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Perceived Self-Adjustment in Marriage Regarding Marriage Readiness in Emerging Adulthood

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Abstract

Over the past five years, Indonesia's marriage rate has steadily declined, driven partly by widespread negative news about marriage that induces apprehension among young adults. This quantitative correlational study investigated the relationship between the perception of marital self-adjustment and marriage readiness among unmarried emerging adults. Utilizing purposive sampling, data were collected from 580 respondents residing in East Jakarta. Instruments included the Keldal Marriage Readiness Instrument (α = 0.963) and the Perception of Marriage Self-Adjustment Instrument (α = 0.845). Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation. The results demonstrated a moderate positive correlation between the perception of marital self-adjustment and marriage readiness (r = 0.447) indicating that individuals with more positive perceptions possess better readiness for marriage. These findings imply that pre-marital educators and governmental psychological services should develop targeted counseling programs focused on realistic marital adjustment. Therefore, individuals need to find out about issues prone to occurring in married life, enabling them to prepare themselves to handle these challenges properly.

Keywords: emerging adulthood, marriage, marriage readiness, perception, self-adjustment

Abstrak

Selama lima tahun terakhir, tingkat pernikahan di Indonesia terus menurun, sebagian dipicu oleh maraknya berita negatif seputar pernikahan yang menimbulkan kekhawatiran di kalangan *emerging adulthood*. Penelitian korelasi kuantitatif ini menyelidiki hubungan antara persepsi penyesuaian diri dalam pernikahan dan kesiapan menikah di kalangan *emerging adulthood* yang belum menikah. Dengan menggunakan teknik pengambilan sampel purposif, data dikumpulkan dari 580 responden yang tinggal di Jakarta Timur. Instrumen yang digunakan meliputi Keldal *Marriage Readiness Instrument* (α = 0.963) dan *Perception of Marriage Self-Adjustment Instrument* (α = 0.845). Data dianalisis menggunakan korelasi Pearson. Hasil menunjukkan korelasi positif sedang antara persepsi penyesuaian diri dalam pernikahan dan kesiapan menikah (r = 0.447), yang mengindikasikan bahwa individu dengan persepsi yang lebih positif memiliki kesiapan menikah yang lebih baik. Temuan ini menyiratkan bahwa pendidik pra-nikah dan layanan psikologis pemerintah perlu mengembangkan program konseling yang ditargetkan dan berfokus pada penyesuaian pernikahan yang realistis. Oleh karena itu, individu perlu mengetahui masalah-masalah yang rentan terjadi dalam kehidupan pernikahan, sehingga mereka dapat mempersiapkan diri untuk menghadapi tantangan tersebut dengan tepat.

Kata kunci: *emerging adulthood*, kesiapan menikah, penyesuaian diri, persepsi, pernikahan

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Introduction

Fear of marriage is becoming increasingly common among young people today. This fear is in line with data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) which shows a decline in the number of marriages in Indonesia over the last five years, with 1,577,255 marriages in 2023 (down 7.51%), while at the provincial level, Jakarta has the second-highest marriage-divorce gap after West Java, and East Jakarta has the largest gap (BPS, 2024; 2025), making it the location chosen for this study. The phenomenon of declining marriage rates and increasing divorce rates raises questions about the readiness of the younger generation to marry. The *Lembaga Advokasi Keluarga* Indonesia (LAKI) survey shows that more than 70% of respondents feel unsure about their marriage readiness (Fachrunisa et al., 2023). Many factors influence young people to delay marriage, including the desire to achieve success in education or career, pressure from the social environment, and changing social values in their environment (Riska & Khasanah, 2023). Based on Lo-oh (2023) shows that although marriage is still expected, the younger generation needs more time and views marriage more individually. Social and cultural changes also influence expectations of marriage (Shukla et al., 2015).

Young adulthood is most often described as a stage of life in which individuals adopt new roles and statuses within society (Scales et al., 2016). According to Law Number 40 of 2009 regarding Youth, youth are defined as those aged 16 to 30 years. Moreover, Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 16 of 2019, the minimum age for women and men to marry is 19 years old. The marriage age rule was established with the hope of reducing divorce rates, increasing the number of high-quality offspring, and optimizing the growth and development of young people. In this study, the target respondents were limited to those within the emerging adulthood age range.

