Indonesian Journal of Community and Family Midwifery Nursing – IJCFN
E-ISSN: xxxx-xxx
https://ijcfn.lppmubs.com/index.php/ijcfn/index
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EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MARRIAGE IS SCARY PERCEPTIONS AND PREMARITAL MENTAL READINESS AMONG NURSING PROFESSION STUDENTS AT BINA SEHAT PPNI UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Marriage is scary describes fear or anxiety about married life that may affect mental readiness for marriage and, if unmanaged, increase the risk of household conflict and separation. This study analyzed the relationship between marriage is scary and mental readiness for marriage among nursing profession students at Bina Sehat PPNI University, Mojokerto, using a correlational, cross-sectional design. The population comprised 136 students, with 133 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a marriage is scary questionnaire and a pre-marital mental readiness questionnaire, then analyzed using the Chi-Square test ($\alpha<0.05$). Results showed most respondents perceived marriage is scary negatively (62.4%), while almost all had low mental readiness (76.7%). The Fisher Exact test results showed $p=0.001$ ($p<0.05$) with a Contingency Coefficient of 0.410, indicating a moderate relationship. The more negative the perception of marriage is scary, the lower the mental readiness; premarital education and self-understanding are recommended to improve readiness.

Keywords: Marriage is Scary, Mental Readiness for Marriage, College Students.

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is scary is a perception of fear related to various aspects of marriage (Tirta & Arifin, 2025). This perception includes the fear of marrying the wrong partner, infidelity, and unmet expectations regarding the attitudes of a partner's family (Kholifah et al., 2023). The phenomenon is not merely viral on social media but is reinforced by real cases such as domestic violence in Pacet, Mojokerto, which can trigger an increasingly negative perception of marriage (Kompas.com, 2025). This condition can affect an individual's mental readiness, particularly among Generation Z, who tend not to validate information from social media before forming judgments, leading them to directly perceive marriage as frightening (Setiani, 2023). The marriage is scary perception among Generation Z reflects doubts about commitment and responsibility in marriage, which conceptually impacts mental unreadiness prior to marriage (Kusnul & Nugroho, 2025).

Data from Turkey indicate that during 2020-2022, 50% of adults aged 18-30 years were not ready for marriage because they considered it a burden (Yildirim, 2022). Similarly, in China during 2022-2023, 77% of young adults felt unsuitable for marriage and 54% were indifferent toward it (Chang, 2024). Riskesdas (2021) reported that more than 10% of prospective brides and grooms experienced emotional mental disorders and depression, with approximately 1,800 suicide cases per year, 47% of victims aged 18-39 years, several of which were caused by domestic problems. Statistics Indonesia recorded 394,608 divorce cases in 2024, with the highest rates in East Java and Central Java (Statistik, 2025), supported

by data showing 2,916 divorced couples in Mojokerto during January-February 2025, most of which were filed by wives (Pengadilan Agama, 2025).

Previous research found that 64.7% of respondents reported being mentally unready for marriage (Setyawati et al., 2025), while only 21% of Generation Z respondents reported being fully ready for marriage (Nurmala, 2024), and the majority of respondents in another study also fell into the non-optimal marriage readiness category (Satriyanto & Oktaviani, 2025). A study in North Aceh found that 66.7% of respondents were not emotionally ready and 53.3% chose to postpone marriage (Susanto, 2023). Law Number 16 of 2019 sets the minimum marriage age to ensure the physical, mental, and social readiness of prospective couples; however, the rising divorce rate and growing fear of marriage among the younger generation indicate a gap between government policy and the psychological reality of students (Pemerintah Pusat, 2019).

A research gap exists regarding this phenomenon. Putri (2025) focused on marriage is scary as a construction of women's perception influenced by social media without including the variable of mental readiness, while Ode et al. (2025) explored Generation Z's engagement with the trend and the importance of premarital counseling without specifically linking it to students' mental readiness. These gaps indicate the importance of conducting this study to fill the research gap in Indonesia, particularly in Mojokerto.

A preliminary study conducted on April 22, 2026, through interviews with 7 female nursing profession students at Universitas Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto found that 6 of 7 students (86%) reported anxiety about marriage related to divorce, physical violence, household chores being solely a wife's responsibility, in-law interference, and economic problems. Regarding mental readiness, 4 of 7 students (57%) admitted they were not yet ready to take on the role of wife because they still struggled with managing emotions during disagreements and communicating openly with their partner.

This perception may be caused by a lack of emotional maturity, self-efficacy, and psychosocial skills (Ulfa et al., 2025). The perception of fear can affect long-term commitment (Herawati et al., 2025), while individuals who are not yet employed and worry about divorce and economic problems also tend to have lower mental readiness (Annisa et al., 2024). Mental unreadiness before marriage can lead to more serious psychological disturbances (Ayuanda et al., 2024) and may trigger depressive symptoms (Nabila Triana Putri, 2024). Efforts that can be made include seeking positive information on social media, improving self-understanding, and developing relational competence and self-efficacy (Achdiani et al., 2025), as well as participating in structured premarital education (Alwi & Prafitralia, 2025; Panzola et al., 2024), since emotional maturity is a key requirement for marriage (Aprinda et al., 2022). Based on the description above, this study aims to analyze the relationship between marriage is scary and mental readiness for marriage among nursing profession students at Universitas Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto.

