

## Negotiating Marriage Preparation: Generation Z Muslims' Views on Premarital Guidance in Madura

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### Abstract:

This study explores the mixed attitudes of Muslim Generation Z towards pre-marital counseling in Branta Tinggi village, Madura, Indonesia. Born between 1995 and 2010, Gen Z shows a shift from traditional-religious marriage models to more rational-religious approaches, influenced by digital exposure to marriage challenges and economic uncertainties. Field research in Branta Tinggi reveals that, although Gen Z respects pre-marital counseling as both a religious and social necessity, they also view it with skepticism due to concerns about its administrative nature and effectiveness. The study finds a dual perspective: pre-marital counseling is not a religious requirement for a valid marriage according to fiqh, but it is mandatory for state recognition under Indonesian law. Participants have specific expectations for the content and delivery of counseling, favoring interactive, ICT-based approaches that cover sensitive topics thoroughly rather than idealized presentations. Overall, this research sheds light on how digital-native generations balance traditional values with modern rationality in marriage preparation, offering insights for religious institutions and policymakers aiming to improve the effectiveness of pre-marital counseling.

### Keywords:

Generation Z, pre-marital counseling, marriage attitudes, Islamic law, Madurese culture, marriage paradigm shift



## Pendahuluan

Indonesia is entering a new phase of demographic transition characterized by the predominance of Generation Z.<sup>1</sup> Generation Z is the nation's largest age group, comprising over twenty-five percent of the total population.<sup>2</sup> This cohort has developed in an extensive digital environment marked by widespread social media use, global information dissemination, and swift cultural transformations. These conditions inevitably shape their perceptions of marriage and family institutions.<sup>3</sup>

Within Muslim communities, marriage is regarded not merely as a personal bond between two individuals but also as a significant religious and social institution imbued with normative values.<sup>4</sup> In Madura, particularly, marriage holds a fundamental position within the social and cultural framework.<sup>5</sup> Madurese marriage traditions exemplify a profound integration of Islamic teachings and local wisdom, passed down through generations.<sup>6</sup> However, contemporary social dynamics introduce new challenges that influence young people's perceptions, including increasing divorce rates, domestic conflicts, and early marriage practices.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Arni Amanda Saragih and Syofiaty Lubis, "Generasi Gen z Dan Childfree Di Indonesia Berdasarkan Undang-Undang Nomor 39 Tahun 1999 Tentang HAM: Studi Perspektif Fiqih Siyasah," *Jurnal EDUCATIO: Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia* 9, no. 2 (October 9, 2023): 870, <https://doi.org/10.29210/1202323248>.

<sup>2</sup> Febriyanti Rossanti et al., "Isu-Isu Pernikahan Dalam Perspektif Gen Z," *Madani: Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin* 2, no. 10 (2024).

<sup>3</sup> Roykhatun Nikmah et al., "Literasi Pra-Nikah Di Era Digital: Edukasi Dan Sharing Gen- Z Tentang Kesiapan Ekonomi, Mental, Hukum Dalam Pernikahan Ideal Di MAN 1 Boyolali," *Jurnal Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat Desa (JPMD)* 6, no. 2 (2025).

<sup>4</sup> Muhammad Taufiq, Muhammad Fauzinuddin Faiz, and Ziyad Ravaşdeh, "Between Sharia and State: Fatwa Authority and Pandemic Responses in Indonesia, Turkey, and Morocco," *De Jure: Jurnal Hukum Dan Syar'iah* 17, no. 1 (June 28, 2025): 377-94, <https://doi.org/10.18860/J-FSH.V17I1.31433>.

<sup>5</sup> A M Wafa and M H Zuhdi, "The Decline in Generation Z Marriage Rates: Ma'ālāt Al-Af'āl Perspective," *Al-Afkar, Journal For Islamic Studies*, 2025.

<sup>6</sup> Moch. Ikwan, M. Afwan Romdloni, and M. Sukron Djazilan, "Fiqh Al Bi'ah; Strategi Membangun Islamic Environmentalisme Di Pesantren Kota Surabaya," *Al Iman: Jurnal Keislaman Dan Kemasyarakatan* 5, no. 1 (September 16, 2021): 41-61, <http://ejournal.kopertais4.or.id/madura/index.php/aliman/article/view/4437>.

<sup>7</sup> Siti Musawwamah et al., "Resistance to Child Marriage Prevention in Indonesia and Malaysia," *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah* 23, no. 1 (2023): 259-80, <https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v23i1.32014>.

