



## WOMEN DELAY MARRIAGE IN MALAY LAND

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### ABSTRACT

*There are many reasons to get married and there are many reasons not to marry. It is normal for marriage to be considered as a rational option, especially in metropolitan areas, but of course this cannot be normalized for people in small towns like Tanjungpinang where the majority are from the Malays. Modernity and the degradation of traditional values are the reasons why women delay marriage. Based on the results of the research, the Tanjungpinang Malay community can understand the delay in the age of marriage for working women (career women) but not so for women who do not work it is considered a disgrace.*

**Keywords:** Marriage, Postponing Marriage, Modernity, Women.

### ABSTRAK

Ada banyak alasan untuk menikah dan ada banyak pula alasan untuk tidak menikah. Hal yang normal jika perkawinan dianggap sebagai optional (pilihan) yang rasional terutama di daerah kota metropolitan, namun tentunya hal ini tidak bisa dinormalisasi pada masyarakat di kota kecil seperti Tanjungpinang dimana mayoritas berasal dari Suku Melayu. Modernitas dan terdegradasinya nilai-nilai tradisional menjadi alasan perempuan menunda usia perkawinan. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, masyarakat Melayu Tanjungpinang dapat memaklumi penundaan usia menikah bagi perempuan bekerja (wanita karir) namun tidak demikian bagi perempuan yang tidak berkeja justru dianggap sebagai aib.

Key word: Perkawinan, Tunda Menikah, Modernitas, Perempuan

### A. INTRODUCTION

The smallest institution is the family. The formation of a family generally occurs through marriage, both religious and or customary marriages. Marriage according to (Cahyani, 2020) comes from Arabic, namely Zawwaja which means partner and Nakaha which means gatherer. If combined means gathering 2 people into one.

Marriage is guaranteed in the ideology of the Indonesian state, namely Pancasila, which is the 1st precept which implies that marriage is closely related to religion. In addition, marriage is also regulated in Law Number 1 of 1974 Article 1 concerning Marriage, namely; The physical and spiritual bond between a man and a woman (husband and wife) aims to form a happy and eternal family based on God.

Article 7 explains that the minimum age for marriage for men is 19 years and the age for women is 19 years to prevent marriage too early. Even so, as long as someone has not reached the age of 21 years, parental permission is still needed to marry off their child.

Although the age limit for marriage has been stipulated by law, when viewed from a reproductive health perspective, the age of 19 for women means that the person concerned is not yet of a healthy reproductive age. Because based on health science, the ideal age that is biologically and psychologically mature is 20 to 25 years for women, then 25 to 30 years for men (Center for Data and Information of the Indonesian Ministry of Health). This is in line with the marriage age of the BKKBN of the Riau Islands Province. According to the BKKBN of the Riau Islands Province, the ideal age for marriage for women is 21 years and the age for men is 25 years, so that married couples have mature readiness in navigating the household so that quality relationships can also be created in the family.

The impact of massive socialization of the ideal age of marriage starting from the New Order era, can be felt from the decline in the number of early marriages in Indonesia. Another phenomenon then emerged along with the 9-year compulsory education policy, the development of the era where women's emancipation was echoed and the interest of women in the realm of productive work increased the ideal marriage age. In fact, there are those who deliberately delay getting married for several reasons, including women, one of which is because of a career. According to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) of Tanjungpinang City, the number of working women starting from the age of 15 years and over in 2015 was 27,644 people.

Delaying marriage is the choice of some working women in this Malay land. Although it is still considered unusual, the stereotype or social stigma for women who are slow to marry is spinsters (old maids) or old maids.

In order to get away from the stigma of spinsters, since the days of the sultanate, Malay parents usually search for a mate for their child. Both parents in the Malay Archipelago and mainland Malay (Hamidi, 2014) both have strong power to choose a mate for their daughter. Archipelago Malays in question are Malays who live in the waters of the Riau Archipelago and along the coast of Riau Province who have been influenced by Malay culture in Singapore and Malaysia. While the Mainland

Malays in question are Malays who live in Riau mainland who are influenced by Minangkabau and Tapanuli cultures. (Wan Ghalib in Zulfa, 2010). Malay culture recognizes community in large families. Thus, marriage in the Malay community is not only a personal matter that carries out the marriage, but also involves the family and the surrounding community. When there is a Malay woman who decides to postpone marriage, then the decision is certainly a concern for the extended family and the surrounding community. So, there will be a very different stigma given to women who delay marriage in European society compared to Malay society.

Finding the phenomenon of women delaying marriage in Tanah Melayu, the researcher is interested in researching "The Reasons for Malay Women to Delay Marriage in Tanjungpinang City".

## **B. PREVIOUS STUDIES**

Has written "The Marriage Customs of the Malay Community During the Siak Sultanate". Before marriage, Malay women will find a mate first by means of the "Merisik" procession. Parental involvement is important from the beginning to the end of the procession. (Zulfa, 2010).

In this study, using the paradigm of functionalism, which can be seen from the thought of liberal feminism which provides a critique of liberal political theory that upholds autonomy, equality and moral values as well as individual freedom but at the same time is considered to discriminate against women. The basic assumption of the feminist movement is rooted in the view that freedom and equality are rooted in rationality and the separation of the private and public worlds. Equal opportunities and rights between men and women are important, because women are rational creatures too. Thus, a strategy is needed to prepare women to be able to compete in the world of free competition, one of which is through the Women in Development programs. (Fakih, 2016)

## **C. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study used qualitative research methods. This study uses a qualitative approach, namely the social sciences research method that collects and analyzes data in the form of words

(oral and written) and human actions and the researcher does not attempt to calculate or quantify the qualitative data that has been obtained and thus does not analyze the numbers. (Afrizal, 2014). The reason for using a qualitative approach is to understand reality as a whole. The research location is in Tanjungpinang. The selection of informants was carried out by purposive sampling with criteria; a) Malay women who grew up in Tanjungpinang, unmarried, living with family, delaying marriage as a rational choice for career reasons. b) parents of women who delay marriage. c) leaders of LAM (Malay Customary Institution) Tanjungpinang City.