The concept of emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2014) defines the age range of 18–29 years as a transitional period influenced by the technological revolution, changes in sexual values, the women's movement, and the youth movement. This causes individuals in emerging adulthood to prioritize pursuing education, delay marriage, and experience a fairly long transition period before finding a steady job. Emerging adulthood phase is characterized by identity exploration particularly in the areas of romance and career, an instability where individuals constantly question their choices, self-focus or a time of self-reflection to plan for the future, feelings of being “in between” or feeling caught between adolescence and adulthood, yet not wanting to belong to either, and lastly the age of possibilities, or an age full of hope to become a successful person and also to change one's life (Arnett, 2007).

Individuals in the emerging adulthood phase are advised to marry, since they’re not too young or too old. This can be strengthened by research by Maulina and Rejeki (2024) which states that marrying too young can have negative impacts such as instability in family life, financial instability, and poor social relationships. In addition, people who marry after the age of 30 have more serious disadvantages than advantages, since these disadvantages are often related to health conditions, such as difficult pregnancies, risk of HIV infection, and abnormalities in children (Gündoğdu & Bulut, 2022). Marriage is a transition to adulthood (Karunia & Rahaju, 2019). The conviction to

marry is formed through various preparations before entering into the relationship (Elfira, 2019).

A good marriage can begin with good readiness for marriage. Readiness for marriage is a sign that an individual is ready to experience a change in roles and responsibilities in the household (Murniati et al., 2024). Marriage readiness can be viewed from various dimensions, six of which are financial readiness, emotional readiness, interpersonal readiness, readiness for life and roles in the family, sexual readiness, and readiness for social responsibilities (Keldal & Yıldırım, 2022).

Karunia and Rahaju (2019) found that many emerging adults consider themselves ready for marriage, but are not yet truly ready to live a married life. This shows that there are factors that influence an individual's readiness for marriage, causing them to doubt their own readiness. Various aspects of married life are increasingly being shared online, shaping individuals' perceptions of marriage. Perception is closely related to actual actions, it involves the selective processing and integration of sensory stimuli based on related memories and is shaped by the selective focus of attention of each individual who perceives (Hansen & Vass, 2021). Therefore, some portrayals of romantic married life may make individuals want to get married, but there are also many news stories about domestic violence, infidelity, and divorce that make individuals afraid or hesitant to get married.

The wide range of problems that may occur in marriage cannot be avoided by every couple. Some things that are considered minor, such as differences of opinion about where to live or differences in communication styles, can lead couples into domestic problems. Ramdani and Husaini (2024) state that problems in the household often occur due to differences in the perspectives or behaviours of family members. Therefore, individuals need to have good self-adjustment skills in marriage. Just as Susanti, et al. (2021) discovered that if an individual's self-adjustment improves, then their social conflict will decrease and vice versa.

In Brahmana et al. (2023) study, marital adjustment is defined as the process of adaptation between husband and wife who are united in a relationship and have a desire to learn from each other in adjusting to the needs, desires, and expectations of their partner. Moreover, Kendrick and Patricia (2016) describe marital adjustment as a process of each partner adjusting to their spouse, to their new role as husband or wife, and to their responsibilities in the marriage, which may ultimately predict marital success. Self-adjustment in marriage is the responsibility and obligation of individuals in marriage and the fulfilment of respect for the rights of their partner (Vaishnavi & Shalini, 2020).

Based on the definitions of perception and adjustment in marriage described above, it can be concluded that the perceived self-adjustment in marriage is an individual's view of their role and responsibility in resolving marital problems. This needs to be considered, as it is in line with the research by Henry et al. (2020), which states that couples need to have a good perception of their partners, such as recognizing each other's differences in character and communication style, so that both partners can understand each other's circumstances and tolerate miscommunication better. Furthermore, this can also be reinforced by Ningrum, et al. (2021) which found that marriage readiness is also influenced significantly by knowledge about family life.

The emergence of the concept of early adulthood in the context of marriage and family life has been a topic of discussion in recent years. Due to the prevalence of negative information regarding divorce and domestic violence, individuals at this developmental stage often feel uncertain about their readiness for marriage, accompanied by anxiety regarding the challenges of adapting to married life in the future. These mutually reinforcing factors further encourage individuals to choose to postpone marriage.

Although previous literature has extensively explored marriage readiness through the lens of socioeconomic or demographic factors, this study offers a new perspective by focusing specifically on the developmental phase unique to early adulthood. Individuals in this transitional phase face distinctive psychological changes, making them highly vulnerable to external narratives about marriage. Furthermore, this study addresses a critical empirical gap by explicitly examining how anticipations and perceptions regarding future marital adjustment can influence marriage readiness. Investigating this phenomenon is crucial, as it provides a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of delayed marriage in the modern era, ultimately offering empirical insights to help young adults prepare effectively for marriage.

