

THE ROLE OF SALMAN ITB PREMARITAL EDUCATION SCHOOL (SPN) IN FACING GLOBAL CULTURAL CHALLENGES FOR YOUNG GENERATION

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ABSTRAK

Budaya global berupa resesi sex, child free, dan LGBTQ+ menjadi tantangan terberat bagi generasi Z. Tulisan ini berupaya mengungkap bahaya-bahaya dari ketiga jenis tantangan tersebut, serta memberikan solusi yang aman dan nyaman bagi Gen Z supaya tidak menjadi korban dari budaya global tersebut. Metode kualitatif menjadi pilihan dalam menuliskan laporan penelitian ini, dengan dilengkapi oleh hasil wawancara dari sejumlah responden dari beberapa mahasiswa di perguruan tinggi agar lebih melengkapi data yang kami kumpulkan dan analisis. Nilai kebaruan dari riset ini ialah mengungkap betapa masifnya tantangan global bagi generasi Z, terutama terkait dengan tanggungjawab yang mereka emban sebagai generasi penerus pembangunan bangsa. Hasil dari riset ini mengungkap tentang peran Sekolah Pra Nikah dalam mempersiapkan generasi Z dalam menghadapi tantangan global. Pernikahan menjadi solusi yang baik, aman dan nyaman bagi generasi Z dalam menghadapi tantangan global ini.

Kata kunci : resesi sex, child-free, sekolah pranikah, pernikahan, generasi z

ABSTRACT

A global culture nowadays shows that sexual deviations, including sex recession, child-free, and LGBTQ+ issues pose the greatest challenges for young generations. This article aims to uncover the dangers of these three types of challenges and provide appropriate solutions for future generations to avoid becoming victims of this global culture. Research data was processed using qualitative methods, with data collection obtained through questionnaires and interviews. The respondents and informants involved were students from universities in Bandung City. The novelty of this research is to reveal students' perceptions of three global challenges threatening the survival of future generations. The results of the research show that Premarital Education School hold a crucial role in preparing future generations who understand the threats and respond with the solution that marriage is a good, safe, and comfortable guidance in facing these global challenges.

Keywords : sex recession, child-free, premarital course, marriage, young generation

INTRODUCTION

Sexual recession is a phenomenon that describes a decline in sexual activity in society (Zulfa Anika & Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, 2022). This phenomenon was first proposed by Kate Julian in 2018 and has since become the subject of intensive research (Julian, Kate. 2018). In Asia, the phenomenon of sexual recession first appeared in East Asian countries such as Japan, China and South Korea (Putri, Cantika Adinda. 2023). According to data from the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency (2024), this sex recession trend is starting to enter Indonesia, which is marked by a decline in marriage rates from year to year (Annur, Cindy Mutia. 2024). The age of first marriage among Indonesians is starting to get higher.

Factors that trigger the phenomenon of sexual recession include the increasing costs of child care and education, many women and men are postponing marriage because they want to focus on studying or career (Zulfa Anika & Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, 2022). Due to the soaring costs of care and education to raise children, many married couples choose to postpone or even decide not to have children (child-free).

The challenges of Generation Z are increasing with the spread of LGBTQ+ campaigns. Based on the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), currently there are 32 countries around the world that legalize same-sex marriage (Wisda, Avesina & Sahroji, Ahmad. 2022). If these issues are not addressed properly, they can cause more complicated problems in the future. If the current young generation chooses not to marry, be child free and become LGBTQ+, there will be a decline in the number of people visible in a country, causing a decline in the demographic figures of a country (Aronson et al., 2015). Not only demographic problems, the cultural issue of sex recession, child free and LGBTQ+ will also trigger an increase in free sex as an outlet for channeling human biological needs which can cause health problems. Casual sex can increase the risk of spreading sexual diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

In responding to these global cultural challenges, the Salman Mosque ITB organizes the Pre-Marriage School program as a solution for the younger generation so that they do not fall into the problems of sex, child free and LGBTQ+ recession. The education provided is about the science of marriage, by getting married we can avoid immoral acts that are prohibited by Allah SWT. This program aims to provide knowledge and understanding to the younger generation about the importance of marriage and having offspring and ways to anticipate problems often faced in household life.

