

Marriage Perception and Islamic Knowledge Among Indonesian Women Migrant Workers in Malaysia

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Abstract

Marriage is an important issue in the life of every human being; it is not a human necessity needs only but fully recommended as a religious request. Muslim man or women should understand it well, as Muslim should not engage in something without having understanding on it. No exception in this case for Indonesian Women Migrant Workers (TKW) in Malaysia, because the knowledge of religious teachings undoubtedly has real implication for the Muslims' life, including matters pertaining to marriage. The study discusses the religious understanding implication of Indonesian Women Migrant Workers (TKW) in Malaysia toward their marriage perception. The researchers used the descriptive and analytical method to describe and analyse the previous information. They also used questionnaires. The results concluded that there is an appropriate channel requirement for Indonesian labor migrants, especially women for their desire to marry who have valid documents. The need for support is necessary from all parties so that human rights can be preserved without causing any harm to people.

Keyword: marriage perception, Islamic knowledge, Indonesian women, migrant workers

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تصور العائلات الإندونيسية في ماليزيا حول الزواج

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الملخص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى الوقوف على مدى تصور العائلات الإندونيسية في ماليزيا حول الزواج، ومدى احتياجهم له وما هي العوائق الموجودة أمامهم، ولقد استخدم المنهج الاستقرائي فيه وذلك لتتبع بعض الآيات والأحاديث حول أهمية الزواج في الإسلام، كما استخدم المنهج المسحي الميداني للحصول على المعلومات من العينة وذلك بتوزيع الاستبيانات وتحليلها تحليلًا وصفيًا ثم استنتاجها واستفسارها. وخلص البحث إلى أهم بعض النتائج منها: دلت الدراسة أن لديهن رغبة قوية في الزواج، ولكن واجهتهن الأمور الأخرى وهي عقدهن في العمل يشترط ألا يتزوجن في مدة عملهن في ماليزيا، إضافة إلى ذلك عدم الدعائم من الجهات المعنية للحصول على وثائق الزواج، لذلك فلا بد من إعادة النظر في هذا الأمر حتى لا يتضررن في حياتهن.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تصور عن الزواج، المعرفة الإسلامية، المرأة الإندونيسية، العائلات المهاجرات

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Allah s.w.t. and his prophet ordered people to live together harmoniously in the bond of marriage rather than alone as hermits. It is recognized and indisputable commandments of Islam (*mithaqan ghalizan*), the sacred union that takes place only between a man and a woman, of any age or background. Allah SWT says in the Glorious Quran:

And among His Signs is this, that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy. Verily, in that are indeed signs for a people who reflect. (Al-Rum: 211)

Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. said:

“O young men, whoever among you can afford to get married, let him do so, and whoever cannot afford it, let him fast, for that will be a shield for him.” (Al-Bukhari, 4778; Muslim, 1400).

In addition to the command of marriage, there are verses and Hadiths confirm the prohibition of adultery, and it is considered a major sin, and threatened the perpetrators of severe punishment in this world and painful torment in the Hereafter;

Allah SWT says:

{And those who invoke not any other ilâh (god) along with Allah, nor kill such life as Allah has forbidden, except for just cause, nor commit illegal sexual intercourse and whoever does this shall receive the punishment. The torment will be doubled to him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein in disgrace.} [25: 68, 69]

And Allah s.w.t. warns who commits Zina:

{And come not near to the unlawful sexual intercourse. Verily, it is a Fâhishah [i.e. anything that transgresses its limits (a great sin)], and an evil way (that leads one to Hell unless Allah forgives him).} [17:32]

In the prophetic hadith,

Narrated by Jabir: A man from the tribe of Aslam came to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and confessed that he had committed ‘zina’ (adultery). The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) turned his face away from him until the man bore witness against himself four times. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said to him, "Are you mad?" He said "No." The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) asked, "Are you married?" He said, "Yes." Then the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) ordered that he be stoned to death, and he was stoned to death at the Musalla (public gathering place). [Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith 8.810]

In another prophetic hadith

Narrated by Abd-Allah ibn Masood (may Allah be pleased with him) said: *I asked the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him), Which sin is worst in the sight of Allah? He (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "To make any rival to Allah, when He has created you". I asked, Then what? He (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "To kill your child for fear that he will eat with you". I asked, then what? He (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "To commit zina with the wife of your neighbour". (Reported in Sahih Al-Bukhari, Hadith #492 and In Sahih Muslim, Hadith #90).*