Previous research has shown that premarital guidance is crucial for enhancing family resilience, lowering divorce rates, and preventing child marriage.<sup>8</sup> Most of these studies focus on the policy and institutional effectiveness of premarital guidance.<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, there is a limited amount of research exploring Generation Z's perceptions of this policy, especially within the unique cultural setting of Madura.<sup>10</sup>

This article addresses a research gap by exploring Muslim Generation Z's perceptions of premarital guidance, focusing on how local traditions, modern influences, and positive law impact their views. It aims to enrich academic discussions on Islamic family law and offer valuable insights for shaping premarital guidance policies that better align with the traits of younger generations.

## **Method**

This study employs a qualitative method with a field research design. It was carried out in Branta Tinggi Village, Tlanakan District, Pamekasan Regency, Madura. The location was chosen because of its rich Islamic socio-cultural traditions and its engagement with contemporary social changes. The study focused on Muslim Generation Z individuals aged 18 to 29. Participants were purposively chosen based on specific criteria: (1) belonging to Generation Z, (2) being unmarried or preparing for marriage, and (3) residing in Branta Tinggi Village. Additional participants included officials from the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) and local community leaders. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews and observations. To ensure validity, source and technique triangulation methods were

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<sup>8</sup> Muhammad Fauzinudin Faiz, Zazen Zainul Ali, and Muhammad Taufiq, "Underage Widows and Widowers before the Law: Problem, Contestation and Legal Certainty in Marriage Dispensation," *Juris: Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah* 22, no. 2 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.31958/juris.v22i2.9097>; Taufik Hidayat Simatupang, "Adult Age in Marriage in Indonesia (Theoretical Study of the Application of the Lex Posterior Derogat Legi Priori Principle)," *Jurnal Penelitian Hukum De Jure*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.30641/dejure.2021.v21.213-222>; Musawwamah et al., "Resistance to Child Marriage Prevention in Indonesia and Malaysia."

<sup>9</sup> Erfaniah Zuhriah and Imam Sukadi, "Strategi Penanggulangan Perkawinan Anak Pasca Putusan Mahkamah Konstitusi Nomor 22/PUU-XV/2017 Perspektif Teori Masalah," *De Jure: Jurnal Hukum Dan Syariah* 14, no. 1 (2022): 160-78, <https://doi.org/10.18860/j-fsh.v14i1.16076>.

<sup>10</sup> Afwan Faizin, Alfitra Alfitra, and Ali Mansur, "Legalizing Unofficial (Sirri) Marriage For Indonesian Migrant Workers In Malaysia," *JURNAL CITA HUKUM*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.15408/jch.v7i1.10341>.

used. The data analysis process comprised stages of data reduction, display, and inductive conclusion drawing.

## Result & Discussion

### Ambivalent Attitudes between Appreciation and Doubt

Generation Z, also known as Gen-Z, includes people born between 1995 and 2010.<sup>11</sup> Today, they are the most prominent generation in terms of race, gender, and sexual orientation. As they are now in their twenties, they often face questions about when they will marry or their marriage plans. For some, these questions can be uncomfortable and stressful, especially since not everyone understands their personal feelings or plans regarding marriage.<sup>12</sup> In today's digital age, social media heavily influences how people compare their lives to others, including married life. Many individuals set high expectations or standards for their future partners, yet worry that potential partners might not meet these criteria. As a result, most of Gen-Z tend to delay marriage out of doubts and fears, feeling that real marriage may not match the idealized portrayals seen online.<sup>13</sup>

**Table 1: Gen-Z Attitudes Toward Marriage**

Aspect	Gen-Z Perspective	Contributing Factors
<b>Marriage perception</b>	Sacred commitment between two partners	Religious and traditional values
<b>Dominant concern</b>	"Marriage is scary" phenomenon	KDRT exposure, infidelity cases, high

<sup>11</sup> Sudirman, Iskandar, and Muhammad Syahrul Sambu, "Generation Z's Perception of the Islamic Law on Panaik Money Among the Bugis Makassar Community in Sorong, Indonesia," *Manchester Journal of Transnational Islamic Law and Practice* 21, no. 1 (2025).

<sup>12</sup> Muhamad Taufiq, "Nikah Sirri Perspektif Maqashid Syariah," *Al-Manhaj: Journal of Indonesian Islamic Family Law* 1, no. 2 (2019): 114, <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-manhaj.v1i2.3138>; Zainuddin, Dhiauddin Tanjung, and Ramadhan Syahmedi Siregar, "The Role of Islamic Religious Counselors in Providing Premarital Guidance at the Religious Affairs Office of Sultan Daulat District, Subulussalam City, Aceh Province," *International Journal of Science and Society* 6, no. 3 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.54783/ijsoc.v6i3.1241>.