In the Pre-Marriage School program, the younger generation will also learn about marriage procedures in Islam, the importance of communication in the household, how to

manage family finances, and the importance of reproductive health. So that in the future we can build a sakinah, mawaddah, warahmah household in accordance with the teachings of the Islamic religion. The Pre-Marriage School Program can also be a forum for the young generation to share experiences and knowledge and build community. In this way, Pre-Marriage Schools can provide knowledge to the younger generation about the importance of marriage for human survival as well as in reducing divorce rates and ways to build and strengthen family institutions in society.

This research uses a qualitative approach to understand the phenomena of sex recession, child free and LGBTQ+, as well as the effectiveness of the Pre-Marriage School program in dealing with these phenomena. The research methods we use include literature studies, conducting surveys, in-depth interviews, and data analysis to find patterns, relationships, and significant findings. We used data analysis with a Likert scale to measure respondents' attitudes, perceptions and preferences (Likert, 1932).

DISCUSSION

Salman ITB Pre-Wedding School (SPN Salman ITB) is an activity carried out by the Family Education Activities Program, under the auspices of the Da'wah Division of the Salman ITB Mosque. This activity was founded in 2007, with the aim of providing marriage knowledge for the younger generation. This SPN program is held online and offline at the Salman ITB Mosque. Based on the results of data collected from 2016 (at that time SPN Offline was in its 28th batch) the total number of SPN Offline participants up to the 43rd batch was 3,112 participants. Meanwhile, SPN Online started to be implemented in 2020 with a total of 2,883 participants gathered from batch 01 to batch 15.

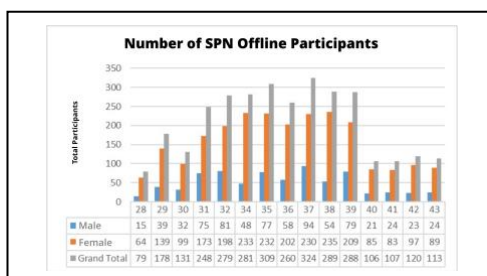


Figure 1. SPN Offline participants from 2016 (batches 28-43).

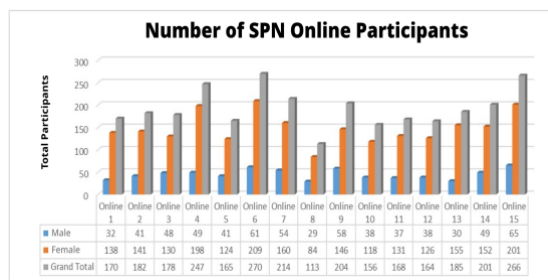


Figure 2. SPN Online participants from 2020 (batches 01-15).

The implementation of this SPN activity program was initially motivated by the many conflicts that occurred in married life which led to an increase in the divorce rate due to the lack of knowledge of married couples in dealing with the vagaries of the running of the household. Activities in marriage education were still very minimal at that time, considering that marriage guidance activities for prospective brides and grooms carried out by the Religious Affairs Office (KUA) of the Ministry of Religion were only intensified in 2017 with the issuance of Decree of the Director General of Islamic Community Guidance Number 373 of 2017 concerning Technical Guidance Instructions Marriage for the bride and groom.

As time goes by, the implementation of Premarital School activities has undergone changes and developments both in terms of the material presented, the concept and technical activities and the facilities provided to participants and alumni. This SPN program continues to follow current developments as a solution to overcome various problems surrounding marriage, such as the current issue of postponing marriage/sexual recession, postponing or deciding not to have children, and deviations from LGBTQ+ sexual orientation. The SPN program provides understanding to young generations (gen z and millennials) about the negative impacts of these issues through an Islamic religious perspective so that bigger problems do not occur in the future.

