

Review Paper

A Systematic Literature Review of Factors Influencing Marital Readiness

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Abstract: There is a risk of bias in the research since current literature review frameworks frequently lack measurement of the volume of literature, guidance on keyword inclusion, confidence in detecting knowledge gaps, and framing of research objectives. This calls into question the review's legitimacy and dependability. In order to overcome these difficulties, we want to enhance the systematic literature review (SLR) approach, which begins with a literature review and is then followed by another literature review. The researchers used a systematic literature review approach, the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA), to obtain relevant publications related to young people's marriage readiness. This process was divided into three main stages: identification, screening, and eligibility. Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus were the two main databases used in the study, containing over 33,000 journals spanning over 256 disciplines, such as psychology, environmental studies, developmental studies, and integrative social sciences. Primary research, psychological marriage readiness, readiness to marry, adolescent and young adult populations aged 1 to 25 years, and papers in English were the inclusion criteria for this study. Based on prior research findings, it has been shown that various aspects, including financial, emotional, sexual, personality, and mental readiness, are significant determinants of a person's marital readiness. This comprehensive literature review indicates that marriage readiness is influenced by three key aspects: individual, financial, and social factors. The results indicate a need for additional research on these factors.

Keywords: Marital readiness; factors of marital readiness; getting married; marriage; marriage decision

Introduction

Marriage is a transitional period that individuals usually face when entering early adulthood. In general, marriage is an intentional reproduction that ensures the survival of any community or society (Rahman & Hoesni, 2023). Although some people feel that marriage is not necessary for them, some really want to get married. According to Mkandawire et al. (2019), marriage is essential to human existence because it provides a continuous backbone for survival in the outside world. Every community is understood to need marriage, and if there is a community without marriage, it is considered that they will fail miserably as a family (Chewe, 2013). Nevertheless, some people decide not to marry because they always feel their social responsibility to uphold the institution of family.

The beginning phases of marriage and the beginning of a family, which can occur when the groom and the bride-to-be discover a partner who satisfies their requirements and shares their goals of living their lives together (Dalin et al., 2021). According to Rahmah and Kurniawati (2021), married life involves a variety of facets of life and necessitates responsibility. According to the findings of a study that was conducted by

Lakadjo et al. (2019), the importance of cultivating self-preparation for the eventualities of marriage and family life is a defining characteristic of early adulthood. In the realm of academic inquiry, one of the most interesting topics to investigate is the preference of individuals for getting married. Because of variations in social dynamics and the prevalent conventions in society, the modern perspective of young people with regard to marriage has undergone a period of transformation. It is becoming increasingly common for young individuals in today's culture to choose to postpone marriage or to opt out of getting married altogether.

Among several studies conducted by Ningrum et al. (2021), Keldal and Yıldırım (2022), Larson and Lamont (2005), the evaluation of marital preparation in young adults plays a crucial role in determining the likelihood of establishing successful relationships with possible marriage partners. It has been suggested by Hurt (2014) and Mawaddah et al. (2019) that the concept of marital readiness can commonly impact the decision to enter into a marriage. According to Hoesni and Zakaria (2021) marriage can contribute to the psychological well-being of individuals. The phenomenon of social transformation has had a significant impact on the attitudes associated with marriage and family formation in society (Kefalas et al., 2011; Roempke & Lichter, 2016). According to Keldal and Yıldırım (2022), incapability of being ready for marriage can be a significant factor that discourages young individuals from engaging in marriage relationships. In direct opposition to the religious and cultural principles that are preserved in Eastern societies and Islamic nations, the belief that was mentioned earlier is immediately opposed.

According to Nurainun (2022), the idea of readiness for marriage may be an important measure of the extent to which a prospective bride has adjusted to her new status as a single woman. Regarding the decision-making process that individuals go through regarding whether or not they are prepared to enter into matrimony, numerous previous studies Keldal dan Yıldırım (2022), Willoughby (2012), Rahmah and Kurniawati (2021), Thornton (2008) have discovered a plethora of factors that exert an effect. Because of its role in determining the selection of marital partners, the timing of marriage, the underlying motivations for going into marriage, and the subsequent behavioural patterns exhibited within the marital relationship, the study of marriage readiness is significant (Kashirskaya et al., 2015; J. H. Larson & Thyne, 1998; Voropai et al., 2021; Willoughby, 2012). According to Larson and Thyne (1998), the term "perceived marital readiness" refers to the subjective appraisal that an individual makes regarding their readiness to embrace the duties and hardships that are connected with marriage.