<sup>13</sup> Muhammad Taufiq et al., "Online Marriage in the Perspective of Fiqh Nawazil," *Jurnal Hukum Islam* 21, no. 1 (2023): 29–54, [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.28918/jhi\\_v21i1\\_02](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.28918/jhi_v21i1_02); Kholifatun Nur Mustofa et al., "Religious Authority and Family Law Reform in Indonesia: The Response and Influence of the Indonesian Ulema Council on Interfaith Marriage," *Juris: Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah* 23, no. 2 (2024): 383–93, <https://doi.org/10.31958/JURIS.V23I2.11849>.

		divorce rates on social media
<b>Decision approach</b>	Skeptical and cautious	Economic instability, relationship uncertainty, family conflicts
<b>Postponement reasons</b>	Mental readiness, financial stability, emotional volatility	Career considerations, individual preparedness

Muslim Gen-Z in Madura, especially in Branta Tinggi village, hold mixed feelings about pre-marital counseling programs.<sup>14</sup> It is recognized that, on one hand, pre-marital counseling is a valuable program for helping prospective brides prepare before fully entering married life. As Muhammad Ali mentioned:

“Pre-marital counseling (bimwin) is of considerable importance for every couple preparing for marriage. This program is typically conducted by officials from KUA Kec. Tlanakan, specifically counselors. Observations indicate that individuals who have completed this counseling exhibit greater mental, physical, and psychological readiness when entering marital life. Naturally, this program adheres to both religious regulations and local customs prevalent in this village and in Madura. Its primary objective is to foster the realization of a harmonious family, characterized by *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*.”

Within the socio-cultural context, particularly Madurese culture, such perceptions strongly uphold and respect religion and tradition.<sup>15</sup> Pre-marital counseling for prospective brides from this perspective constitutes a religious obligation and social responsibility.

<sup>14</sup> Ridhwan and A. Nuzul, “The Petta Kalie’s Contribution in the Development of Islamic Law during the Kingdom of Bone,” *Samarah*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v5i1.8977>.

<sup>15</sup> Hasani Utsman, “Tengka : Etika Sosial Dalam Masyarakat Tradisional Madura,” *Karya Ilmiah-Tesis*. (UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2018); Muhammad Taufiq et al., “Tengka, Identity Politics, and the Fiqh of Civilization: The Authority of Madura’s Kiai in the Post-Truth Era,” *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam Dan Kemanusiaan* 24, no. 1 (2024): 139–65, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijtihad.v24i1.139-165>; Paisun, Maskuri, and Junaidi Mistar, “The Kiai’s Leadership in Harmonizing Chinese-Muslim Relations through Multicultural Islamic Education,” *Munaddhomah*, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v6i2.1897>.

**Table 2: Dual Perception of Pre-marital Counseling**

Perspective	View	Rationale
<b>Appreciation</b>	Important and necessary program	Preparation for household life, religious obligation, social responsibility
<b>Doubt</b>	Administrative formality concerns	Exposure to marriage failure narratives, KDRT, infidelity on social media
<b>Cultural context</b>	Respects religious and traditional values	Madurese culture emphasizes religious and traditional customs
<b>Global exposure</b>	Awareness of marriage complexities	Digital disruption era, global discourse on marriage challenges

Conversely, Muslim Generation Z individuals in Branta Tinggi village are also engaged with the global discourse concerning the intricacies of marriage in this disruptive era.<sup>16</sup> Social media has become a prominent platform for the youth of this generation, abundant with presentations and narratives regarding failed marriages, domestic violence (KDRT),<sup>17</sup> infidelity, and various challenges that frequently afflict household life. Such exposure to information fosters negative stigmas and engenders concerns and doubts among Generation Z.<sup>18</sup>

These concerns are increasingly apparent from empirical field research data. All young men and women of this generation concur that marriage constitutes a sacred commitment between two individuals. Nonetheless, the notion that "marriage is scary" persists and continues

<sup>16</sup> Syukron Jazila, "Disruption Faces, Inequality, and Its Appearance in Religion: An Integrated Paradigm," *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism* 9, no. 2 (October 9, 2020): 193–206, <https://doi.org/10.21580/tos.v9i2.5368>; Ulufiah Nikmathul, "Perubahan Strategi Segmenting, Targeting, Dan Positioning Pada Pemasaran Produk Umroh PT Arofahmina Cabang Tulungagung," in *Frontiers in Neuroscience*, 2021.

<sup>17</sup> Putri Sekar Sari et al., "Indonesian Migrant Workers in Malaysia: Damages in Family Structure System in Their Hometown," *Przestrzen Społeczna*, 2022; Naufal Ghaly Rozani, Siti Ngainnur Rohmah, and Abdur Rahim, "Perlindungan Terhadap Korban Seks Komersial Anak Di Bawah Umur Menurut Undang-Undang Nomor 17 Tahun 2016 Dan Hukum Islam," *SALAM: Jurnal Sosial Dan Budaya Syar-I* 10, no. 4 (October 9, 2023): 1127–42, <https://doi.org/10.15408/sjsbs.v10i3.32496>.