Social dynamics in human life will never end (Zulfa Anika & Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, 2022). As time goes by, society will experience changes in the form of social life, leading to a shift from a traditional way of life to a more modern one (Dewi, E. 2012). However, we as human beings who believe and have reason must be able to sort out changes that have a positive impact to continue development and avoid changes that can have a negative impact on survival.

The phenomenon of postponing marriage or what is known as sexual recession has become part of global culture, and has now entered the social structure of Indonesia. From a theoretical perspective, delaying marriage reflects the younger generation's awareness of current social realities (Azhari, 2016). Today's young generation chooses to postpone marriage

for various reasons. From the results of surveys and interviews that we conducted with 135 respondents from SPN alumni and students spread throughout Indonesia, 43% of respondents answered that the cause of the sexual recession in Indonesia was because there was a shift or change in cultural values. Technological advances make the spread of information very fast. The ease of obtaining information makes the younger generation 'aware' of the problems that are currently occurring in the world. Apart from that, currently the position of women and men is equalized. This is different from the culture of the past where women did not need to go to high school because they would stay at home to take care of household needs. In fact, women who will become mothers in the future are the first madrasa for their children, so they also need to have extensive knowledge so that their children become superior generations in the future. Other factors such as career focus, with 27.3% of respondents answering, are reasons for the younger generation to postpone marriage. The current economic uncertainty and recession due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is the main cause (Anwar, 2022). Unstable economic conditions make the current young generation choose to postpone marriage. Not to mention if they have to bear the living costs of their parents or younger siblings, this is what is usually called the sandwich generation, so they have not thought about starting a family, let alone having children. The high cost of childbirth and children's education means that young couples in the sandwich generation prefer to postpone having children or focus on their careers first. The impact of this sex, childfree and LGBTQ+ recession culture is also very diverse. Starting from the erosion of religious values, the demographic conditions of a region, global economic instability, to physical and mental health problems. This impact occurs because the birth rate is decreasing, so that the demographic structure becomes unbalanced with the elderly population increasing and the productive young population decreasing, this could potentially be a problem in economic growth (Pelu et al., 2022; Sidqi & Rasidin, 2023). Another impact of a sex recession or postponing marriage is that it could potentially increase the culture of free sex. Free sex will cause more complex problems such as the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.

From the results of interviews with several respondents, some said that the sex and childfree recession is not a big problem in Indonesia because of its large population. Indonesia is the country with the fourth largest population with a total population of 278.82 million people (Worldometers, 2024). However, if this is not addressed wisely, it is not impossible that in the next few years, there will be a significant decline in birth rates in Indonesia. Based on data from the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency from 2010-2020, there was a decrease in the total birth rate (total fertility rate) of 0.39.

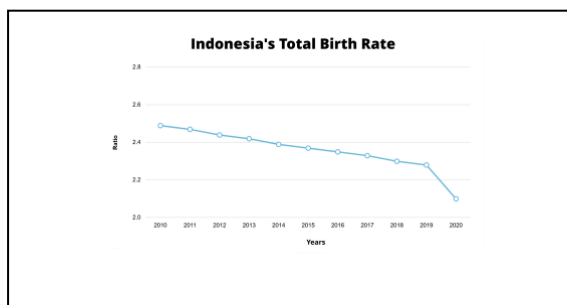


Figure 3. Graph of Indonesia's Total Birth Rate from 2010-2020 (R&D Kompas/RNA, 2020).

