

FROM MARRIAGE IS SCARY TO MARRIAGE READINESS: A SOCIO-LEGAL STUDY OF BANYUWANGI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS THROUGH ISLAMIC FAMILY LAW

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ABSTRACT

The rise of the TikTok trend *Marriage is Scary* reflects changing perceptions of marriage among younger generations and raises questions about how digital narratives interact with Islamic family-law values. This study examines Banyuwangi university students' responses to the trend, identifies the factors shaping their perceptions, and analyzes its implications from the perspective of Islamic family law. Employing a qualitative socio-legal approach, the study draws on questionnaires and interviews with students from Islamic-based and general universities in Banyuwangi, supported by relevant scholarly literature. The findings show that students respond to the trend critically and reflectively rather than simply rejecting marriage. The content produces diverse effects, including greater caution, anxiety, and, for some students, stronger motivation to prepare for marriage through emotional, financial, and relational readiness. Social media exposure is the dominant factor, followed by family environment, social interaction, personal readiness, and religious understanding. From an Islamic family-law perspective, the trend does not necessarily represent a rejection of marriage but reflects legitimate concerns about marital risks and responsibilities. Through *maqasid al-shari'ah*, particularly the preservation of life and lineage and the prevention of harm, these concerns can be transformed into constructive marriage preparation. The study argues that digital marriage discourse can function as a catalyst for critical and responsible marriage readiness.

Keywords: *Marriage is Scary; TikTok; Marriage Readiness; Digital Culture; Islamic Family Law; Maqasid al-shari'ah.*

ABSTRAK

Kemunculan tren TikTok *Marriage is Scary* mencerminkan perubahan persepsi generasi muda terhadap perkawinan sekaligus menimbulkan persoalan mengenai interaksi antara narasi digital dan nilai-nilai hukum keluarga Islam. Penelitian ini menganalisis respons mahasiswa di Banyuwangi terhadap tren tersebut, mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang membentuk persepsi mereka, serta mengkajinya dalam perspektif hukum keluarga Islam. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan sosio-legal kualitatif dengan data yang diperoleh melalui kuesioner dan wawancara terhadap mahasiswa dari perguruan tinggi berbasis keislaman dan perguruan tinggi umum di Banyuwangi, serta didukung literatur ilmiah yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa merespons tren *Marriage is Scary* secara kritis dan reflektif, bukan semata-mata sebagai penolakan terhadap perkawinan. Konten tersebut menimbulkan dampak yang beragam, berupa meningkatnya kehati-hatian, kecemasan, dan pada sebagian mahasiswa justru mendorong kesiapan menikah yang lebih matang, baik secara emosional, finansial, maupun relasional. Paparan media sosial menjadi faktor paling dominan, diikuti lingkungan keluarga, interaksi sosial, kesiapan pribadi, dan pemahaman keagamaan. Dalam perspektif hukum keluarga Islam, tren tersebut tidak serta-merta menunjukkan penolakan terhadap perkawinan, melainkan merefleksikan kekhawatiran terhadap risiko dan tanggung jawab rumah tangga. Melalui *maqasid al-shari'ah*, khususnya perlindungan jiwa dan keturunan serta pencegahan kemudharatan, kekhawatiran tersebut dapat diarahkan menjadi kesadaran dan kesiapan perkawinan yang konstruktif. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa diskursus perkawinan di ruang digital dapat menjadi katalis bagi terbentuknya kesiapan menikah yang kritis dan bertanggung jawab.

Kata Kunci: *Marriage is Scary; TikTok; Kesiapan Menikah; Budaya Digital; Hukum Keluarga Islam; Maqasid al-shari'ah.*

INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly evolving digital era, mass media has undergone significant transformation. Although mass media continues to serve as a primary source of information and knowledge, traditional media has gradually been challenged by the emergence of digital media. Digital media serves a similar purpose, namely disseminating information to the public; however, it provides greater accessibility and convenience. Examples of digital media include websites, social media platforms, mobile applications, and streaming services. One of the most widely used digital media platforms today is TikTok, a short-form video-based application that has gained immense popularity in Indonesia (Rosa Amalia, 2025).