Based on the background of the problem described and the relevant research summarized, the researcher is interested in conducting research on unmarried emerging adults. The purpose of this study is to determine whether the perception of self-adjustment in marriage correlates with the marriage readiness of emerging adults.

Methods

Participants

The research method used in this research used a quantitative approach with a correlational design. The research sample was collected through purposive sampling with a total of 580 respondents, with the inclusion criteria being in the emerging adulthood stage (structurally defined as 19-29 years old), unmarried, and currently residing in East Jakarta. Conversely, individuals who previously married were excluded from the study. This study was part of a larger research project on Marriage Readiness in Emerging Adulthood. The larger study examined the relationships among perceptions of marriage, family resilience, family harmony, and perceptions of marital adjustment. Therefore, a large sample was recruited to accommodate the broader scope of the research. The primary data in this study was data from a survey using a questionnaire, while the secondary data in this study was relevant to previous articles. Data collection was conducted from September 2024 to July 2025.

Measurement

The primary data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire, which had been verified through validity and reliability testing. The instruments were distributed directly to the respondents, allowing them to complete the scale independently at their own pace. The validity test was carried out to ensure that the operational definitions of the variables accurately represented their conceptual

meanings. Meanwhile, the reliability test aimed to assess the consistency and confidence level of the measurement results.

Perception of adjustment in marriage is an individual's view of crucial matters in the formation of marital adjustment based on the experiences, values, and goals of the individual, measured through the dimensions of psychological, social, health, financial, family relationships, sexual, parenting, housework, and problem solving. The marriage adjustment perception instrument was developed by the researcher based on modifications to the marriage adjustment instrument by Vaishnavi and Shalini (2020). Based on the reliability test results that have been conducted, it is found the Cronbach alpha value of 0.845 > 0.6. The questionnaire consisted of 17 questions using a Likert scale of 1 to 4 (1 = very unsuitable, 2 = unsuitable, 3 = suitable, 4 = very suitable).

Marriage readiness is a state in which individuals in emerging adulthood feel ready to enter married life and are able to fulfill their responsibilities for everything that will happen in marriage, as measured by the dimensions of social responsibility readiness, financial readiness, sexual readiness, emotional readiness, family life and family role readiness, and interpersonal relationship readiness. The marriage readiness instrument used was the standard instrument by Keldal and Yıldırım (2022). Based on the reliability test results that have been conducted, it is found the Cronbach alpha value of 0,963 > 0,6. The questionnaire consisted of 17 questions using a Likert scale of 1 to 4 (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree).

Analysis

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistic version 26. It was used to test the validity and reliability of perceived self-adjustment's instrument and marriage readiness's instrument, analyzed the descriptive data, and explored the relationship between perceived self-adjustment variables and marriage readiness variables. The study utilized Spearman's rank-order correlation analysis due to the non-normal distribution of the data and the ordinal nature of the measurement scale. This non-parametric test was considered appropriate for assessing the direction and strength of the relationship between variables. The strength of the correlation coefficients was interpreted based on the criteria proposed by Sugiyono (2019), in which coefficients of 0.00–0.19 indicate a very weak correlation, 0.20–0.39 weak, 0.40–0.59 moderate, 0.60–0.79 strong, and 0.80–1.00 very strong.

Findings

Demographic Distributions

Based on the research that has been conducted, the characteristics of respondents are divided into several categories, including gender, age, religion, employment status, monthly income, living arrangements, relationship status, and engagement status.

Table 1. Distribution of respondent's characteristics demography

Demographic Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Men	175	30.2
	Women	405	69.8
Age	19 years old	27	4.7
	20 years old	47	8.1
	21 years old	108	18.6
	22 years old	150	25.9
	23 years old	61	10.5
	24 years old	41	7.1
	25 years old	36	6.2
	26 years old	34	5.9
	27 years old	39	6.7
	28 years old	23	4.0
	29 years old	14	2.4
Religion	Islam	535	92.2
	Protestantism	22	3.8
	Catholicism	14	2.4
	Buddhism	4	0.7
	Hinduism	5	0.9
Employment Status	College student	328	56.6
	Civil servant (PNS)	19	3.3
	Private employee	132	22.8
	Entrepreneur	20	3.4
	Freelancer	35	6.0
	Unemployed	11	1.9
	Others	35	6.0
Monthly Income	< IDR 5,396,761	161	27.8
	> IDR 5,396,761	119	20.5
	Not yet employed	300	51.7
Living Arrangements	Living with family	489	84.3
	Living independently	91	15.7
Relationship Status	Previously dated, currently single	241	41.6
	Never dated	148	25.5
	Currently dating	191	32.9
Engagement Status	Never engaged	555	95.7
	Previously engaged, currently not engaged	3	0.5
	Currently engaged	22	3.8