Among the various aspects of the challenge of building psychological marriage readiness among the younger generation, the most important factor is having an accurate awareness of the social functions that marriage and family play in contemporary society (Denysenko, 2020). The findings of several studies by Carroll et al. (2009), Denysenko (2020), and Voropai et al. (2021) show that more than half of young people are not ready to enter into a marriage relationship. According to the findings of Denysenko's (2020) research, 68 percent of young women in Ukraine are not ready to get married. When it comes to their readiness to get married, men and women in Russia have different levels of readiness (Voropai et al., 2021). The findings of Keldal and Yıldırım (2022) show that age factors, ideal age of marriage, and time of acquaintance before marriage have a significant impact on the readiness of young adults in Turkey to get married.

In a different study conducted by Willoughby (2012) on a total of 1010 adolescents, it was discovered that the age of the teenager does not have a significant role in marriage. However, when it comes to maturity, marriage becomes an important component. According to the findings of the study, views towards marriage are also related to factors such as gender, level of education, and tribe. A career is also cited as a significant factor in determining whether or not an individual is ready to get married in maturity. According to the findings of yet another study that was carried out in Ukraine on young adults, there has been a decline in the desire to get married and a rise in the trend of divorce. The findings of this study highlight the disparity between the hopes and wants of young adults towards marriage. Personality and character are more important to young adults than their spouse, and they desire to have good relationships. According to the findings of Mosko and Pistole (2010), instinctive religiosity has an effect on views as well as the readiness to marry.

According to Rahmah and Kurniawati (2021), marital preparation can also be an essential predictor of the quality of child development and the success of the family. This means that when the bride and groom join into a marriage, they are also required to prepare for new roles and responsibilities, including the responsibility

of caring for children. Intellectual readiness is a prerequisite for marital preparedness, and intellectual unavailability indicates that the respondent does not have an interest in reading books, news, or information about scientific topics. Recently, in response to the problem of a large number of divorces, a significant number of young individuals have chosen to cohabit rather than get married (Thornton, 2008). According to the findings of the study, factors such as family history, religious affiliation, values, education predictions, lifetime income, and professional aspirations all have a role in determining whether or not a couple would marry and live together.

According to research by Carroll et al. (2009), in earlier generations, marriage was seen as the pinnacle of maturity. But according to studies, most young people today don't view marriage and other significant life events—like graduating from college and starting a family—as necessary markers of maturity (Carroll et al., 2009). This is unexpected considering that attitudes and feelings regarding marriage, along with perceived marital readiness, have been found to be significant factors in determining whether or not to get married and to be significant predictors of later marital satisfaction (Arcus, 1987; Clarkberg, Stolzenberg, & Waite, 1995; Holman, Larson, & Harmer, 1994; Waller & McLanahan, 2005).

The study of attitudes, feelings, and marital readiness is essential because these factors serve as the foundation for decisions regarding whom to marry, when to marry, and later expectations and behaviours associated with marriage (Arcus, 1987; Fine & Hovestadt, 1984; Larson, 1988). Additionally, according to Holman, Larson, and Harmer (1994), perceived marital preparation is a strong predictor of later marital satisfaction during the marriage. Relationship expectations are founded on the attitudes and feelings that individuals have about marriage before being married. An individual's behaviour in a current or future connection with an intimate partner may be influenced by pessimism, which is described as an expectation regarding the nature of the relationship.

There are several literature reviews based on studies conducted by researchers in various cultural and social contexts that show fundamental differences in the factors influencing marriage readiness, ranging from psychological, emotional, social, to cultural aspects, namely the complexity of marriage readiness (Keldal & Yildirim, 2022; Satari et al., 2022; Rahmah & Kurniawati, 2021), psychological and emotional dimensions (Willoughby & Egbert, 2016; Mosko & Pistole 2010; Ningrum et al. 2021), social and cultural pressures (Hrytsiuk et al., 2022; Ismail & Diah, 2020), education, and intervention. (Lakadjo et al., 2019; Dewi et al., 2019).

Therefore, these studies indicate that marital readiness is not only dependent on the emotional and psychological aspects of the individual but is also influenced by social norms, culture, family pressure, and religious values. However, there are still gaps in understanding how these factors interact with each other, especially in different cultural contexts. The lack of educational programs and data-driven interventions poses a major challenge in improving marriage readiness among the younger generation.