TikTok provides engaging and easily accessible audio-visual content, making it a preferred platform among various segments of society. The application was developed by ByteDance Inc., a technology company based in China, which had previously created Douyin and later acquired Musical.ly in 2017. In August 2018, Musical.ly was integrated into TikTok, which was subsequently introduced and widely adopted in Indonesia. Throughout 2023, TikTok became the most downloaded application in Indonesia, recording 67.4 million downloads. Furthermore, in January 2024, Indonesia ranked as the second-largest TikTok user base worldwide after the United States, with approximately 126.83 million users (Data Reportal, 2024).

TikTok has become a platform for self-expression, the dissemination of personal aspirations, and the rapid acquisition of up-to-date information. However, the platform has also been associated with various controversial forms of content, such as the trend known as *Marriage is Scary*. (Annisa et al., 2025). This trend has attracted significant public attention due to its association with users' personal experiences. The *Marriage is Scary* content presents negative narratives related to marital life, including fears of infidelity, domestic violence, and financial instability. The term *Marriage is Scary* conveys the perception that marriage is considered something frightening or intimidating. This expression has become a prominent trend on social media, particularly among women who share and portray various concerns regarding their future marital lives (Putri, 2025).

This phenomenon is further supported by data from Morgan Stanley in the United States, which predicts that by 2030, approximately 45% of women will choose to remain single and not marry due to various factors, including fear of betrayal, domestic violence, economic challenges, and concerns about career development. Issues highlighted by influencers who have experienced domestic violence have also contributed to strengthening negative perceptions of marriage among TikTok users. Through its algorithmic system,

TikTok is capable of disseminating content on a massive scale, including potentially biased narratives, which may reinforce negative stereotypes among adolescents (Zhang, 2023). The patriarchal system that remains dominant in many societies has a significant impact on various aspects of life, contributing to gender inequality and injustice. Within this system, men are positioned as the primary holders of power and decision-making authority in society, while women are often expected to comply with decisions made by men (Prhita Shintiya et al., 2025).

Nevertheless, university students continue to hold an important position in social life, both as agents of knowledge development and as individuals capable of critically responding to various phenomena, including the widely discussed *Marriage is Scary* trend. Therefore, the ability to understand, analyze, and evaluate various issues both those related to academic contexts and broader social matters is an essential competence that university students need to possess (Riswandi et al., 2025). The term *Marriage is Scary* conveys the perception that marriage is considered something frightening or intimidating. This trend has gained popularity on social media and is influenced by various concerns and anxieties regarding marital life (Nasri, L. A., & Octavia, 2025).

This phenomenon indicates that the perception of *Marriage is Scary* has become increasingly widespread and frequently discussed among various segments of society, particularly among university students who are generally entering the stage of life associated with marriage readiness (Riswandi et al., 2025). One of the purposes of marriage is to have offspring with a clear lineage, which represents one of the five implementations of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, namely *hifz al-nasl* (the preservation of lineage) (Huda & Saripudin, 2022). Fundamentally, one of the primary objectives of marriage is to have offspring. Therefore, marriage can be understood as a means of ensuring the continuity of generations and preserving human existence on earth (Huda & Saripudin, 2022).

Considering this phenomenon, research on the responses of Banyuwangi university students toward the TikTok trend *Marriage is Scary* is highly relevant. This phenomenon is not only related to the development of social media but also intersects with the deeply rooted religious values within society. Through this study, the researcher aims to explore how university students perceive and understand the trend, the factors influencing their responses, and how Islamic family law views the narratives of fear surrounding marriage that have emerged on social media. Therefore, this research is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between digital culture, students' social

psychology, and the perspective of Islamic family law in interpreting contemporary issues related to marriage.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research method with a sociological empirical approach (Ardiansyah et al., 2023). In this study, the term Banyuwangi university students specifically refers to students who are currently pursuing higher education at universities located in Banyuwangi Regency, rather than students originally from Banyuwangi who study outside the region. This clarification is important to maintain the accuracy of the research context and to ensure that the responses examined genuinely originate from the academic environment within Banyuwangi.

The data sources in this study consist of two types, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through interviews with several informants selected purposively based on their relevance to the research topic. The informants were drawn from two different university environments, namely an Islamic-based institution (UNIIB) and a general university (UNTAG), involving students studying in Banyuwangi who had previously been exposed to *Marriage is Scary* content. These informants were considered capable of providing insights into students' responses as well as the psychological and social factors influencing those responses.