<sup>18</sup> Hasna Nur Latifah et al., "Pengaruh Media Sosial Terhadap Persepsi Marriage Is Scary Di Kalangan Gen Z," *Jurnal Psikologi Dan Bimbingan Konseling* 10 (2025).

to influence this demographic, raising apprehensions about potential risks that could affect their domestic lives in the future.<sup>19</sup> The youth of this generation exhibit greater skepticism towards lifelong marital commitments, which are traditionally regarded as standard within society, and they demonstrate increased prudence and wisdom when considering entering a new phase of family life. This phenomenon is driven by various influences, including an unstable economy, relationship uncertainties, high divorce rates, and family conflicts that are widely disseminated and viral on social media platforms. Such factors impact the desire and conviction of Generation Z's young men and women, leading them to delay marriage. Concerns regarding mental readiness, financial stability, and emotional stability remain primary reasons for their decision to postpone marriage.<sup>20</sup>

### **Paradigm Shift in Marriage Models from Tradition to Rational Choice**

Muslim youth in Generation Z have altered their perspective on marriage. This paradigm shift is evidently observable, transitioning from marriage as a religious-traditionalist obligation to a more religious-rationalist approach, which undoubtedly necessitates careful and mature consideration.<sup>21</sup> Examining the reality that preceding

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<sup>19</sup> Gita Olviyani et al., "Fenomena Marriage Is Scary Di Kalangan Generasi Z: Tinjauan Hukum Islam Dan Hukum Positif Di Indonesia," *Al-Ahwal Al-Syakhsyiyah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Peradilan Islam* 6, no. 2 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.15575/as.v10i2.48333>; Nur Latifah et al., "Pengaruh Media Sosial Terhadap Persepsi Marriage Is Scary Di Kalangan Gen Z"; Dwi Oktaviani and Krismono, "Analysis of the Marriage Is Scary Phenomenon Among Generation Z: A Perspective of Islamic Law Sociology," *Reflection : Islamic Education Journal* 2, no. 1 (2024).

<sup>20</sup> Mohd Al Adib Samuri, "Child Marriage Discourse According to Al-Qaradawi's Fiqh Methodology," *Islamiyyat* 46, no. 1 (October 9, 2024): 3–14, <https://doi.org/10.17576/islamiyyat-2024-4601-01>; Musawwamah et al., "Resistance to Child Marriage Prevention in Indonesia and Malaysia"; Simatupang, "Adult Age in Marriage in Indonesia (Theoretical Study of the Application of the Lex Posterior Derogat Legi Priori Principle)."

<sup>21</sup> A Kumedi Ja'far et al., "The Construction of Islamic State Law in the 5.0 Era from the Perspective of Maqasid Al-Shariah," *KnE Social Sciences*, October 9, 2024, 58–71–58–71, <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v9i2.14966>; Taufiq, Faiz, and Ravaşdeh, "Between Sharia and State: Fatwa Authority and Pandemic Responses in Indonesia, Turkey, and Morocco"; Nor Hasan et al., "Tradition, Social Values, and Fiqh of Civilization: Examining the Nyadran Ritual in Nganjuk, East Java, Indonesia," *Samarah* 7, no. 3 (2023): 1778–1802, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v7i3.20578>.

generations, prior to Generation Z, tended to adhere to a marriage model shaped by social norms and familial expectations passed down through generations, which continue to serve as guidance in Branta Tinggi village. This contrasts with Muslim Generation Z individuals, who employ greater deliberation regarding factors such as economic stability, emotional readiness, and career development.

**Table 3: Marriage Paradigm Shift Across Generations**

Aspect	Pre-Gen-Z Generation	Gen-Z Generation
<b>Marriage model</b>	Traditional-religious based on social norms	Rational-religious based on individual readiness
<b>Primary consideration</b>	Family expectations and social norms	Economic stability, emotional readiness, career achievement
<b>Decision factors</b>	Single factor (love)	Multiple interrelated factors
<b>Counseling perspective</b>	Ceremonial/administrative requirement	Substantive need for comprehensive preparation
<b>Traditional practices</b>	Full adoption	Selective adoption and adaptation

This paradigm shift phenomenon aligns with field research findings regarding various factors influencing Generation Z to delay marriage.<sup>22</sup> Research indicates that the postponement of marriage is not solely attributable to one factor, namely love, which has been identified as a potential obstacle for couples to progress more seriously toward marriage. However, in reality, multiple interrelated factors are at play. These include economic stability, emotional and psychological volatility, career achievement, and preparedness to undertake