This systematic review is guided by its main research objective: to summarize the factors associated with marriage readiness among young adults. This is crucial because it reveals what past researchers have focused on and where future research should focus. This study aims to further clarify previous research findings and provide a better understanding of factors related to marriage readiness.

Methodology

Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA), a method for conducting systematic literature reviews, was utilised by the researchers to extract relevant articles that were connected with young people's preparedness for marriage. This section focuses on those approaches. The three primary phases of the procedure are eligibility, screening, and identification.

The two primary databases utilized in the study were Scopus and Web of Science (WoS). With over 33,000 journals spanning over 256 fields, including developmental studies, environmental studies, psychology, and integrative social sciences, WoS is a large database. It was created by Clarivate Analytics and has extensive backfile and citation data spanning a century. Scopus, one of the biggest abstract and citation databases of peer-reviewed literature with over 22,000 journals from more than 5000 publishers worldwide, was the second database used in the review. It covers a wide range of topics, including development studies,

psychology, and the social sciences. The goal of the search was to find research on social media and FOMO that focused on college or young adult populations. The inclusion criteria were (1) primary research, (2) willingness to marry, (3) psychological marital readiness, (4) adolescent and young adult population aged 1 to 25 years, and (5) English language articles. Review papers, books, book chapters, conference proceedings, and publications lacking empirical data were all omitted based on the specified exclusion criteria. Publications in languages other than English were not included because of translation issues. This evaluation does not include publications that were published in 2011 or before, or more than ten years ago.

Table 1. Criterion of searching

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Language	English	Non-English
Timelines	Between 2010-2022	< 2010
Literature type	Journal (only research articles)	Review articles, books, chapters in a book, conference proceedings, and articles with no empirical data
Subject Area	Psychology, Social Science, Arts and Humanities	Besides Psychology, Social Science, Arts and Humanities
Population and sample	College student, Young adulthood or Adolescent	Other than college students, Young adulthood or Adolescent

1. Systematic Review Process

Three steps made up the review process: eligibility, screening, and identification. After identifying the keywords to be utilised in the search, a thorough search of synonyms and related phrases from dictionaries, thesaurus, and encyclopaedias was conducted.

Duplicate articles and articles that don't fit the researcher's defined inclusion criteria are filtered and removed during the filtering step. Based on these standards, a total of 239 articles were reviewed, and 160 of them were rejected. The whole text of the remaining articles, including the title, abstract, and main body, is reviewed at the feasibility stage. In this review, only papers that fulfil the inclusion criteria are used. Upon examination, 15 articles were found to have violated the inclusion requirements, and 45 of them were subsequently eliminated. At last, twenty-three papers had been corrected and prepared for analysis. The following provide the process flow utilised in this research as shown in Figure 1.

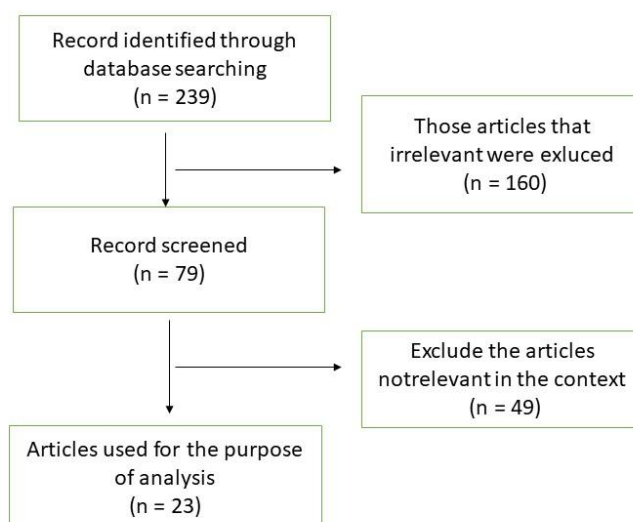


Figure 1. Process of Research

The Findings

Based on the literature review, the authors conclude that three important factors influence individuals' marital readiness. These include individual factors (Keldal, 2020; Willoughby, 2010; Willoughby, 2011; Aini & Afdal, 2020; Hrytsiuk et al., 2022; Larson et al., 2007), economic factors (Muraco & Curran, 2012; Ismail et al., 2015; Kashirskaya et al., 2015; Keldal & Yildirim, 2022, Larson & Thayne, 1998; Mosko & Pistole, 2010; Satari et al., 2022), social factors (Larson & Thayne, 1998; Larson et al., 2007; Rahmah & Kurniawati, 2021; Keldal & Yildirim, 2022; Willoughby & Egbert, 2016).