#### **D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

In this paper, we will describe some of the reasons Malay women delay marriage. The different meanings of marriage are the reasons why Malay women in Tanjungpinang City take the decision to postpone marriage. The discussion below certainly does not attempt to generalize to all Malay women, but this is a phenomenological view of some Malay women who decide to postpone marriage until they are over 30 years old.

##### **1. The Meaning of Marriage is Starting to Shift**

The informant (a Malay woman in Tanjungpinang) admitted that getting married was a religious teaching. However, in religion there is never an obligation to marry at a young age. Even some informants believe that marriage is a relationship with God. Thus, a woman's readiness to marry depends on the instructions from God's sustenance. When God has not given a partner, it could be that God has given women the opportunity to continue their career.

The public's view that marriage is a law that must be done immediately to stay away from adultery is used as a guide in socializing. Although delaying the marriage, it does not mean that the informants have free sex. Malay women who became informants in this study still believe that marriage is sacred so it takes physical and spiritual readiness to live it.

Marriage is not seen as the only way to be happy. They find other joys in making a living on their own when they are single. They think that marriages under the age of 30 will interfere

with their newly built career path. So delaying marriage is considered to prolong the opportunity to reach important positions in the office.

## **2. Marriage as an Option**

Some of the Tanjungpinang Malay community consider marriage as an option. Deciding whether to marry or not to marry is an optional that cannot be intervened by others. However, it cannot be denied that the role of the extended family in the Tanjungpinang Malay community still exists.

However, the opinion of the extended family is only one of the considerations and not the only one. This can happen because women who work will be economically independent so that they do not depend on their parents and the surrounding community. Moreover, the informants believe that marriage is a personal matter so that the problems faced in marriage will be faced alone, not with the extended family.

## **3. Friend Influence**

The social environment influences the constructed mindset. Being in an independent, modern and open environment makes Tanjungpinang Malay women realize that they can get equality with men. So they try to be mutually empowered. The influence of this social environment can also be caused by the successful educational process internalizing gender equality in society. When women have the right to have equal opportunities in careers, to receive education and to gain access in social, economic and political spheres, they focus on empowering themselves first.

## **4. Prepare Yourself for a Suitable Mate**

Malay women who have established careers think that they also deserve a mate with a good career too. Because, they want to prove that the stereotype from society that an established woman will "fear" men to marry her is wrong. Such stereotypes dominate some women so they are afraid to postpone marriage.

## **5. Child Free**

CC (31 years old) stated that the reason for delaying marriage was to avoid having children. This woman who works in a private company thinks that it is not easy for children to educate quality children who can make the world proud. If adopting children can help control the world's population, then CC chose not to delay marriage so as not to have children. Because so far Indonesian men marry for the purpose of having children.

### **Society's Views About Women Delaying Marriage.**

If the reasons above have been described for some of the reasons Malay women in Tanjungpinang decided to postpone marriage, the following will describe the public's views on women delaying marriage:

#### **1. Dishonor**

In the Tanjungpinang Malay community, women who delay marriage are considered a disgrace. However, this is more specifically labeled for women who do not work and have low education. The construction that is built is that people think that these actions are deviant, disgraceful, strange or something that is not good about someone. Society considers that delaying marriage for women is a disgrace.

So that women who delay marriage in general will become the subject of public discussion and are considered to have committed a disgraceful act or something that is not good.

Often the surrounding community (especially extended families) reprimanded the woman's parents. This is due to the social values that are taught in the family and society from generation to generation until now. Society considers that marriage must be hastened because it avoids adultery.

So when marriage is an "immediate necessity", there will be sanctions for women who are late in marriage in the form of labeling. Labeling is the distinction and labeling or naming based on the differences possessed by members of the community. Most individuals are not perceived as socially relevant, but some of the given differences can be socially salient.

## 2. Independent

Previllage is usually owned and given to career women who delay marriage. They are actually seen as "lucky" than women who do not work and have low education. Career women are generally labeled as independent women. At least they can support themselves without having to depend on other people.

If you delay marriage, some people think that the reason is because women are too focused on their careers so they forget to get married. Of course, this accusation is very tendentious, because there is a clear gap between "forgetting" and "postponing".

Women who delay marriage realize that the more complex life is, the more physical and spiritual maturity is needed. They put off getting married in order to prepare for these two things. Women with established careers and higher education seem to be more normalized if they delay marriage than women who do not work. Working and highly educated women are often considered more capable of making decisions. Society tolerates women who are slow to marry on the grounds of high education, a hard worker and the breadwinner of the family. This causes the thought of continuing to the level of marriage is not very important for women.

Freedom (freedom) and justice (equality) given to women is a form of rationality and separation between private and public. Over time, delaying marriage is then considered a strategy to prepare women to be able to compete in the world of free competition in the productive realm.

## E. Conclusion

There are several reasons that make Malay women in Tanjungpinang decide to postpone marriage, namely:

1. The meaning of marriage is starting to shift.
2. Marriage as a Choice



3. The Effect of Association
4. Prepare Yourself for a Decent Match
5. Child Free

In the midst of the phenomenon where Malay women delay marriage, it raises the public's view of women who delay marriage. Two different reactions from society in viewing working women and unemployed women are delaying marriage. When working women delay marriage, society's reaction is more accepting because they perceive women with own income is more independent than women who do not work, which is seen as a disgrace to the family and society.





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