There are many reasons for people to get married. Some people they want to channel their desire and others they want to have a life partner. There are also people who want to have offspring, or they want to refrain themselves from doing sin. However marriage is the Sunnah of the Prophet and there must be such intention to marry in every Muslim (Sakinah Salleh: 2013, Ahmad Zawawi Abdullah). However, sometimes the value is shifted due to shifting one's perception of marriage (Rohani Abdul Rahman: 2013). Some are due to unhappy experience of their parents' marriage; there are people who have been harmed by their partners or some of them judge the costly process of marriage.

In the end, people start thinking too long to get married. Some of them even legalize sexual intercourse without marriage and stay together at home, and have children from illegal relationship (Yaasir shalabi 2003). This might happen to anyone, especially people who lack understanding on their religion. Lack of religious understanding may cause a person to fall into sin. Regular issue happened in local mass media is the Indonesian Women Migrant Workers (TKW) who work overseas as the issue of promiscuity. Moreover, TKW are abroad, therefore, for sure the identity of the child's father is questioned because there is no legal marriage certificate. Finally, children who become victims, born stateless.

On the other hand, the migrant workers who -in fact- have their husbands in Indonesia, went to work in other country, they get remarried, whereas their status is legal wives based on their legitimate previous marriage. Undoubtedly this violates the Sunnah of the Prophet SAW (Syahrin Nasution: 2009). The TKW are indeed normal human who have natural instinct to follow their desire in marriage.. However, they are deprived of what they want because they are bound by another law (Abdul Hamid Kisyik: 2010).

There are also TKW who work in Malaysia, although in their own condition without husband, they are able to maintain their identity and their pride as women. Women who have strong faith can do that. The temptation of social life is so strong, that they can hardly avoid it well (Sahid Athar: 2006). A good environment also affects this behavior besides Islamic knowledge and women's perception on marriage.

This study involved the extent to which the relationship between knowledge of Islam and the perception of marriage among the TKW so that the researchers have a clear picture of it and get an evaluation of this social situation.

2.0 Literature Review

Through my studies, I have not found any previous similar study to this topic.

3.0 Statement of the Problem

Understanding the Islamic religion is very important in the life of every believer, because every believer should follow God's commandments and His Prophet in any of their activities. This understanding will affect their way of thinking and work and make them always worked on the basis of guidelines and clear objectives. No different in this case for men, women, officers, regular employees, workers and others wherever they are. Getting married is considered an important issue in Islam, encouragement for its implementation is clearly mentioned in the Quran and Hadith. A good understanding of religion has an impact on the attitude of these things on every Muslim, including Indonesian Women Workers (TKW) in Malaysia. The presence of Indonesian women workers in large numbers in Malaysia make the issue of their religious understanding and perception of marriage relevant to be highlighted in form of research.

4.0 Objectives

This study aims to:

1. Know exactly how far the level of understanding of Indonesian women workers about Islam.
2. Know the perception of Indonesian women about the importance of marriage.
3. Provide solutions to authoritative parties in facing the problems faced by Indonesian women workers in marriage issues.

5.0 Significance of the Study:

The findings of this study will redound to the following:

1. The number of valid social problems faced by Indonesian working women in Malaysia.
2. This review will provide benefits to authoritative parties to find a way forward for the problems faced by Indonesian working women in Malaysia.
3. This review is important because it defines human rights issues, where a person is entitled to get.

6.0 Materials and Method

6.1. Data Source and study population

We used survey data instead of Pre wedding seminars held in Cyberjaya as sample source. Instead of 270 female participants attending, 182 participants filled the survey form (67% response rate). Seminar participants come from various factory hostels around Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Melaka. When participants

register, the survey form is distributed and while waiting, the participants are asked to fill out the questionnaire until the event begins. From the data returned, questions of knowledge, perceptions filled out correctly will be assessed 1 and the wrong answer or no answer assessed 0.

6.1.1 Socioeconomic Status

Socio-economic data is based on age, education last, factory area, area of origin and marital status.