<sup>22</sup> Olviyani et al., "Fenomena Marriage Is Scary Di Kalangan Generasi Z: Tinjauan Hukum Islam Dan Hukum Positif Di Indonesia"; Nikmah et al., "Literasi Pra-Nikah Di Era Digital: Edukasi Dan Sharing Gen- Z Tentang Kesiapan Ekonomi, Mental, Hukum Dalam Pernikahan Ideal Di MAN 1 Boyolali"; Nur Latifah et al., "Pengaruh Media Sosial Terhadap Persepsi Marriage Is Scary Di Kalangan Gen Z."



household responsibilities, which contribute to Muslim Generation Z youth delaying marriage.<sup>23</sup>

Considering the complexity of these factors, pre-marital counseling from the perspective of Generation Z has also evolved. This program is no longer regarded as a mere ceremonial or administrative requirement prior to marriage; rather, it has transformed into a substantive process aimed at preparing individuals to embrace the realities of a more modern and comprehensive household life.<sup>24</sup> Premarital counseling is anticipated to offer practical solutions in mitigating and guiding internal conflicts, financial management, effective communication, and the simulation of critical decision-making processes to establish a harmonious household for both spouses.<sup>25</sup>

The paradigm shift discussed herein is anticipated to influence the perception of traditional wedding customs among Muslim youth of Generation Z.<sup>26</sup> A majority within this demographic continue to uphold and honor indigenous wisdom and traditional ritual processions,

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<sup>23</sup> Asman Asman, "THE RED YARN OF CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC LAW REFORM: A Critical Study of Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im's Thought," *Syariah: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pemikiran* 21, no. 1 (October 9, 2021): 17–44, <https://doi.org/10.18592/sjhp.v1i1.4193>.

<sup>24</sup> Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *Shari'ah Law: An Introduction*, Oneworld, vol. 11 (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2008), [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.regsciurbeco.2008.06.005%0Ahttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/305320484\\_SISTEM\\_PEMBETUNGAN\\_TERPUSAT\\_STRATEGI\\_MELESTARI](http://scioteca.caf.com/bitstream/handle/123456789/1091/RED2017-Eng-8ene.pdf?sequence=12&isAllowed=y%0Ahttp://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.regsciurbeco.2008.06.005%0Ahttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/305320484_SISTEM_PEMBETUNGAN_TERPUSAT_STRATEGI_MELESTARI); Muhammad Taufiq, *Maqâshid Syariah & Filsafat Hukum Islam* (Pamekasan: IAIN Madura Press, 2023); Taufiq, "Nikah Sirri Perspektif Maqashid Syariah."

<sup>25</sup> Suud Sarim Karimullah, "Religion and State in the Islamic Political Paradigm in Indonesia Perspective of Prof. Kamsi," *Analisis: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 22, no. 1 (October 9, 2022): 53–74, <https://doi.org/10.24042/ajsk.v22i1.12648>; Qodariah Barkah et al., "Abandonment of Women's Rights in Child Marriage; An Islamic Law Perspective," *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pranata Sosial*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-Ihkam.v17i2.6725>.

<sup>26</sup> Suherman Suherman et al., "PERSPEKTIF ISLAM DAN PERAWAT KOMUNITAS TERHADAP FENOMENA CHILDFREE PADA KALANGAN GEN Z," *International Journal Mathla'ul Anwar of Halal Issues* 5, no. 1 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.30653/ijma.202551.119>; Olviyani et al., "Fenomena Marriage Is Scary Di Kalangan Generasi Z: Tinjauan Hukum Islam Dan Hukum Positif Di Indonesia"; Nikmah et al., "Literasi Pra-Nikah Di Era Digital: Edukasi Dan Sharing Gen- Z Tentang Kesiapan Ekonomi, Mental, Hukum Dalam Pernikahan Ideal Di MAN 1 Boyolali."

including *tan pentan*, *pingitan*, *maen mantoh*, or *maen bisan*, which are actively observed in Branta Tinggi village. While some individuals exhibit selectivity in integrating these local traditions within the contemporary era, many sustain practices handed down across generations.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, there is a trend towards modifying wedding ceremonies or processions to better align with modern lifestyles, such as substituting *maen mantoh* with a single reception conducted within a building.