Secondary data were obtained from various sources of literature, including books, scientific journals, undergraduate theses, academic articles, and digital sources discussing Islamic family law, the concept of marriage, scholars' perspectives on dharar (harm), social media user behavior, as well as studies on TikTok trends and the formation of social perceptions. The data collection techniques in this study involved distributing questionnaires (Google Forms) and conducting semi-structured interviews with student respondents to explore their understanding, perspectives, and experiences regarding the *Marriage is Scary* trend on social media.

In addition, the researcher conducted a documentation study of various relevant social media content as supporting materials (Ansari & Arifin, 2026). The data analysis technique employed a qualitative analysis approach using an interactive model, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. During the data reduction stage, the researcher selected and focused on data relevant to the objectives of the study. Subsequently, the data were presented in a descriptive form to facilitate interpretation and understanding. The final stage involved drawing conclusions systematically based on

emerging patterns and findings, thereby producing an in-depth interpretation that aligns with the research context.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Banyuwangi Students' Understanding of the *Marriage is Scary* Trend

Based on the results of the research conducted through questionnaires distributed to students in the Banyuwangi region, particularly at Ibrahimy Islamic University Banyuwangi (UNIIB) and the University of 17 August 1945 Banyuwangi (UNTAG), an overview was obtained regarding their understanding of the *Marriage is Scary* trend developing on the social media platform TikTok. In general, students demonstrated varying levels of understanding, ranging from merely being familiar with the trend to having a deeper comprehension of the content and meaning conveyed through such narratives.

Most respondents understand the *Marriage is Scary* trend as a digital phenomenon containing narratives of fear, concerns, and realities related to marital life. The content they encounter generally portrays less-than-ideal household experiences, such as partner conflicts, disharmony, as well as economic and communication issues within marriage. From this perspective, students recognize that the term *Marriage is Scary* is not merely an emotional expression but also a representation of various real-life experiences and public opinions developing within society.

Furthermore, students also understand that this trend is not entirely negative but carries dual interpretations. On the one hand, the content is perceived as a form of warning or reflection on the realities of marriage, which do not always unfold as expected. On the other hand, students recognize that some content may be exaggerated or overstated in order to attract audience attention. Therefore, students do not simply accept the content at face value; rather, they engage in a process of selection and interpretation based on their individual perspectives.

This finding is consistent with research conducted by Riyan Riswandi, Cucu Surahman, and Risris Hari Nugraha, which indicates that Muslim Generation Z students perceive the *Marriage is Scary* phenomenon not merely as a narrative of fear toward marriage but also as a reflection of real challenges encountered in marital life. Students tend to adopt a critical perspective by considering aspects of self-readiness, the potential risks of family conflict, and the importance of premarital education before entering marriage (Riswandi et al., 2025).

In a deeper context of understanding, some students perceive the *Marriage is Scary* trend as a phenomenon related to changes in the younger generation's perspectives toward the

institution of marriage. Marriage is no longer viewed merely as a life goal that must be achieved immediately, but rather as a major commitment requiring mental, emotional, and financial readiness. This understanding indicates a paradigm shift from traditional views toward a more realistic and rational perspective.

Students also demonstrate an understanding that *Marriage is Scary* content is often presented in the form of storytelling or personal experiences, which creates a sense of authenticity and makes the content appear more credible. Some frequently encountered *Marriage is Scary* content on TikTok portrays narratives related to partner infidelity, domestic violence, and family financial difficulties, presented through short videos, screenshots of conversations, and personal experience narratives. Such content often conveys concerns such as: “*Marriage is Scary*; what if after getting married I have to face infidelity, domestic violence, financial difficulties, poor communication, and an unhealthy relationship with my partner?”

These visual representations make messages easier to understand and create the impression that problems within marriage are real and closely related to people’s everyday lives. This makes the content more accessible and easier to internalize, although not all experiences presented can be generalized. In other words, students recognize that what they see on social media does not always reflect the entirety of marital realities but rather represents only a small portion of the experiences of certain individuals.

Therefore, students’ understanding is also reflected in their ability to distinguish between informative content and content intended primarily for entertainment purposes. Several respondents stated that some content genuinely provides insights into marital dynamics, while other content is created solely for entertainment purposes or to gain popularity and virality. This indicates that students possess a relatively good level of digital literacy in responding to and evaluating information circulating on social media.