Distribution of Respondents Based on Age

The gender distribution of respondents in this study indicates an imbalance between male and female participants. The majority of individuals who took part in the research were women, while only 27% of the total respondents were male. This disproportion suggests that female participants were more represented and possibly more accessible or willing to engage in the study. Such a gender gap may also reflect broader social patterns, where women tend to show greater interest or openness in topics related to marital readiness and relationship studies. Consequently, the findings

of this research should be interpreted with consideration of this gender dominance, as it may influence the overall perspectives and behavioral tendencies reflected in the data.

In terms of age, the majority of respondents in this study were 22 years old. According to the National Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN), 22 years old is the median age of first marriage (MUKP) for women in Indonesia. MUKP serves as a social and demographic indicator for society, as married individuals have a higher risk of pregnancy than unmarried individuals. This is based on religion, customs, and culture in Indonesia, which do not allow or normalize sexual relations outside of marriage.

Distribution of Respondents Based on Religion

In terms of religion, there are five religions, including Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Based on the distribution of respondents, it can be seen that the majority of respondents in this study are Muslim. This is in line with the majority religion in Indonesia.

Distribution of Respondents Based on Employment

In terms of employment characteristics, it can be seen that students dominate the workforce of the 580 respondents, as can be seen in figure 1, 328 respondents are students, 19 respondents are civil servants, 132 respondents are private sector employees, 20 respondents are entrepreneurs, 35 respondents are freelancers, and 35 respondents have other occupations. Meanwhile, 11 respondents are unemployed. This distribution is relevant to the characteristic of emerging adulthood, which is, upon entering the emerging adulthood phase (18-29 years old), individuals become productive individuals, so that they can choose different paths, such as becoming a college student, building a business, or becoming an employee at an institution.

Distribution of Respondents Based on Income

Income characteristics were measured based on the Regional Minimum Wage (UMR) of Jakarta Province, which is IDR 5,396,761. Based on the data distribution results, it can be seen in figure 2 that only 119 respondents had an income above the Jakarta UMR, 161 other respondents had an income below the Jakarta UMR, and most of the respondents were not working yet. This is unfortunate, as it can affect the accuracy of the financial readiness picture, which is known to be very important in marriage readiness.

Distribution of Respondents Based on Living Arrangements

In terms of living arrangements, respondents were categorized into two main groups: those who reside with their parents or family members and those who live independently. The data reveal that the majority of participants continue to live within the family household, reflecting a strong cultural tendency among young adults to remain in the parental home until marriage or financial stability is achieved. Out of the total 580 respondents, only 91 individuals (approximately 15.7%) reported living on their own, while the remaining respondents still depend on their family environment for daily living. This pattern suggests that familial support systems continue to play a central role

in the respondents' social and economic lives, particularly during the transition to adulthood and marital readiness.

Distribution of Respondents Based on Relationship Status

Relationship status was divided into three categories: never been in a relationship, currently in a relationship, and previously been in a relationship but not currently. Based on the data distribution results, the largest distribution of respondents is in the group that has been in a relationship but is not currently. Only 25.5% of respondents admitted to never having been in a relationship, while around 32% of other respondents are known to be currently in a relationship.

Distribution of Respondents Based on Engagement Status

Lastly, regarding the characteristics of engagement status, 95.5% of respondents in this study have never been engaged, 22 respondents are currently engaged, and 3 other respondents claim to have been engaged but are no longer.

Relationship Between Perceived Self-Adjustment and Marriage Readiness

Based on the correlation test that has been conducted, the significance value of the data in this study is Sig. = 0.00, which means that this value is smaller than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the variable of perceived self-adjustment is related to the variable of marriage readiness. It is also known that the correlation coefficient value of the two variables is r= 0.447, which means that the two variables have a moderate relationship.