### Gen-Z Expectations for Content and Methods of Pre-marital Counseling

Pre-marital counseling is a series of programs initiated by the government through the Ministry of Religious Affairs designed to provide prospective brides and grooms with knowledge and skills to better prepare for establishing a household.<sup>28</sup> This program encompasses eight mandatory modules, including: 1) Building the foundation of a *sakinah* family, 2) Planning a solid marriage, 3) Marriage dynamics, 4) Family needs, 5) Family health, 6) Building quality generations, 7) Family resilience in facing current challenges, and 8) Recognizing and utilizing laws to protect family marriage.<sup>29</sup>

**Table 4: Current vs. Expected Pre-marital Counseling Implementation**

Aspect	Current Implementation	Gen-Z Expectations
<b>Delivery method</b>	One-way presentation (16 hours face-to-face, 4 hours independent)	Interactive: discussions, case studies, demonstrations, real simulations

<sup>27</sup> Azizah Mohd and Nadhilah A. Kadir, "Minimum Age of Marriage under Islamic Law and the Islamic Family Law (Federal Territories) Act 1984: A Preliminary Study on the Ideal Age of Marriage in Malaysia," *Al-Shajarah*, 2019; Musawwamah et al., "Resistance to Child Marriage Prevention in Indonesia and Malaysia."

<sup>28</sup> Otong Sulaeman et al., "Negotiating Gender Justice in Minangkabau Marital Disputes: Between Adat, Islamic, and State Law," *Juris: Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah* 24, no. 1 (2025): 39–49, <https://doi.org/10.31958/JURIS.V24I1.11848>.

<sup>29</sup> Andi Muh. Taqiyuddin BN, Ahmad Arief, and Fadli, "PEMBARUAN HUKUM KELUARGA DI DUNIA ISLAM," *Familia: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 4, no. 1 (October 9, 2023): 34–48, <https://doi.org/10.24239/familia.v4i1.83>.

<b>Platform</b>	Face-to-face at KUA, virtual (Zoom, WhatsApp)	Preference for flexible digital platforms
<b>Content focus</b>	Idealistic and normative discussions	Comprehensive coverage including sensitive topics
<b>Facilitator quality</b>	Variable	High competency and quality as primary reference source
<b>Learning style</b>	Monotonous, potentially boring	ICT-integrated, engaging, interactive

Pre-marital counseling conducted at KUA Kec. Tlanakan, the authorized stakeholder and authority on religious affairs within the Tlanakan sub-district—including Branta Tinggi village—is carried out through three methods: face-to-face sessions totaling 16 lesson hours, independent activities for 4 hours at KUA involving reading reference books, or virtual sessions via Zoom meetings or WhatsApp.

Regulations already enforced by officials from the Ministry of Religious Affairs do not negate the issues and expectations faced by Muslim Gen-Z youth.<sup>30</sup> Data shows this generation has specific preferences for the content and methods used in pre-marital counseling. As a generation familiar with interactive learning and ICT integration, their main hope is that counseling methods should not be solely lecture-based. They value discussion sessions, case studies, demonstrations, and real simulations, which they have long desired. The goal is to present material in a way that is comprehensible and engaging, avoiding monotony and boredom.

Furthermore, concerning delivery methods, as outlined in the pre-marital counseling guidelines, virtual counseling is well-received by Generation Z. The flexibility and convenience of participating through digital platforms such as Zoom and WhatsApp align more closely with their lifestyle, which is deeply integrated with digital

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<sup>30</sup> Saragih and Lubis, "Generasi Gen z Dan Childfree Di Indonesia Berdasarkan Undang-Undang Nomor 39 Tahun 1999 Tentang HAM: Studi Perspektif Fiqih Siyasah"; Olviyani et al., "Fenomena Marriage Is Scary Di Kalangan Generasi Z: Tinjauan Hukum Islam Dan Hukum Positif Di Indonesia."

technology.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, an even more significant consideration than the methods and technological accessibility is the quality of delivery and the competency of the facilitator, which serve as the primary measures of effectiveness.

**Table 5: Desired Content Topics in Pre-marital Counseling**

Topic Category	Specific Areas	Current Status	Gen-Z Priority
<b>Conflict management</b>	Internal conflict resolution strategies	Limited coverage	High priority
<b>Sensitive issues</b>	KDRT, gender roles, reproductive health	Considered taboo/minimal	Comprehensive discussion needed
<b>Financial matters</b>	Money management and strategies	Basic coverage	Detailed practical guidance
<b>Communication</b>	Effective couple communication	General principles	Practical techniques and simulations
<b>Role distribution</b>	Gender roles and task division	Traditional approach	Modern, balanced perspective

With regard to the content of pre-marital counseling, the expectations and desires of Muslim Generation Z youth encompass a more comprehensive discussion of various aspects of marriage. This includes topics still regarded as sensitive, such as conflict resolution, domestic violence, gender roles and their distribution, management and financial strategies, and reproductive health. These concerns originate from accounts of preceding generations, who have indicated