6.1.2 Islamic knowledge

Data on knowledge of Islam derived from 20 questions about knowledge of Islam. Questions of Faith 1,2,3,4,5,17, Questions of syariah/worship 6,7,8,9,10,15,16,18, questions Akhlaq 11,12,13,14,19,20. This question has already been validated by previous studies by Usman Jakfar 2009.

a. Have faith that is true

With the true faith, a Muslim will have a strong bond to God (s.w.t) and the strong bond that he will not deviate from the road and his provisions. With the cleanliness and soundness of faith, a Muslim will surrender all his actions to God (s.w.t)

b. Ibadah (worship Properly)

True worship is the worship of God (s.w.t) in a manner consistent with what has been set forth and in line with what has been described by the Prophet (did) in the Sunnah of the holy and life journey of scent. In fact, every Muslim when performing ablution, prayer, fasting, charity and pilgrimage to the House, should be in accordance with what the Prophet (s.a.w)

c. Akhlaq (behavior Solid)

Every Muslim must have a solid behavior, good behavior outwardly or inwardly. This means demanding adherence to uphold the behaviors al-Qur'an and follow the behavior that has been exemplified by the Prophet (did). This sturdy behave claimed either in relation to God (s.w.t) or with His creatures. Because with good character, people will be happy in his life, both in the world especially in the hereafter.

7.0 Married Perception

Married perception is assessed based on 23 questions, namely the question of self-perception of marriage compiled by researchers and obtained from various sources (Hasrizal Abdul Jamil: 2011, Cahyadi Takariawan: 2012, Rohani Abdul Rahman: 2013). Also the additional question number 11,17,21,22 is to assess the extent to which the TKI's need for proper channel assistance on marriage in Malaysia.

8.0 Statistical analysis

Descriptive analyses were used to report background characteristic of sample. Bivariate analysis was done to examine the association of Islamic and Wedding perception and

also with background characteristics, using t test for continuous variables and the X2 test for categorical variables.

9.0 Results

Sample characteristics

Table 1. Socioeconomic Characteristics, Islamic Knowledge and Married Perception.

Socioeconomic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage	Islamic Knowledge		Married Perception	
			Poor	Good	Low	High
Age (years)						
<20	18	9.9	5	13	7	11
20-25	140	77.3	39	101	36	104
>25	23	12.7	9	14	6	23
Education						
Secondary	5	2.8	1	4	1	4
Tertiary	154	85.1	49	105	43	111
College/University	12	6.6	1	11	3	9
Others	10	5.5	2	8	2	8
Married Status						
Unmarried	169	93.4	49	120	44	125
Married	9	5.0	3	6	3	6
Widowed	2	1.7	1	2	2	1
Origin in Indonesia						
Jakarta	10	5.5	3	7	3	7
West Java	15	8.3	3	12	7	8
Central Java	88	48.6	21	67	21	67
East Java	32	17.7	15	17	9	23
Aceh	3	1.7	2	1	0	3
Medan	11	6.1	4	7	1	10
Padang	5	2.8	1	4	3	2
Riau	1	0.6	0	1	0	1
Palembang	2	1.1	0	2	0	2
Lampung	4	2.2	1	3	1	3
Others	10	5.6	4	7	4	6

From table 1 above, the most age is between 20-25 years as many as 140 samples (77.3%). This age is the young reproductive age. Therefore, at the age is the age of desire and worthy of a person to marry. From this data also, the level of Islamic knowledge was high, 101 samples and when viewed from the perception of marriage, most of them (104 samples) have a high marriage perception. The highest number of senior high school education is 154 samples (85.1%), and most of them have just finished school. And almost all samples (169 samples / 93.4%) are unmarried. Almost half of the sample (88 / 48.6%) is from Central Java, followed by East Java and West Java.

Table 2 illustrates the married perception among the migrant workers. More than 64% of migrant workers declared themselves to be married. On average they agreed with the concept of marriage such as the need for patience, married is a love, married causes peace of mind, by marriage, the body will be healthy, convinced that marriage will last long, by marriage lust will be channeled well, by marriage, the responsibility will be borne together, need to manage finances well and the happiness of the household depends on each individual. Among the respondents, there are those who assess the cost of a wedding as expensive (more than 40%) and difficulty in finding a good partner.

Approximately 30-40% of respondents stated that they had the desire to marry but still had no official channels and doubted the marriage channel in Malaysia and feared of the absence of legitimate documents when getting married in Malaysia. Most of them believed that valid legal documents will guarantee their rights, especially for mothers and children.

