a continuation of the bloodline. As Allah Subhanahu wata'ala says in Surah An-Nahl verse 72 which means:

وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ
 أَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَنِينَ وَحَفَدَةً وَرَزَقَكُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ أَفِي الْبَاطِلِ
 يُؤْمِنُونَ وَبِنِعْمَتِ اللَّهِ هُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

Allah has made for you wives from among yourselves and made for you from your wives children and grandchildren, and has given you sustenance from the good things . So why do they believe in falsehood and deny Allah's blessings? (Kementerian Agama, 2018).

In another letter, many couples are described as saying that after getting married they prayed and tried to have children or offspring as soon as possible. Because with the presence of children or offspring, happiness in a household is felt to be complete, as stated in Surah Al-Furqan verse 74, which means; And those who say, "Our Lord, grant us comfort for the eyes of our spouses and offspring, and make us leaders of the pious." (Kementerian Agama, 2018). In this prayer, they ask Allah to give them a life partner who will be a source of calm and happiness in life, offspring who are a gift from Allah, to continue their descendants. In other words, they want a happy family and offspring who will continue their preaching and contribute positively to society.

Not only does it comes from the holy book of Al-Qur'an, in several hadiths of the Prophet there are also several views regarding the purpose of marriage in Islam. Through the Hadith Encyclopedia Book 9 Imam application (Hadits, 2017), the author obtained several hadiths, but the hadith that will be discussed in this research is the hadith narrated by Imam an-Nasa'i No. 3175 from the Book of Sunan an-Nasa'i Chapter Marriage, which means as follows; Having informed us of Abdurrahman Bin Khalid, he said; has told us about Yazid Bin Harun, he said; has reported to us Al-Mustalim Bin Sa'id, from Manshur Bin Zadzan, from Mu'awiyah Bin Qurrah, from Ma'qil Bin Yasar, he said; A man came to Rasulullah sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam and said; "In fact, I found a woman who has wealth, but she is barren, can I marry her?" so he forbade it, then he came to him a second time and he forbade it, then he came to him a third time, then he forbade it and he said; "Marry a woman who is fertile and loving, because I am proud of your many children (Imam An-Nasai No. 3175).

From the explanation above, there are several points that need to be explained regarding the hadith above: **1) Infertility:** The Prophet SAW may have felt that the

woman's infertility could be a source of problems and unhappiness in the marriage. Infertility can make it difficult for couples to achieve one of the main goals of marriage in Islam, namely having children. Therefore, the Prophet SAW may have worried that such a marriage might bring complications and unhappiness; **2) *Household Welfare:*** Islam emphasizes the importance of welfare in the household. The Prophet Muhammad SAW considered that marrying a fertile and loving woman would create a happy and stable domestic environment. This is because having children can be a source of happiness and blessings in the household; **3) *Continuation of Lineage:*** In Arab culture at that time, continuity of lineage was very important. Therefore, the Prophet Muhammad SAW wanted to ensure that descendants could continue their generations. Marriage to a fertile woman has greater potential for continuing offspring than to a barren woman; **4) *Similar Values:*** The Prophet Muhammad SAW wanted to emphasize the importance of similar values and outlook on life in marriage. Marrying a woman who has position and wealth can show differences in values and life orientation that can disrupt harmony in the household.

Paying attention to the discussion of the hadith above, the author believes how important the presence of children or offspring is for married couples, because having offspring cannot be separated from positive values and can also have a good impact on both parents when they are educated and grow and develop in a good environment. Children or descendants will become good deeds that will continue to flow until the afterlife, as stated in the hadith narrated by Imam Muslim No. 1631 has the following meaning; From Abu Hurairah Radiallahu 'anhu said: Rasulullah said; "When a child of Adam (human) dies, his deeds are cut off from him, except for three things, namely almsgiving (the rewards of which continue to flow), useful knowledge, and pious children who always pray for him." (Muslim Imam No. 1631).

Couples who choose to go Childfree are not allowed if it is not based on health-related reasons. Childfree is prohibited if it concerns worldly matters (work career), economics or fear of not providing optimal child rights. Every couple is not allowed to be childfree because the Prophet ordered them to marry women who are loving and give birth to many children so that they will become the pride of the Prophet, because he was proud to have a large number of people. Likewise, if someone chooses Childfree because they are worried about the inability to finance, educate and raise children, or because they are afraid that there will be a population explosion with an excess of

human population that could destroy the world, or also because they are worried that their body condition will change during pregnancy and after giving birth, then this reason is not justified.