Based on the literature sources that the researcher successfully analyzed, a person's age is the most important aspect when considering whether or not they are ready to get married. A large number of early investigations have explained the influence of age, which is the basic finding that has been found. The findings of the study from the articles written by Keldal (2020), Willoughby (2010), and Willoughby (2011), say that the most important factors that determine whether or not a person is ready to get married are the optimal age and the level of maturity that has been achieved.

Furthermore, the literature sources by Aini and Afdal (2020), Hrytsiuk et al. (2022), and Larson et al. (2007) all found that a large number of people belonging to the younger generation place a great deal of importance on the relationship between personality traits, mental well-being, psychological state, emotional state, and other factors related to aspects of a person's personality. A person's emotional state, such as emotional intelligence, emotional control, and emotional maturity, has been recognized as a major driver of marital readiness, according to research sources that have been conducted in the past (Ghalili et al., 2012; Salsabila (2019) and Indraswari, 2022). Ningrum et al., (2021) conducted a study in which they found that the capacity for adaptation is an important determinant in the process of supporting marital readiness. According to Oktanina (2013), the importance of effective adaptation in moderating conflict in marital relationships is widely known, which highlights the paramount importance of this factor in determining whether or not an individual is ready for marriage.

In addition, we are discussing topics related to financial considerations. Good and organized financial management is important and is a matter that cannot be underestimated for couples who are married while studying (Ramli et al., 2020). Financial factors provide perspective on the challenges in making important decisions in life, including marriage (Bukhari et al., 2022). Muraco and Curran (2012) did research that reveals that economic circumstances can potentially contribute to postponements in the formation of marriage partnerships. As in the study of Ismail et al., (2015) that when husband and wife have income, it will provide greater economic stability and greater protection against financial problems. This research demonstrates that the financial aspect bears important relevance within the setting of a marital union. There is evidence to support this assertion. Financial conditions, debt, dependents, and employment are the aspects of the economy that are being taken into consideration when making this assessment. Kashirskaya et al. (2015), Keldal and Yildirim (2022), Larson and Thayne (1998), Mosko and Pistole (2010), and Satari et al. (2022) are among several studies that have demonstrated that young individuals choose to delay marriage or prefer cohabitation over marriage owing to the uncertainty of their financial situation. Keldal and Seker (2021) conducted research in the past to explore the preferences of the younger generation. Their findings suggested that the younger generation places a higher priority on having a stable job than getting married. There are a number of key factors that play a role in the younger generation's decision to enter the institution of marriage (Ismail & Diah, 2020; Larson et al., 2007; Lakadjo & Yustiana, 2022; Aini & Afdal, 2020). These factors include financial well-being, financial management skills, financial independence, and financial readiness. In addition, Ramli et al., (2020) added that the financial behavior practiced by married couples affects consumption, savings, sharing of internal resources, family relationships and well-being in the family.

Furthermore, the social factors discussed in this context encompass various interactions between individuals and their surrounding environment that can influence their inclination to marry. The influence of family on the readiness of youth to marry has been extensively studied in the literature (Larson & Thayne, 1998; Larson et al., 2007; Rahmah & Kurniawati, 2021). These studies consistently emphasize the important role played by the family in shaping the readiness of young people to marry. The influence of family background and family responsibilities on readiness for marriage has been identified in previous research

(Keldal & Yıldırım, 2022; Willoughby & Egbert, 2016). The ability to engage in social interactions and fulfill societal duties in daily life may also affect a person's readiness to enter into marriage. Literature sources suggest that an important aspect of marital readiness is an individual's ability to understand the scientific principles underlying parenting, engage in effective communication as parents, and fulfill their roles in the community (Carrol et al., 2009; Elfira, 2018; Dewi et al., 2019). In addition to other social determinants, social support has been identified as a significant determinant of the inclination to marry among contemporary young individuals. Based on studies, the presence of a favorable perception of marriage in one's environment can influence an individual's decision to express their readiness to marry (Bukhari et al., 2022; Ningrum et al., 2021).