In another aspect, students understand that the *Marriage is Scary* trend did not emerge spontaneously but is part of a broader social phenomenon, namely the increasing openness of society in discussing domestic issues within public spaces. Social media serves as a platform for individuals to express their experiences and opinions, thereby contributing to the formation of new social constructions regarding marriage. This understanding demonstrates that students do not merely perceive the trend as an individual phenomenon but also recognize it as a more complex social phenomenon.

The understanding of Banyuwangi university students regarding the *Marriage is Scary* trend can be categorized as relatively critical and reflective. They do not merely comprehend

the literal meaning of the term but are also capable of recognizing the context, message content, and communication strategies used in the presented content. This understanding is shaped through their interactions with social media, personal experiences, and their ability to interpret and evaluate the information they receive.

Students are not merely passive consumers of *Marriage is Scary* content; rather, they actively interpret and construct meaning from the messages conveyed within it. This indicates that the trend has been understood as part of social dynamics that influence the younger generation's perspectives on marriage, without necessarily being interpreted as entirely negative or inherently frightening.

Factors Influencing Students' Responses

These factors do not exist independently but are interconnected and collectively shape students' overall understanding. The first factor is exposure to social media, particularly the TikTok platform. Most respondents acknowledged that they frequently encountered content portraying negative aspects of marriage, such as household conflicts, infidelity, financial issues, and divorce. The intensity of exposure to such content indirectly shapes the perception that marriage is a risky and frightening commitment. Furthermore, social media algorithms that tend to repeatedly display similar content reinforce this perception, resulting in students being more frequently exposed to negative narratives rather than representations of harmonious marriages. This demonstrates that social media functions not only as a source of entertainment but also as an agent in the construction of social reality.

The second factor is family experiences and the surrounding family environment. Respondents who come from family backgrounds characterized by less harmonious relationships tend to have more negative perceptions of marriage. Conversely, respondents who observe examples of harmonious families tend to develop more balanced or even positive views of marriage. Direct and indirect experiences within the family serve as an initial source of learning for individuals in understanding household dynamics. Therefore, the family plays an important role in shaping students' perceptions, although in this study its influence remains below that of social media.

The third factor is the social environment and experiences shared by people around them. Many respondents stated that the experiences of friends, relatives, or close individuals who have encountered marital problems influence their perceptions of marriage. Such narratives are often more readily believed because they come from people with whom they have direct relationships, thereby creating a sense of realism regarding the potential risks of

marriage. This contributes to strengthening students' concerns, particularly when the stories they encounter tend to be negative.

The fourth factor is personal readiness, both emotionally and financially. Some respondents perceived that fear of marriage does not only arise from external factors but also from internal concerns. They felt unprepared to face the significant responsibilities of married life, such as managing emotions, establishing healthy communication, and fulfilling economic needs. This lack of readiness subsequently reinforces the narrative that marriage is something frightening and should either be avoided or postponed.

Furthermore, religious understanding is also a factor that influences students' perceptions. Respondents with a stronger understanding of religious values tend to view marriage as an act of worship and a Sunnah that carries noble objectives. This factor serves as a counterbalance to the negative influences of social media by providing the perspective that marriage should not only be viewed in terms of potential risks but also through spiritual values and long-term purposes.

The factors influencing students' perceptions of the *Marriage is Scary* trend are complex and interconnected. However, within the context of this study, social media emerges as the most dominant factor, followed by family environment, social interactions, self-readiness, and religious understanding. This trend indicates a shift in the sources of opinion formation, from previously being based on direct experiences to becoming increasingly influenced by digital content consumption.

The Impact of the *Marriage is Scary* Trend on Students' Perceptions of Marriage

One of the most noticeable impacts is the emergence of a more cautious attitude toward marriage. Students tend to no longer perceive marriage as something simple or solely based on romantic aspects. Instead, they have begun to understand that marriage is a long-term commitment requiring readiness in various aspects, including emotional, psychological, and social responsibility. This cautious attitude reflects an increased awareness of the complexity of marital life.

On the other hand, some students also experience increased fear or anxiety regarding marriage. Content depicting marital conflicts, disharmony, or negative experiences within marriage may create the perception that marriage is a high-risk commitment. This tends to occur among respondents who are more frequently exposed to negative or dramatic narratives, leading them to develop the impression that marriage is inherently associated with various problems.