Table 2. Married Perception Questions

Statement	Strongly agree		Agree		Not agree		Strongly not agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I should get married	34	18.8	82	45.3	58	32.0	7	3.9
Married must be patient with the couples shortcomings	99	54.7	78	43.1	4	2.2	0	0
Married can burden me	6	3.3	4	2.2	113	62.4	58	32.0
Marriage is love	53	29.3	111	61.3	15	8.3	2	1.1
With married so the heart be peaceful	74	40.9	94	51.9	9	5.0	4	2.2
My parents' marriage was unhappy	8	4.4	13	7.2	83	45.9	77	42.5
By marrying the body to be healthy	43	23.8	118	65.2	17	9.4	3	1.7
The wedding reception was a lot of spending money	13	7.2	61	33.7	100	55.2	7	3.9
I want to get married but no channel	7	3.9	40	22.1	120	66.3	14	7.7
Difficult to find a good mate	21	11.6	79	43.6	68	37.6	13	7.2
I want to get married but do not know the procedure in Malaysia	9	5.0	51	28.2	102	56.4	19	10.5
I am afraid of marriage did not last long	9	5.0	44	24.3	103	56.9	25	13.8
Better career than being a housewife	6	3.3	19	10.5	104	57.5	52	28.7
With marriage, lust channelled properly	72	39.8	99	54.7	8	4.4	2	1.1
With marriage, the responsibility be shouldered with	86	47.5	90	49.7	3	1.7	2	1.1
Sex before marriage can find someone capable pregnant or not	1	0.6	9	5.0	57	31.5	114	63.0
There are no guarantees married in Malaysia will receive a valid marriage certificate	11	6.1	63	34.8	85	47.0	22	12.2
Marriage must be good at managing finances	94	51.9	81	44.8	6	3.3	0	0
I'm afraid to get married because of fear unhappy	6	3.3	11	6.1	107	59.1	57	31.5
A legitimate marriage will lasting marriage	88	48.6	79	43.6	13	7.2	1	0.6

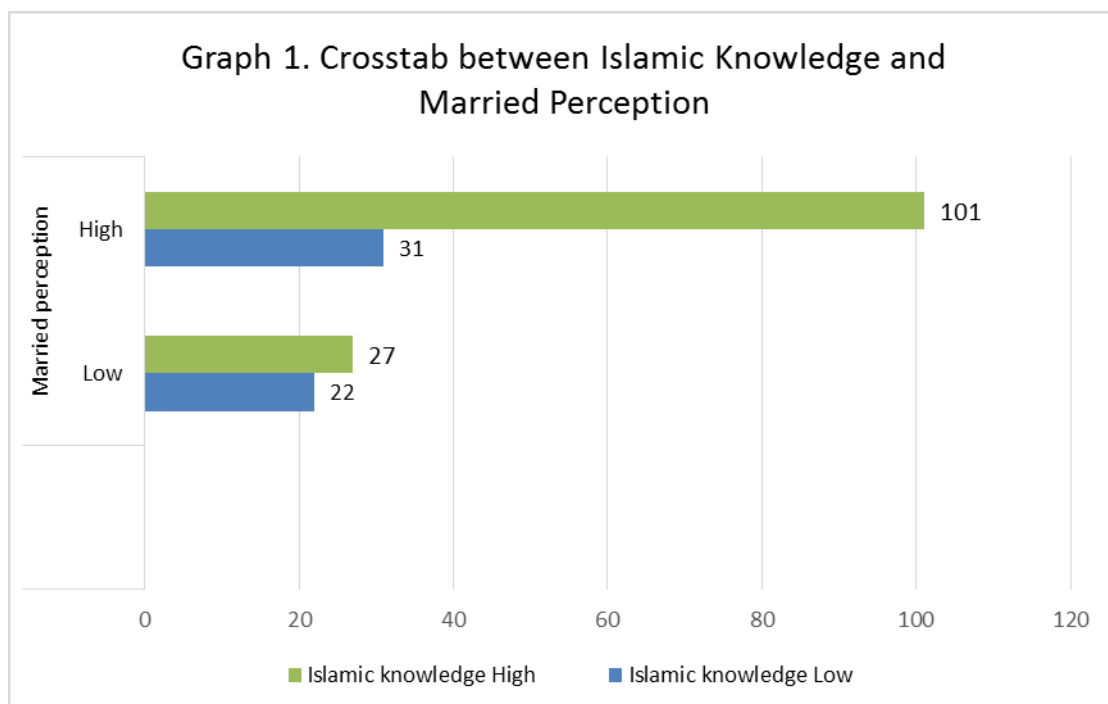
Marriage legitimate safeguard the rights of mothers and children	101	55.8	69	38.1	9	5.0	2	1.1
Secret marriage was enough for me to channel the desire to get married in Malaysia	0	0	0	0	79	43.6	102	56.4
Happiness depends on ourselves	53	29.3	70	38.7	52	28.7	6	3.3