To find out what the younger generation's perspective is about the sexual recession, we asked questions using a Likert scale concept. The Likert scale is a rating scale used to measure opinions, attitudes or behavior. The Likert scale provides several question options that allow respondents to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the questions asked (Likert 1932). To find out the overall number of respondents to the questions asked, the Likert scale percentage index can be calculated using the following formula:

$$\Sigma x = T \times Pn \dots\dots\dots [1]$$

$$\text{Indeks \%} = (\Sigma x / y) \times 100\% \dots\dots\dots [2]$$

The calculation results can be measured using a percentage scale, where an index of 0% – 19.99% means strongly disagree, an index of 20% – 39.99% means disagree, an index of 40% – 59.99% means still undecided, an index of 60% – 79.99% means agree, and an index of 80% – 100% means strongly agree.

The question we ask is whether the culture of sexual recession needs to be considered at a global level. Respondents answered with various answers. Once done using the percentage index formula, it was obtained as much as 82.8%. From the Likert scale, it means that the respondents strongly agree to raise the issue of the sexual recession for immediate follow-up in order to get the best possible solution.

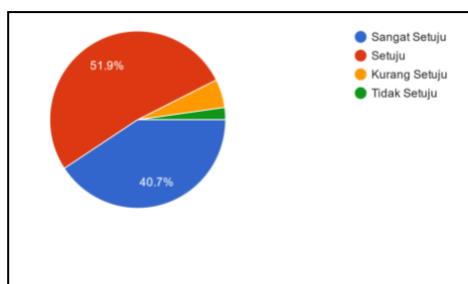


Figure 4. The answers to questions asked to respondents.

In research conducted by Andika et al., (2021), unstable economic conditions globally are the main reason behind the emergence of the sexual recession phenomenon. The ongoing economic downturn raises concerns about the financial imbalances one may face after marriage. Here the role of the Pre-Marriage School is in providing knowledge in married life with one of the materials provided, namely financial management in the household, so that today's young generation does not need to worry about financial conditions because they already have the knowledge to manage finances so that they do not Conflict occurs in marriage due to economic problems.

Allah SWT says in the Al-Qur'an Surah Ar-Rum verse 21 that it is very beautiful about marriage and the relationship between husband and wife.

“And among His signs (of His greatness) is that He created partners for you from your own (kind) so that you may feel at ease with them. He created among you feelings of love and compassion. Indeed, in that there are truly signs (of Allah's greatness) for a people who think.”
[Ar-Rum/30:21]

In this verse, Allah SWT teaches that marriage is His sunnah. Some important messages from this verse include Allah creating partners for us, both male and female. Allah gives a feeling of love and affection between husband and wife. Marriage provides peace and blessings. In marriage, we complement and help each other. Marriage is a part of God's very beautiful plan. Therefore, if we meet the criteria, there is no need to be afraid of getting married.

The laws regarding marriage vary according to the circumstances. Marriage law becomes mandatory if a person has the ability to build a household and cannot refrain from committing adultery. In this case, getting married is an obligation because it is feared that if you don't get married, you will commit acts that are prohibited in Islam, such as adultery or free sex. The law of marriage becomes sunnah if a person has the ability to marry and can refrain from committing adultery. Marriage is sunnah if there is no threat of committing adultery. Marriage law becomes makruh if someone marries without considering the ability to fulfill the rights and obligations of marriage, or if the marriage can lead to difficulties. The law of marriage becomes haram if it is carried out in a way that violates Islamic law, such as marrying a woman who already has a partner, in the state of Hajj ihram, syighar marriage, tahlil marriage, mut'ah marriage and so on.

If we have reached puberty and have the desire to get married but are not yet able to get married, we are advised to fast to restrain our desires. Rasulullah SAW said:

"Whoever of you has the ability to marry, then marry, because marriage lowers the gaze more, and more fortifies the farji (genitals). And whoever cannot afford it, let him fast (fast), because fasting can fortify him." (HR Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidzi)

Premarital schools play an important role in overcoming the phenomenon of sexual recession. This program providing education and guidance about relationships, communication, and understanding about sexuality and the role of a man or woman in the family according to teachings Islam.