However, not all of the impacts that emerge from this phenomenon are negative. Some students demonstrate responses in the form of increased readiness to face marriage. They use *Marriage is Scary* content as a source of learning and self-reflection, encouraging them to prepare themselves more thoroughly before entering marital life. In this context, such content functions as an informal educational medium that provides insights into the realities of household life.

Furthermore, this trend has also contributed to the emergence of a more realistic and critical mindset toward the concept of marriage. Students no longer perceive marriage solely through an idealistic perspective but have begun to consider various possibilities and challenges that may arise within marital life. They have become more selective in responding to information and do not simply accept all content circulating on social media. This demonstrates a process of reflection and critical evaluation of the information they receive.

Rather than avoiding marriage, they are instead encouraged to learn about healthy relationships, improve their communication skills, and develop more realistic expectations (Krismono & Dwi Oktaviani, 2025). This is reflected in the increasing interest in premarital counseling, marriage literacy, and the decision to postpone marriage until individuals are fully prepared. Delaying marriage is viewed as a productive step rather than a form of avoidance, as it is undertaken to achieve greater readiness in various aspects, including education, career development, and financial stability.

The younger generation has begun to promote a new paradigm characterized by greater equality, healthy communication, and mutual agreement. The *Marriage is Scary* trend reflects a shift in mindset toward a more conscious, rational, and well-planned approach to viewing marriage as a major life decision that requires comprehensive preparation (Annisa et al., 2025). Many young people are postponing marriage or choosing not to marry, which contributes to declining birth rates and an increasing elderly population. Furthermore, there has been a shift in family structures toward more diverse forms, such as living independently, single-parent families, or relationships without marital bonds. The *Marriage is Scary* phenomenon is a complex issue that cannot be viewed entirely negatively. On the one hand, it encourages greater awareness and more careful planning regarding marriage. On the other hand, if not properly managed, it may lead to excessive anxiety, social pressure, and significant changes in societal structures (Alitha et al., 2025).

This phenomenon indicates that the *Marriage is Scary* trend does not merely function as entertainment content but also serves as an agent of social construction that shapes students' perceptions of marriage. From the perspective of social construction theory, the

reality perceived by individuals is not entirely objective; rather, it is shaped through continuous interactions and exposure to information, including content disseminated through social media platforms such as TikTok (Kussanti, 2022). Digital media algorithms also play a role in reinforcing these perceptions by repeatedly presenting similar content, thereby shaping particular patterns of thought among users (Fathilah et al., 2025).

Furthermore, social media has the ability to shape individuals' identities and perspectives toward social realities through the process of internalizing the messages they receive (Amelia et al., 2025). This is consistent with the concept of message construction in social media, which undergoes three stages: externalization, objectivation, and internalization. Through this process, content that is initially subjective can gradually be perceived and accepted as a social reality by users (Salma & Yusanto, 2025). Therefore, the *Marriage is Scary* trend not only reflects social realities but also actively contributes to shaping students' perceptions, anxieties, and readiness in understanding and approaching marriage.

Analysis of Islamic Family Law on the Trend *Marriage is Scary*

Islam encourages individuals to establish families and live within a family structure because the family represents a small-scale form of a stable life that fulfills human needs without neglecting their essential desires. From the Islamic perspective, marriage is a set of divine regulations established by Allah SWT, which carries numerous benefits and significant advantages (Mesta Wahyu Nita, 2022). Marriage enables a lawful relationship between men and women who naturally possess mutual attraction toward one another. Through marriage, offspring are produced, which constitutes one of the fundamental objectives of marriage.

Therefore, prospective husbands and wives who intend to enter into marriage must possess a comprehensive understanding and profound awareness of the marriage covenant, or *mithaqan ghalizhan* (a solemn and binding covenant) (Pasyah & Syaifuddin, 2025). The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also stated that marriage is part of his Sunnah. One of the hadiths narrated by Ibn Mājah states:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: النِّكَاحُ مِنْ سُنَّتِي، فَمَنْ لَمْ يَعْمَلْ بِسُنَّتِي فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي، وَتَزَوَّجُوا فَلِيَّ مُكَاتِّرٌ بِكُمْ الْأُمَمُ، وَمَنْ كَانَ ذَا طَوْلٍ فَلْيَنْكِحْ، وَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَعَلَيْهِ بِالْصِّيَامِ، فَإِنَّ الصَّوْمَ لَهُ وَجَاءٌ. (رواه ابن ماجه : ﴿١١﴾)

A hadith narrated by 'Aisyah (may Allah be pleased with her) states that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "*Marriage is part of my Sunnah. Whoever does not follow my Sunnah is not among my followers. Marry, for I will take pride in your large number before other nations.*"

Whoever has the ability (financial means) should marry, and whoever is unable to do so should fast, for fasting serves as a means of restraining one's desires" (HR. Ibnu Majjah: 1919).