Table 2. The research article findings based on the proposed search criterion

No	Author & Year	Journal	Title	Country
1	Keldal, G., Yıldırım, İ. 2022	Family Relations 71(1), pp. 307-324	Factors associated with marital readiness among Turkish young adults	Turkey
2	Satari, E., Akbari Kamrani, M., Farid, M. 2022	International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health 34(1),20190042	The necessity for redesigning premarital counselling classes based on marriage readiness from the perspective of youth and specialists: A need assessment based on the Bourich model and quadrant analysis	Iran
3	Keldal, G. 2022	Turkish Psychological Counselling and Guidance Journal 12(65), pp. 248-261	Associations Between Religiosity and Marital Beliefs among Emerging Adults	Turkey
5	Rahmah, N., Kurniawati, W. 2021	Journal of Public Health Research 10,2405	Relationship between marriage readiness and pregnancy planning among prospective brides	Indonesia
8	Willoughby, B.J., Egbert, J. 2016	Marriage and Family Review 52(8), pp. 722-741	Complexities in Assessing Marital Beliefs: Illustrations Across College and Non-College Emerging Adults	USA
11	Mosko, J.E., Pistole, M.C. 2010	The Family Journal 18(2), pp. 127-135	Attachment and Religiousness: Contributions to Young Adult Marital Attitudes and Readiness	USA
12	Willoughby, B.J. 2011	Journal of Adult Development 19(2)	Associations between Sexual Behaviour, Sexual Attitudes, and Marital Horizons During Emerging Adulthood	USA
13	Keldal, G., & Şeker, G. 2021	American Journal of Family Therapy,	Marriage or career? Young adults' priorities in their life plans.	TURKEY
14	Hrytsiuk, I., Mahdysiuk, L., Halyna, T., Oksana, K., & Mariia, Z. 2022	Youth Voice Journal,	Psychological readiness of young people for early marriage: Desires and reality	UKRAINA
15	Muraco, J.A., & Curran, M.,A 2012	Marriage & Family Review, 48(3) 227-247	Associations between marital meaning and reasons to delay marriage for young adults in romantic relationships	USA
16	Ningrum, D. N., Latifah, M., & Krisnatuti, D. 2021	HUMANITAS: Indonesian Psychological Journal	Marital readiness: Exploring the key factors among university students	Indonesia
17	Kashirskaya et al., 2015	Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 6(6), 452–463.	Psychological marital readiness as personal formation	Russia

18	Lakadjo, M. A., Yusuf, S., & Yustiana, Y. R. 2019	Reducing Violent and Promoting Peaceful Societies Through Guidance and Counseling,	Development of marriage readiness instruments.	Indonesia
19	Elfira, N. 2019	JOMSIGN: Journal of Multicultural Studies in Guidance and Counseling, 2(2), 126–133.	Students' marriage readiness based on cultural background.	Indonesia
20	Dewi, A.M., Widyastuti., & Jalal, N.,M. 2019	IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 23(1), 74-78	Relationship of marriage perception and married readiness in young woman in Makassar City	Indonesia
21	Hurt, T. R. 2014	Marriage and Family Review, 50(6), 447–479	Black men and the decision to marry.	USA
22	Ismail, Z., & Diah, N. 2020	Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH), 5(6)	Relationship between Financial Well-Being, Self-Esteem, and Readiness for Marriage among Final Year Students in Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).	Malaysia
23	ZohrehGhalili, Ahmadi, S.A., Maryam, & Fatehizadeh 2012	Interdisciplinary Journal Of Contemporary Research In Business	Marriage readiness criteria among young adults of Isfahan: A qualitative study	Iran