<sup>31</sup> Mohammad Akmal Haris, "Urgensi Digitalisasi Pendidikan Pesantren Di Era Society 5.0 (Peluang Dan Tantangannya Di Pondok Pesantren Al-Amin Indramayu)," *Islamic Management: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 2023.

that the content of pre-marital counseling remains confined to idealistic and normative discourse.<sup>32</sup>

### Pre-marital Counseling in Indonesian Positive Law

In Indonesian Positive Law, pre-marital counseling has a clearly established juridical basis. The Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation, specifically Article 8 Number 20 of 2019 concerning marriage registration, mandates prospective brides (catin) to partake in pre-marriage courses or pre-marital counseling programs. Within the framework of Islamic law applicable in Indonesia, the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) plays a significant role in providing specific attention to marriage preparation. Article 3 of the KHI states that the purpose of marriage is to realize a *sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah* household life. To attain this noble goal and aspiration, pre-marital counseling serves as a crucial preventive measure.

**Table 6: Legal Framework for Pre-marital Counseling**

Legal Instrument	Key Provisions	Implications
PMA No. 20/2019 Article 8	Mandatory pre-marital counseling for prospective brides	Obligatory participation requirement
KHI Article 3	Marriage aims for <i>sakinah, mawaddah, wa rahmah</i>	Counseling as preparation for marriage goals
Marriage Law Article 2(2)	Registration requirement	State recognition and legal protection
Fiqh Requirements	5 conditions: groom, bride, wali, 2 witnesses, <i>sighat</i>	Religious validity independent of counseling
Administrative Consequence	Non-compliance	Administrative sanctions (in practice)

From a more technically oriented perspective, the Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation (PMA) functions as a mechanism responsible for overseeing the implementation of pre-marital

<sup>32</sup> maswir maswir, "Implementasi Hukum Islam Di Indonesia Dalam Perspektif Siyasah Syar'iyah," *Hukum Islam* 19, no. 1 (October 9, 2019): 81-100, <https://doi.org/10.24014/hi.v19i1.7249>.

counseling. PMA Number 20 of 2019 concerning Marriage Registration explicitly stipulates the obligation of pre-marital counseling. Article 8 of PMA Number 20 of 2019 mandates that prospective brides and grooms intending to marry must participate in pre-marital counseling. The regulation in question is compulsory, and non-compliance may result in sanctions. Nevertheless, in practice, the sanctions enforced are predominantly administrative in nature.

As is widely understood, Muslim Generation Z youth in Indonesia possess distinct characteristics that differentiate them from previous generations. One unresolved issue pertains to the obligation to engage in counseling.<sup>33</sup>

**Table 7: Gen-Z Perspectives on Legal Status of Pre-marital Counseling**

Perspective	Legal Interpretation	Basis	Implications
<b>View 1: Administrative only</b>	Not a condition for valid marriage, only administrative obligation	Fiqh law (5 conditions of marriage validity)	Marriage valid religiously without counseling
<b>View 2: State requirement</b>	Mandatory for state recognition and legal protection	Positive law (PMA, KHI, Marriage Law)	No state recognition without counseling
<b>Dualism result</b>	Two-tier understanding	Religious vs. state law	Tension between religious and legal validity
<b>Practical compliance</b>	High awareness Gen-Z follow procedures	Understanding of legal implications (inheritance)	Compliance despite quality concerns

<sup>33</sup> Olviyani et al., "Fenomena Marriage Is Scary Di Kalangan Generasi Z: Tinjauan Hukum Islam Dan Hukum Positif Di Indonesia"; Nikmah et al., "Literasi Pra-Nikah Di Era Digital: Edukasi Dan Sharing Gen- Z Tentang Kesiapan Ekonomi, Mental, Hukum Dalam Pernikahan Ideal Di MAN 1 Boyolali."

		rights, custody, insurance, civil rights)	
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Based on field data findings, the assumption among Muslim Gen-Z youth regarding juridical law is that pre-marital counseling is not a requisite for a valid marriage but merely an administrative responsibility. This perception stems from fiqh law pertaining to marriage in Islam. Several fiqh texts outline five conditions for a valid marriage: the prospective husband (groom), prospective wife (bride), wali, two witnesses, and sighat (ijab and qabul).<sup>34</sup>

A different perception regarding pre-marital counseling, as articulated by Muslim women of Generation Z, indicates that the state's positive law, exemplified by KHI, serves as a manifestation of fiqh law within the Indonesian context. Consequently, if a marriage is contracted without registration by designated officials, it can be deemed invalid under state law. Participation in pre-marital counseling is regarded as an obligatory prerequisite to facilitate the registration and legalization of the marriage by the state. This perception is grounded in the view of pre-marital counseling from the standpoint of state administrative law, specifically overseen by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Engaging in the pre-marital counseling program is a requirement for accessing marriage registration services, as stipulated in Article 2, Paragraph 2 of the Marriage Law, whereby registration is essential for the recognition and legal protection granted by the state.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Taufiq, "Nikah Sirri Perspektif Maqashid Syariah"; Faizin, Alfitra, and Mansur, "Legalizing Unofficial (Sirri) Marriage For Indonesian Migrant Workers In Malaysia"; Ihsan Yilmaz, "The Emergence of Islamist Official and Unofficial Laws in the Erdoganist Turkey: The Case of Child Marriages," *Religions*, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12070513>.