Table 2. Results of the Spearman Correlation test

Correlations

			Perceived of Self-Adjustment	Marriage Readiness
Spearman's rho	Perceived of Self-Adjustment	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.447**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.000
		N	580	580
	Marriage Readiness	Correlation Coefficient	0.447**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	.
		N	580	580

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 shows the result of the Spearman correlation test examining the relationship between perception of marital adjustment and marriage readiness among 580 respondents. The correlation coefficient (ρ) is 0.447 with a significance value of p = 0.000 ($p < 0.01$), indicating a moderate and statistically significant positive relationship between the two variables. This means that individuals who perceive themselves as more capable of adjusting within marriage tend to have higher levels of marriage readiness. In other words, the better one's self-perceived adaptability, the more prepared they are to enter marital life. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.200, indicating that perception of marital adjustment accounted for

approximately 20.0% of the variance in marriage readiness, while the remaining 80.0% may be influenced by other factors not examined in this study.

The results of the study obtained through data processing of the respondent distribution show that most respondents have a perception of self-adjustment in marriage that is in the moderate category, which means that most respondents have a fairly positive perception of self-adjustment in marriage.

Distribution of Respondents on The Perceived of Self-Adjustment

The Table 3 below shows a descriptive analysis of the variable perception of self-adjustment. The condition of a person being ready to marry must be accompanied by good social maturity, because marriage requires the ability to quickly adapt to new situations and environments. In this research, the social perception dimension is the dimension with the highest category, namely 38.1%. This shows that respondents have a very positive perception of following the friendship story of the couple.

Table 3. Descriptive analysis of research variable data

Statistics		
		The Perceived of Self-Adjustment
N	Valid	580
	Missing	0
Mean		80.17
Median		80.88
Mode		80.88
Std. Deviation		7.287
Minimum		50.00
Maximum		95.00

Table 4 shows the results of the analysis of the social perception dimension, which shows that most respondents have a very positive perception of following the friendship story The social perception dimension was the dimension with the highest category, namely 38.1%. This shows that respondents have a very positive perception of following the friendship stories of their partners. Table 4 shows the distribution of respondent categories based on perceptions of adjustment in marriage.

Table 4. Distribution of respondents on the perception of self-adjustment in marriage

Dimension		Category (%)			
		Low	Medium	High	Total
Psychological Perception	n	38	453	89	580
	%	6.6%	78.1	15.3	100
Social Perception	n	91	268	221	580
	%	15.7	46.2	38.1	100
Health Perception	n	89	342	149	580
	%	15.3	59.0	25.7	100

Table 4. Distribution of respondents on the perception of self-adjustment in marriage (Continue)

Dimension		Category (%)			
		Low	Medium	High	Total
Financial Perception	n	165	415	0	580
	%	28.4	71.6	0	100
Perception of Relationship with Family	n	134	321	125	580
	%	23.1	55.3	21.6	100
Sexual Perception	n	97	483	0	580
	%	16.7	83.3	0	100
Perception of Parenting Styles	n	42	456	82	580
	%	7.2	78.6	14.1	100
Perception of Housework	n	97	362	121	580
	%	16.7	62.4	20.9	100
Perception of Problem Solving	n	30	550	0	580
	%	5.2	94.8	0	100

Distribution of Respondents on Marriage Readiness

Similar to the previous variable, the majority of respondents had moderate readiness for marriage, which means that the majority of respondents had fairly good readiness for marriage. The Table 5 show that emotional readiness was the dimension with the highest distribution of low categories. This shows that the majority of respondents did not yet have good emotional readiness to face married life in the future. In more detail, the data reveal meaningful patterns regarding the maturity, awareness, and preparedness of young adults in entering marital life.

Social Responsibility Readiness shows that the majority of respondents (63.1%) fall within the moderate category, while 19.8% demonstrate a high level of readiness and 17.1% remain at a low level. This suggests that most participants possess a reasonable understanding of social obligations and the responsibilities attached to marriage, such as cooperation, contribution to family welfare, and civic engagement. However, the relatively small proportion of individuals with high readiness indicates the need for more intensive social education emphasizing shared responsibility and the social dimension of marriage.

In terms of Emotional Readiness, 80.0% of respondents are in the moderate category, 20.0% at a low level, and notably, none are classified as highly ready. This finding implies that while many respondents show moderate emotional stability, the absence of any high scorers signals a substantial gap in emotional maturity. Emotional preparedness is critical for effective communication, conflict resolution, and empathy within marital relationships. The lack of high readiness suggests that emotional regulation, self-awareness, and resilience remain areas of concern among the studied population.