Discussion

Based on previous research, the majority of research samples are college students, teenagers, and young adults aged 18-30 years. The entire subject criteria are those who have not married for both men and women. A lot of research is done on college students (Keldal & Şeker, 2021) related to marriage readiness by measuring financial readiness, emotional readiness, interpersonal relationship readiness, family life & family role readiness, sexual readiness, and social responsibility readiness. Mosko and Pistole (2010) linked marital readiness with attachment and religiosity by linking financial, sexual, emotional, and intrinsic religiosity readiness, and their findings stated that intrinsic religiosity affects attitudes and marital readiness. Willoughby and Egbert (2016) measured marriage readiness among college and non-college students and found that the factors that influence marriage readiness are family capacities, role transitions, norm compliance, interpersonal competencies, intrapersonal competencies, and sexual readiness. Others (Satari et al., 2022) found that among young people, the lowest priority in determining marital readiness is the ability to own a vehicle, have enough income, and have financial independence. In his research, he found that individual, interpersonal, and contextual skills are not too important in determining the readiness of young people to marry. Keldal and Yıldırım, (2022) linked the perception of religiosity with marital belief in emerging adulthood using one of the marital readiness measurements. However, the research results explain more about marital salience and marital beliefs. Rahmah and Kurniawati, (2021) researched marital readiness in Indonesia, but it only measured "ready" and "unready." The results of their research found that marital readiness is related to readiness to have children, readiness to manage a family, and readiness to accept responsibilities as husband and wife.

The perspective is in line with the study's findings on the description of marital preparedness, which indicate that while a third of Indonesia's potential brides are still unready to tie the knot, most prospective brides are generally prepared for marriage. The state of being prepared or not to form a relationship with a partner, manage a family, care for children, and accept obligations as husband and wife is demonstrated by one's readiness to marriage (Hamdi et al., 2019). The results of this study support those of Septyandari's (2013) study, which found that a mature marital plan is necessary to create a pair capable of running a home.

It is not just a matter of romance in determining the readiness of marriage (Hoesni et al., 2012). A quality marriage is associated with various basic concepts such as happiness, well-being, satisfaction and

stability of the relationship between husband and wife (Zakaria et al., 2019). In addition, a mature partner is needed to manage the household in all aspects, including finances. The findings of this study are consistent with Oktanina (2013) study, which involved 96 working young adult women and showed a positive correlation between willingness to marry and work commitment—that is, the greater the tendency to marry, the greater the work commitment. Husbands and wives will feel calm and have a pleasant family when they work.

In addition, one of the factors that influence the willingness to marry is the individual's own factors. Children who witness the divorce or separation of their biological parents do not have a happy childhood. Majority of them are afraid and not confident to have a close relationship because they believe their parents don't care about it. They are also afraid of being abandoned and family life repeating itself (Adibah & Zanariah, 2020; Dombak & Çelik, 2022). When these emotions are carried too far, it makes it difficult for the person to uphold the commitment on which marriage is based and makes it impossible for them to maintain a romantic or intimate relationship.

The conclusion of the study shows that women are more likely than men to be ready to get married (Mawaddah et al., 2019; Dombak & Çelik, 2022). This is because, according to Arnett (2014), men struggle to do, and marriage is a big commitment in life. That view is different from the findings of Makhbul et al. (2024) who studied working women. The findings of the study show that the difficulties faced by working women in meeting a soul mate, the desire to fulfill family dreams, career commitments, low levels of confidence in marriage and the experience of breaking up are among the main factors that contribute to delaying marriage. Nevertheless, a survey revealed that the willingness of both sexes to marry is the same (Wulandari, 2020).

Based on the findings of previous studies that investigated marital readiness, it was discovered that the majority of researchers concentrated their attention on the elements that affect marital readiness. The conclusion that can be drawn from past studies is that the primary elements that determine whether or not a person is ready to get married are in terms of financial, emotional, sexual, family, personality and mental, interpersonal relationships, and knowledge. Several terms, including marital attitudes, perceptions about marriage, and appraisal of family conditions, have been utilised in the research that has been conducted in the past on the topic of marital preparedness. Other variables, such as marital values, marriage motivation, marital attitudes, and marital horizon, are utilised in research on marital preparedness. This is because the measurement of marital readiness is still not standardised in previous research. Measurements of people, families, experiences, and other external influences are also taken into consideration when researching marriage preparedness.

Conclusion

In conclusion, marriage readiness is an important aspect to further investigate marital understanding and family dynamics. Based on previous research, the authors conclude that three important factors influence individuals' marital readiness. These include individual factors, economic factors, and social factors. So, it is suggested that there is still a need for research on marital readiness that focuses on factors within the individual himself. In Indonesia, research on marriage readiness still focuses a lot on the study of counselling. This research also emphasizes aspects of companionship before marriage. Therefore, further research is expected to examine more deeply the psychological aspects that are more related to psychological marital readiness. Although there are an increasing number of studies on marriage readiness, more studies should be carried out in Asian culture, specifically Southeast Asia such as Malaysia and Indonesia.

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