By attending premarital school, couples learn how to manage expectations and build healthy relationships. This helps reduce fear or confusion about overcome a problem in a marital relationship. Apart from that, premarital school often discuss family planning and parenting so that they can create a strong and superior generation. This helps couples prepare more good for life after marriage, including responsibility towards children. With better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each partner can build a more harmonious relationship. The younger generation who already understands about married life no longer afraid to get married and have children so will reduces the risk of sex recession and childfree.

Pre-marital schools also provide an understanding that LGBTQ+ is haram the law is in religion. Sanctions for someone who carries out LGBTQ+ practices are stoning, whip, until the perpetrator receives punishment from Allah SWT (Bariah, et. al. 2022). In Al-Qur'an, Allah SWT says in QS Hud verse 82,

"So when Our decree came, We overturned the land of the people of Lut, and We showered them with stones from the burning ground" [Hud/11:82]

In this verse, it is explained that Allah SWT. bring great punishment terrible for Prophet Lut's people who had a deviant sexual orientation. It is hoped that the younger generation can understand that LGBTQ+ behavior is gaining wrath from Allah SWT.

This research has several important findings regarding implications for the program premarital schools in facing global cultural challenges such as sex recession, childfree, to LGBTQ+, among other things, namely being able to provide understanding to the younger generation about negative impact of childfree sexm and LGBTQ+ recession. These findings show that pre-marital school programs can help the younger generation understand the phenomenon of sexual recession, child free, to LGBTQ+ by providing education on marriage and our nature as humans in this world. So it is hoped that the younger generation can make informed decisions appropriate regarding marriage, having children, and avoiding LGBTQ+

behavior. Although Most respondents felt that premarital school programs were effective, but they still exist Several respondents felt that this program needed to be improved further. Therefore, these findings can be used as evaluation material to make improvements and improvements to pre-marital school programs, can also be used as material consideration in developing a better curriculum to address global cultural challenges in issues surrounding marriage.

CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of sexual recession describes a decrease in sexual activity and delay marriage in society. The main factor that triggers this phenomenon is high costs child care and education, as well as a focus on studies and careers by the younger generation, so that even young married couples tend to postpone or even decided not to have children (childfree). Apart from that, LGBTQ+ campaigns too adding to the complexity of the challenges of today's young generation.

Salman Mosque ITB responded to this challenge by organizing a program Pre-Marriage School (SPN). This program aims to provide education about marriage and family life according to Islamic teachings. Through material about family financial management, the importance of communication in the household, and health reproduction, SPN seeks to equip the younger generation to be ready to face and overcome problems the challenges of the sex recession, child-free, and LGBTQ+ issues.

This research uses a qualitative approach with literature study methods, surveys, and in-depth interviews with 135 respondents. The findings suggest that factors the economy, changing cultural values, and focus on career are the main reasons for postponement wedding. The negative impacts of the sexual recession phenomenon include the erosion of religious values, demographic instability, and health problems resulting from casual sex.

The survey results showed that 82.8% of respondents agreed that the issue of a sexual recession was necessary noticed at the global level. SPN has succeeded in increasing the understanding and readiness of the generation youth towards marriage, helping prevent sexual recession and child-free decisions based on the values contained in the Islamic religion. This program is also a forum for young people to share experiences in a community that supports marriage and build a *sakinah, mawaddah, warahmah* family.

This research recommends improving and evaluating the SPN program in address global cultural challenges such as the sex, childfree, and LGBTQ+ recession, as well development of a more comprehensive curriculum. With the right education, young generations are expected

to be able to make wise decisions regarding marriage and take part in looking after its sustainability and demographic balance in Indonesia.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The younger generation is increasing their education in faith, social ethics and knowledge about the importance of preparing to start a family. Educational institutions should be given pre-marital education and the importance of maintaining the reproductive organs of Gen Z. The government is asked to increase the education budget for Generation Z as the nation's next generation so that they can form an attitude of responsibility towards the nation's future, obtain a demographic bonus for a superior generation so that Indonesia becomes a country, advanced and which has a superior civilization in all fields of justice and prosperity.

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