More specifically, the ulama's view is that regarding the Childfree phenomenon, we must first look at a concept that pays attention to the benefits of life and rejects or avoids the bad. The concept in question is Maqashid Syariah, according to As-Syatibi Maqashid Syariah is the goal of law revealed by Allah subhanahu wata'ala. According to him, the essence of Shari'a means a set of laws from God for mankind to obtain happiness in this world, especially in the afterlife. Maqashid Syariah is often referred to as the aim of Islamic law and implementing its laws is for the benefit of the people as a whole (Bakri, 2006). This means that Islamic law can grow and develop so that it becomes a solution to various existing problems. In more detail, Ash-Syatibi stated that there are five *maslahah* contained in Maqashid Syariah, these five *maslahah* are maintaining religion, soul, mind, offspring and property, or what is also commonly called Ad-Dharruriyat Al-Khamsah.

In other words, having offspring is one of the five most basic problems for humans in order to maintain human survival. Allah Subhanahu wata'ala provides provisions to maintain and continue this human lineage through marriage. In more detail, Maqashid Syariah guarantees *hifz al-nasb* (protecting offspring), followed by *hifz al-din* (maintaining religion), *hifz al-nafs* (maintaining the soul), *hifz al-aql* (maintaining reason), and *hifz al-maal* (maintaining assets). By paying attention to the Maqashid Syariah in placing Childfree's position in an Islamic perspective, you must first pay attention to the legal *illat*. Different *illat* positions will result in different legal provisions (Helim, 2019). If the legal *illat* meets the provisions or category of *dharuriyat*, then Childfree can be punished in the permissible category. For example, if a mother is pregnant and there is a fear that her life will be in danger if she gives birth, then the law allows childfree.

In general, couples who take the Childfree path are contrary to several *Maqashid Sharia*, namely in terms of maintaining religion (*hifz al-din*), because by choosing Childfree the couple chooses not to develop the religion of Allah because they do not want to give birth to a new generation (*hifz al-din*). *nasab*) by not passing on his religious understanding to his descendants. In fact, the couple does not maintain their

assets (*hifz al-maal*), because choosing Childfree means that the couple will not guarantee the preservation of their assets. So Childfree can be concluded to be contrary to human nature and of course it can be said to be contrary to Islam.

Someone who is worried about becoming poor because they have children or offspring is someone who lacks a complete and comprehensive understanding of Islam, even though Allah subhanahu wata'ala has provided a guarantee of sustenance. Couples who choose childfree without a justifiable reason will actually suffer losses because the severing of the lineage will eliminate the opportunity for the couple to receive charity that continues to flow (*jariyah*) from their pious children or descendants, they will also not receive prayers from pious children, and even the assets left behind will not be owned. heirs, there is also no one to care for the couple when they enter old age. This is in accordance with a shoheh hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah RA saying: Rasulullah said: *"When a person dies then all his good deeds are cut off except three: namely charity, useful knowledge or pious children who pray for him."* (HR Muslim).

The hadith above explains that there are 3 practices from which rewards will continue to flow even though the person has died, namely: 1) Almsgiving, which is the first practice from which rewards continue to flow. For example, someone who donates the Koran. As long as the Al-Quran is still used for good things, so long its practice will continue to flow without reducing the rewards of those who read the Al-Quran; 2) Useful knowledge, someone who has knowledge and passes on the knowledge he has to other people. If this knowledge is spread widely, then the rewards will continue to flow to the person who originally taught the knowledge; 3) Prayer for pious children. A pious child will definitely understand life in the world thanks to the love given by his parents. So a pious child will not forget to continue praying for his parents, whether they are alive or have passed away. Because the prayers of a pious child will always flow to his parents even in the grave.

4. CONCLUSION

The Islamic view of the decision not to have children, or better known as Childfree, can refer to several sources of Islamic law, namely one of which uses the Al-Qur'an Surah An-Nahl verse 72 as the basis, where one of the purposes of marriage is to continue the bloodline. The meaning of this verse is, Allah made for you wives from

your own kind and made for you from your wives, children and grandchildren, and gave you sustenance from the good things . So why do they believe in falsehood and deny Allah's blessings? (Kementerian Agama, 2018).

The results of the search in this research show that the hadith narrated by Imam Nasa'i No. 3175 regarding the recommendation to have descendants with authentic degrees. This hadith shows that the Prophet Muhammad *sallahu alaihi wasallam* strongly recommended that every Muslim marry a woman who is fertile and merciful in order to increase offspring. On the other hand, it is also emphasized that every Muslim who chooses not to have children in their marriage without emergency reasons, this is prohibited because it is contrary to the *Maqashid Sharia*, namely in terms of maintaining religion (*hifz al-din*), not developing the religion of Allah because they do not want to give birth. new generation (*hifz al-nasab*) and also not maintaining assets (*hifz al-maal*), because choosing Childfree means that the couple will not guarantee the preservation of their assets. So Childfree can be concluded to be contrary to human nature and of course it can be said to be contrary to Islam.

However, if the legal *illat* meets the provisions or category of *dharuriyat*, then Childfree can be punished in the permissible category. For example, if a mother is pregnant and there is a fear that her life will be in danger if she gives birth, then the law allows childfree.

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