For Financial Readiness, 63.6% of respondents are moderately ready, 20.2% highly ready, and 16.2% show low readiness. These findings indicate that while most respondents possess a moderate understanding of financial management and economic responsibility, only one-fifth demonstrate full preparedness to sustain financial stability in marriage. Financial readiness often correlates with employment stability, budgeting

skills, and an understanding of shared economic roles key predictors of marital satisfaction and longevity. However, looking back at the distribution of respondents based on income, it can be observed that the majority of respondents do not yet have an income, which may imply that this study is less able to provide an accurate or comprehensive picture of financial readiness.

The Sexual Readiness dimension exhibits 60.3% of respondents at a moderate level, 25.9% at a high level, and 13.8% at a low level. These results suggest that most participants possess adequate awareness regarding sexuality, intimacy, and reproductive health, yet one-fourth show advanced readiness. The relatively high proportion in the top category could reflect greater exposure to sexual education or evolving attitudes toward open communication about sexual well-being. Nonetheless, the persistence of low scores highlights the need for continued, culturally sensitive sexual health education.

Regarding Readiness for Family Life and Family Role, 89.8% of respondents demonstrate a moderate level, 10.2% a low level, and none fall within the high category. This pattern indicates that while most individuals recognize the importance of family roles and responsibilities, few possess advanced readiness to assume them. The absence of highly ready respondent's underscores limited practical experience in family management, parenting, and domestic partnership skills areas that can be strengthened through premarital counselling and family education programs.

Table 5. Distribution of respondents on the marriage readiness

Dimension		Category (%)			
		Low	Medium	High	Total
Social Responsibility Readiness	n	99	366	115	580
	%	17.1%	63.1	19.8	100
Emotional Readiness	n	116	464	0	580
	%	20.0	80.0	0	100
Financial Readiness	n	94	369	117	580
	%	16.2	63.6	20.2	100
Sexual Readiness	n	80	350	150	580
	%	13.8	60.3	25.9	100
Readiness for Family Life & Family Role	n	59	521	0	580
	%	10.2	89.8	0	100
Interpersonal Relationship Readiness	n	62	344	174	580
	%	10.7	59.3	30.0	100

Finally, Interpersonal Relationship Readiness reveals that 59.3% of respondents are moderately ready, 30.0% are highly ready, and 10.7% are in the low category. This dimension records the highest percentage of respondents with high readiness, suggesting that interpersonal competence such as communication, empathy, and cooperation is relatively well developed compared to other areas. This strength could serve as a foundation for fostering stable and harmonious marital relationships.

Overall, the findings indicate that most respondents exhibit moderate readiness across all dimensions, suggesting a fair level of preparedness for marriage but also revealing several developmental gaps particularly in emotional and family-role

readiness. These insights highlight the importance of comprehensive premarital education and counselling that integrates emotional literacy, financial planning, and family role training to promote holistic marital preparedness and long-term relational well-being.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that perceptions of one's ability to adapt within marriage are positively correlated with readiness for marriage. These findings show that individuals who perceive themselves as capable of adapting to the demands, changes, and challenges of married life tend to demonstrate a higher level of readiness for marriage. This relationship may exist because the perception of self-adaptation reflects an individual's confidence in their ability to manage roles, responsibilities, and interpersonal dynamics in a future marriage. When individuals believe they can adapt effectively to married life, they tend to prepare themselves emotionally, financially, socially, and relationally for marriage. Therefore, perceptions of self-adjustment can serve as an important psychological foundation that supports the development of readiness for marriage.

Previous research results show that husbands and wives need to prepare themselves for new roles and responsibilities, because readiness for marriage will be an important indicator in building the quality of child development and family success (Rahmah & Kurniawati, 2021). Couples who marry when they are ready have higher levels of happiness than couples who marry without being ready (Fatma & Sakdiyah, 2015). Individuals who are about to marry need to be well prepared for marriage, because marriage without proper preparation can cause depression in individuals (Hakim & Masfufah, 2023). Based on Jalal (2023) research on young adults' perceptions of marriage adjustment, the results found that respondents perceived marriage as the best step to form a family and have children. Respondents also said that marriage adjustment can be achieved by couples through good communication, mutual understanding, and acceptance of differences.