Out of the question of Islamic knowledge and perceptions of marriage and created a category in the total level of Islamic knowledge and high quality. The number of respondents who have a level of knowledge of Islam and a low perception of marriage is a total of 22 patients (12.2%) and a high number is a total of 101 patients (55.8%). Crosstab statistical analysis between the two chi-squared test showed significant with p value less than 0.01 and significant correlation relationship between the two with a value of less than 0.01 (Table 3). If Crosstab made the bar graph, then formed a graph

Table 3. Chi square test between Islamic knowledge and married perception

		Married perception		Test
		Low	High	
Islamic knowledge	Low	22 (12.2%)	31 (17.1%)	Chi square value < 0.01
	High	27 (14.9%)	101 (55.8%)	
Total		49 (27.1%)	132 (72.9%)	Pearson Correlation < 0.01

showing the relationship (Graph 1)



10.0 Discussion and conclusion

A good Muslim certainly needs to practice Islam in a perfect manner. Therefore, in the practice of Islamic households need to perform what is exemplified by the Prophet and Ummahatul Muslimin (Al Hamid al Husaini2007). Basically, a man who has reached adulthood, then has begun the desire to find a partner. Hence, the sides of the value of Islam which give adult meaning to people who have been in their values and are responsible for what they make, whether they gain rewards if they do right and get punished if they get wrong. In addition to the adulthood side, Islam also assesses the ability of the individual to be matured and responsible in the maturity sense in life physically and spiritually so that when combined between adulthood and maturity, then someone will be able to wade married life.

On the other hand, the migrant workers also face problems where if they have agreements during work, they are not allowed to get married. This becomes a dilemma for them as they naturally have desire for marriage but they could not do it because of their working contract. Therefore, those with strong faith will get through well, but those with weak faith will easily be tempted to make promiscuity or get married without a legal letter from the government.

The interesting part of discussion material is how to have the right channel for migrant workers in coping with this dilemma. Surely, it is the government who could handle this issue, so that the problem will not become continuous. The extent to which female migrant workers are considered as foreign exchange heroes need to be fought for their rights to get the right channel for their needs. Hopefully there is right solution to deal with this issue.

Islamic education or al-Tarbiyah al-Islāmiyah is the process of preparing a righteous Muslim and reformer in order to create a balance in the potency, goals, utterances, and actions as a whole.

The balance means here that the emergence of the new potency should not lead to the loss of an existing and should not disinfest it in order to emerge other . This is one of the features of the Islamic system and its rules. It is also a balance between spiritual, material and intellectual potency, the balance between human and physical spirituality, between primary and secondary necessities, between reality and aspirations, between personal ambition and the soul of togetherness, between belief in supernatural beings and belief in the apparent, eating, drinking, clothing and shelter, with no exaggeration on one side and negligence on the other. Truly, a balance that leads to a fair attitude. It is fair in every way.

With this Islamic education, it is expected that a Muslim will understand his religion more and know the actions that need to be taken at any time and every circumstance. With a better understanding, muslims are expected to avoid making mistakes and committing sins so that what they do is in the right corridor. May Allah always keep His servants wherever they are.

11.0 Implications

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that there is an appropriate channel required for Indonesian labor migrants, especially women for their desires to marry who have valid documents. The need for support from all parties are urgent so that human rights can be preserved without causing harm to people. Hopefully in the future there would be a right solution for this problem so that social problems like free living together without marriage is not a habit for the workers any more. They can live peacefully by practicing the teachings of Islam and work rightly despite living in Malaysia.

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