<sup>35</sup> Mohammad Umar Hafiz Mohammad Idrees and Mohammad Taufiq, "Daur At-Tarbiyyah Al-Islamiyyah Fi Nasr Ats-Tsaqafah Al-Qanuniyyah Fi Al-Mujtama' Al-Muslim," *El Harakah: Jurnal Budaya Islam* 24, no. 2 (November 19, 2022): 355–72, <https://doi.org/10.18860/eh.v24i2.17637>; Taufiq, Faiz, and Ravaşdeh, "Between Sharia and State: Fatwa Authority and Pandemic Responses in Indonesia, Turkey, and Morocco"; Fathorrahman et al., "Dynamics of Thought in the Fiqh of Civilization Halaqah at Pesantren Affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in Yogyakarta," *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam Dan Kemanusiaan* 24, no. 1 (July 23, 2024): 71–95, <https://doi.org/10.18326/IJTIHAD.V24I1.71-95>.

This situation engenders a dualism in the understanding of pre-marital counseling among Muslim Generation Z individuals. Firstly, marriage remains valid according to Islamic principles, even in the absence of adherence to pre-marital counseling procedures. Secondly, marriage will not be recognized or protected by the state due to the lack of registration and legalization, since registration is a prerequisite that involves participation in pre-marital counseling.<sup>36</sup>

However, based on the empirical experience of one of the marriage registration officials at KUA Kec. Tlanakan, Muslim Gen-Z individuals who possess a high level of legal awareness recognize that in Indonesia's modern state law, marriage registration is not merely a formality but has extensive legal repercussions.<sup>37</sup> These repercussions encompass inheritance rights, child custody rights, insurance entitlements, and various other civil rights.<sup>38</sup> Consequently, many Muslim Gen-Z residents of Branta Tinggi village adhere to the procedures mandated by the government, including participation in pre-marital counseling, despite the fact that the implementation quality often falls short of expectations.

## Conclusion

This study reveals that Muslim Generation Z in Branta Tanggih Village has mixed feelings about premarital guidance programs. While they recognize premarital guidance as essential for a stable and lasting marriage, they are also influenced by the "marriage is scary" narrative and frequent social media coverage of marital conflicts, which foster doubt and caution about marriage.

The findings also indicate a significant paradigm shift from traditionalist to rationalist views of marriage. Marriage is no longer

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<sup>36</sup> Nikmathul, "Perubahan Strategi Segmenting, Targeting, Dan Positioning Pada Pemasaran Produk Umroh PT Arofahmina Cabang Tulungagung."

<sup>37</sup> Taufiq, "Nikah Sirri Perspektif Maqashid Syariah"; Muhammad Fauzudin Faiz, Zezen Zainul Ali, and Muhammad Taufiq, "Underage Widows and Widowers before the Law: Problem, Contestation and Legal Certainty in Marriage Dispensation," *Juris: Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah* 22, no. 2 (2023): 223-34, <https://doi.org/10.31958/juris.v22i2.9097>; Musawwamah et al., "Resistance to Child Marriage Prevention in Indonesia and Malaysia."

<sup>38</sup> Musawwamah et al., "Resistance to Child Marriage Prevention in Indonesia and Malaysia"; Abdussalam Hizbullah, "Eksistensi Dispensasi Perkawinan Terhadap Pelaksanaan Perlindungan Anak Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Hawa : Studi Pengarus Utamaan Gender Dan Anak* 1, no. 2 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.29300/hawapsga.v1i2.2608>.



regarded solely as a socio-religious obligation but as a rational decision requiring financial, emotional, and career readiness. From the perspective of positive law, a dual understanding emerges among Generation Z, viewing premarital guidance both as an administrative obligation and as an essential instrument for obtaining state recognition and legal protection.

Based on these findings, this study recommends that premarital guidance programs be developed through more participatory, interactive, and adaptive approaches that align with the characteristics of Generation Z, including the integration of digital technologies and the strengthening of practical content. Future research is encouraged to explore the effectiveness of digital-based premarital guidance models in enhancing marriage preparedness among young Muslim generations.

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