The positive correlation found in this study can be explained by the nature of perceiver self-adjustment itself. Self-adjustment in marriage involves a person's belief that they are capable of managing differences, negotiating expectations, resolving conflicts, and building healthy relationships with their partner and family members. These abilities are closely related to the competencies required for marital readiness. Individuals who view themselves as capable of adapting to married life tend to view marital responsibilities as something that can be managed, rather than as a threat.

Individual readiness for marriage in this study was measured using six dimensions, namely social responsibility readiness, sexual readiness, emotional readiness, readiness for family life and family roles, interpersonal relationship readiness, and financial readiness (Keldal & Yıldırım, 2022). Instead of functioning independently, these dimensions collectively reflect a person's readiness to face various aspects of married life. The significant relationship between perceptions of self-adaptability and readiness for marriage suggest that positive perceptions of self-adaptability in various aspects of marriage can strengthen readiness across these interconnected domains. Based on the

distribution of respondents' responses across the six dimensions with three categories—low, moderate, and high—it was found that the majority of respondents fell into the moderate category, which means they are slightly ready to get married.

The first dimension, social responsibility readiness, covers various aspects, such as educating children to be useful in society, being a role model for others, and establishing good relationships with neighbours. The importance of social responsibility readiness in marriage is supported by many studies. According to Faradilla and Sunarti's (2024) research, the condition of a person being ready to marry must be accompanied by good social maturity. Moreover, Dhuli and Dhulı (2024) shows that married couples (parents) have an obligation to educate and care for their children. In addition, Maidin (2018) research also states that relationships between neighbours can foster good cooperation in creating harmony in the surrounding community. Based on the distribution of respondent data, most of the respondents were in the moderate category. Therefore, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents feel slightly ready to fulfill their responsibilities that will affect the social conditions in their environment in the future.

The second dimension, the emotional readiness dimension that consists of mutual trust, mutual understanding, mutual love, and commitment. Based on the distribution of respondent data, it is known that most of the respondents were in the moderate category. Based on data distribution, it shows that most respondents are quite prepared to manage their emotions in their future married life, so that individuals are able to build healthy marital relationships. The importance of emotional readiness in marriage is supported by many studies, Purba and Kusumiati (2024) shows that the higher an individual's emotional maturity, the higher their marriage readiness. This shows that individuals with stable emotional maturity have a better ability to deal with potential problems in marriage. In addition, Yılmaz et al. (2023) research also states that trust is one of the most important foundations for building a healthy, stable, and satisfying relationship.

The third dimension, the financial dimension, which can be reflected in their work, income, and financial knowledge that is ready to be used to meet their needs and those of their family in the future. Based on the distribution of respondent data, most of the respondents were in the moderate category. Therefore, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents feel slightly ready to provide for their family's financial needs in the future. This is in line with the characteristics of emerging adulthood described by Arnett (2004) in his book, which states that individuals in the emerging adulthood phase are synonymous with instability. The instability of individuals in the emerging adulthood phase can be well illustrated by relocation, which means an individual's ability to provide housing for themselves is in line with their financial situation. Moreover, both women and men need to increase their understanding of basic financial concepts because they play an important role in increasing the physical-economic strength of their future families (Sunarti et al., 2023).

The fourth dimension, the dimension of sexual readiness with its various aspects, such as knowledge about reproductive health to respecting the partner's decisions in matters related to sexual activities. Based on the distribution of respondent data, it can be identified that most of the respondents were in the moderate category. Therefore, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents feel slightly ready to adapt to sexual

life. The importance of sexual readiness aspects in marriage is supported by many studies, Shi et al. (2025) states that good sexual relationships in marriage also have a strong influence on the growth and fulfilment of a romantic relationship. Moreover, understanding about reproductive health is important for both spouses, so their reproductive health will be well cared for. The Indonesian Ministry of Health (Kemenkes RI, 2020) has a campaign for pregnant women to avoid the 4Ts in pregnancy, namely too young (giving birth at <21 years of age), too old (giving birth at >35 years of age), too close (birth interval <3 years), and too many (number of children >2). This indicates that the ideal age for pregnancy and childbirth is between 21 and 35 years old, with most of the ideal pregnancy age falling within the emerging adulthood phase.