This hadith explains the importance of marriage as part of the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He emphasized that those who do not follow his Sunnah in this matter are not considered among his followers. Marriage holds significant virtue, as the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) will take pride in the large number of his followers before other communities. For those who possess financial ability, marriage is encouraged; however, for those who are unable to marry, fasting is recommended as a means of controlling sexual desires. Therefore, marriage is regarded as a better way to preserve honor and morality. One of the legal foundations of marriage in the Qur'an is found in Surah Adh-Dhariyat (51): 49, which states:

وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

"We have created everything in pairs so that you may remember (the greatness of Allah)" (Kemeterian Agama, 2019).

The following verse in Surah Ar-Rum [30]: 21 states:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

"Among His signs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves so that you may find tranquility in them. He has placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed, in this there are signs of His greatness for those who reflect" (Kemeterian Agama, 2019).

Marriage in Islam has different legal rulings depending on an individual's circumstances. Marriage is considered sunnah for a person who is physically prepared, has sufficient financial capability, and seeks to attain emotional tranquility and continue the lineage. The ruling of wajib (obligatory) applies to individuals who are financially capable and are at risk of committing sinful acts if they do not marry. Meanwhile, marriage is considered makruh (discouraged) for those who are physically ready for marriage but lack adequate financial capacity, potentially causing difficulties within the family they establish. Marriage may also become haram (prohibited) when a person recognizes that they are unable to fulfill marital responsibilities or uphold their spouse's rights, thereby creating the potential for harm (*madarrat*) (Wardana & Ananda, 2024).

Thus, Islamic marriage law is flexible and determined by an individual's readiness and ability to undertake marital responsibilities. Furthermore, from the perspective of Islamic

family law, the phenomenon of *Marriage is Scary* can be analyzed through the approach of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, which emphasizes that every Islamic legal provision aims to achieve *maslahah* (benefit) and prevent *mafsadah* (harm). This principle indicates that fears of marriage arising from narratives of marital conflict, domestic violence, or partner unpreparedness have an empirical basis recognized within social realities; however, they do not automatically constitute sufficient grounds for rejecting marriage.

Maqasid al-shari'ah, particularly *hifz al-nafs* (the preservation of life) and *hifz al-nasl* (the preservation of lineage), serve as fundamental foundations in establishing a healthy and balanced family (Hukum et al., n.d.). In addition, regulations within Islamic family law, such as the minimum age requirement for marriage, aim to ensure individual readiness and prevent potential harm (*madarrat*) within the household (Ropei et al., 2021). Furthermore, the application of *maqasid al-shari'ah* principles in religious court practices demonstrates that Islamic family law is adaptive in addressing social issues and promoting justice (Keluarga, 2024). Therefore, the *Marriage is Scary* trend should not be interpreted as a rejection of marriage, but rather as a social reflection that encourages greater readiness, awareness, and a more comprehensive understanding of the objectives of marriage in Islam.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, Banyuwangi university students' understanding of the *Marriage is Scary* trend can be categorized as relatively critical and reflective. Students do not merely perceive it as a narrative of fear but also as a representation of social realities related to the dynamics of marriage. They are capable of filtering information and interpreting it rationally. From the perspective of Islamic family law, this trend cannot be used as a justification for rejecting marriage, as marriage is considered an act of worship and a *sunnah* that serves noble purposes within the framework of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, including the preservation of life and lineage.

Fear-based narratives should be understood as a form of awareness that encourages individuals to prepare themselves more thoroughly for marriage. The impact of this trend is dualistic, as it generates fear while simultaneously increasing students' awareness and readiness in perceiving marriage. Meanwhile, the most dominant factor influencing students' responses is social media, followed by family environment, social interactions, personal readiness, and religious understanding. Therefore, this phenomenon reflects a shift in the mindset of the younger generation in interpreting marriage within the context of the digital era.

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