The fifth dimension, the dimension of family readiness and family roles, which means a situation in which an individual feels ready to fulfill responsibilities in the household. It's important to have because couples who share household responsibilities have higher relationship satisfaction and better mental well-being in marriage (Karananeethi et al., 2024). Based on the distribution of respondent data, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents feel sufficiently ready to fulfill their responsibilities and new roles in their future families. This is in line with Arnett's (2004) research on one of the characteristics of emerging adulthood, namely the age of possibilities, which provides opportunities for individuals to shape themselves into better partners or parents than their own parents. This can happen because individuals in emerging adulthood have ample space to make their own decisions. The desire to improve themselves to be better than their parents may be supported by research by Milkie et al. (2025), which shows that currently the distribution of household work based on gender is becoming more equal, especially in core household tasks that are considered "feminine" such as cooking, cleaning, and laundering.

Lastly, the sixth dimension is the interpersonal relationship dimension, which is the readiness to build a good relationship with spouse and family in law by respecting each other, understanding each other, and so on. Based on the distribution of respondent data, it shows that the majority of respondents feel sufficiently ready to establish a good relationship with their partners and their partners' families. These results are consistent with the advantages of marrying at an emerging adulthood age, as Cevheroğlu and Tutarel-Kışlak (2022) found that women who married as children had significantly higher scores in terms of rejection by their husbands and mothers-in-law, as well as lower marital adjustment compared to women who married after the age of 18. In Arnett's (2004) study on emerging adulthood, it was found that the most common characteristic of individuals in emerging adulthood is the exploration of identity through various interpersonal relationships, such as in work and romance. In this exploration, individuals engage with various types of human characters, which allows them to choose and sort between characters that suit their own character and those that do not. This can be useful for increasing self-understanding.

In the variable of Perceived self-adjustment, the majority of respondents in the distribution of results were in the moderate category, which means that the majority of respondents had a fairly positive perception of self-adjustment in marriage. The social perception dimension was the dimension with the highest category. This shows that respondents have a very positive perception of facing social life in marriage. This result

provides an ideal foundation for building a happy marriage, Piechota et al. (2022) found that having a spouse who is active in social groups can raise marital satisfaction in middle-aged or later marriages. Based on the research by Latifah and Wahyuni (2019), it was found that curiosity or openness to experience can influence an individual's adjustment in a marriage. This indicates that individuals need to expand their knowledge about marriage so that they can form positive perceptions about their adjustment in marriage in the future, as Ningrum, et al. (2021) found that marriage readiness is also influenced significantly by knowledge about family life.

Overall, these findings suggest that perceptions of personal adaptability are not merely a complementary factor, but rather a crucial aspect contributing to marriage readiness. Individuals who have positive perceptions of their ability to adapt to married life tend to demonstrate greater readiness across various dimensions, such as emotional, social, financial, sexual, family, and interpersonal aspects. Therefore, efforts to improve marriage readiness among emerging adulthood should not only focus on practical preparations but also on strengthening adaptive abilities and fostering positive perceptions of self-adaptability in future married life.

Therefore, the formation of perceptions about self-adjustment in marriage among individuals in emerging adulthood needs to be improved so that individuals can be well prepared for marriage. This result leads individuals in emerging adulthood not to force early marriage, because in the research by Zulfa et al. (2024) was found that the level of family resilience of couples who married early was still vulnerable, especially in terms of the legality of family integrity, physical resilience, economic resilience, and socio-psychological resilience.

A limitation of this study is there are several dimensions of perceived self-adjustment in marriage that only have one indicator and one statement item. This may prevent these dimensions from being measured accurately. Future research is suggested to develop more comprehensive indicators for each dimension of perceived self-adjustment, in order to portray the construct more accurately and provide a deeper understanding of its contribution to marital readiness.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the perception of self-adjustment in marriage is positively correlated with readiness for marriage in emerging adulthood. The correlation between the perception of self-adjustment in marriage and readiness for marriage is in the moderate category. Marriage readiness in emerging adulthood can be improved in various ways, one of which is by having a positive perception of adjustment in marriage. The more positive an individual's perception of adjustment in marriage, the better their marriage readiness will be.

Recommendation

Based on the finding that perceptions of self-adaptation skills are positively associated with marriage readiness, institutions are encouraged to develop programs that strengthen emerging adults' capacities in marriage, including communication skills, emotional regulation, conflict management, and interpersonal competencies. Premarital education, counselling services, and workshops can help emerging adults develop a more positive perception of their ability to adapt to married life, thereby increasing their readiness for marriage. Additionally, policymakers should integrate psychological readiness and adaptive competencies into family development and premarital preparation programs. Families and communities are also encouraged to foster open discussions about marriage and provide a supportive environment that helps young adults develop realistic expectations and adaptive skills for future married life.

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