METHOD

This study used a correlational analytic design with a cross-sectional approach to determine the relationship between marriage is scary and mental readiness for marriage among nursing profession students, with variables measured simultaneously within a single time period (Sugiyono, 2023). The population consisted of 136 regular-program nursing profession students at Universitas Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto in the 2025/2026 academic year. The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling method, based on inclusion criteria (active students able to complete the questionnaire independently) and exclusion criteria (students on leave status), resulting in a sample of 133 respondents.

The independent variable in this study was marriage is scary, with indicators consisting of economy and financial stability, education and career, perception of marriage and commitment, identity and personality, relationship change and adaptation, and social and environmental influence. The dependent variable was mental readiness for marriage, with indicators consisting of interpersonal communication, intrapersonal ability, role transition, family capacity, norm compliance, and sexual readiness. Both variables were measured using questionnaires developed from the study's operational definitions: a nominal scale for marriage is scary (categorized as positive or negative based on the mean/median score) and an ordinal scale for mental readiness for marriage (categorized as high, moderate, or low based on total score).

Data were analyzed using SPSS 21 for Windows. Univariate analysis was used to describe respondent characteristics and the frequency distribution of each research variable. Bivariate analysis was used to determine the relationship between marriage is scary and mental readiness for marriage using the Chi-Square statistical test, with interpretation based on the Fisher Exact test when the expected count assumption was not met (Sinaga, 2022). This study observed research ethics principles, including freedom from suffering and exploitation, informed consent, anonymity, and the principle of justice for all respondents (Singer & Druml, 2025).

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

RESEARCH RESULT

This study was conducted at Universitas Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto with respondents consisting of nursing profession students undergoing clinical practice.

General Data

General data present the demographic characteristics of 133 nursing profession student respondents, consisting of gender, age, residence status, relationship status, and relationship duration.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Respondent Characteristics by Gender, Age, Residence Status, Relationship Status, and Relationship Duration

No	Characteristics	f	%
	Gender		
1	Female	97	72.9
2	Male	36	27.1
	Total	133	100
	Age		
1	22 years	16	12.0
2	23 years	93	69.9
3	24 years	20	15.0
4	25 years	4	3.0
	Total	133	100
	Residence Status		
1	Boarding house	60	45.1
2	Not boarding house	73	54.9
	Total	133	100
	Relationship Status		
1	In a relationship	75	56.4
2	Single	58	43.6
	Total	133	100
	Relationship Duration		
1	Never been in a relationship	30	22.6
2	< 1 year	20	15.0
3	2 years	32	24.1
4	> 3 years	51	38.3
	Total	133	100

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 1 shows that most respondents were female, 97 respondents (72.9%). Most respondents were 23 years old, 93 respondents (69.9%). Most respondents did not live in a boarding house, 73 respondents (54.9%). Most respondents were in a relationship, 75 respondents (56.4%). Almost half of the respondents had been in a relationship for more than 3 years, 51 respondents (38.3%).

Specific Data

1. Marriage is Scary among Nursing Profession Students at Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Marriage is Scary among Nursing Profession Students at Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto University.

No	Marriage is Scary	f	%
1	Positive	50	37.6
2	Negative	83	62.4
	Total	133	100

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 2 shows that most nursing profession students had a marriage is scary perception in the negative category, namely 83 students (62.4%).

2. Mental Readiness for Marriage among Nursing Profession Students at Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Mental Readiness for Marriage among Nursing Profession Students at Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto University.

No	Mental Readiness for Marriage	f	%
1	High	7	5.3
2	Moderate	24	23.3
3	Low	102	76.7
	Total	133	100

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 3 shows that almost all nursing profession students had mental readiness for marriage in the low category, namely 102 students (76.7%).

3. Relationship between Marriage is Scary and Mental Readiness for Marriage among Nursing Profession Students at Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto.

Table 4. Cross-tabulation of the Relationship between Marriage is Scary and Mental Readiness for Marriage among Nursing Profession Students at Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto University.

Marriage is Scary	Mental Readiness for Marriage						Total		P value
	High		Moderate		Law				
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Positive	3	6	20	40	27	54	50	100	0,001
Negative	4	4,8	4	4,8	75	90,4	83	100	
Jumlah	7	10,8	24	44,8	102	144,4	133	100	

Source: Primary Data, 2026 (Fisher Exact p = 0.001; Contingency Coefficient = 0.410)

Table 4 shows that of the 50 respondents with a positive marriage is scary perception, 27 respondents (54%) still fell into the low mental readiness category. Conversely, of the 83 respondents with a negative perception, only 4 respondents (4.8%) had high or moderate mental readiness. The Chi-Square test showed 2 cells (33.3%) with an expected count of less than 5, so the interpretation was based on the Fisher Exact test. The Fisher Exact test showed a significance value of 0.001 ($p<0.05$) with a Contingency Coefficient of 0.410, meaning H0 was rejected and H1 was accepted; therefore, there

was a significant relationship with a moderate relationship strength between marriage is scary and mental readiness for marriage among nursing profession students at Universitas Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto.

DISCUSSION

1. Marriage is Scary among Nursing Profession Students

   The results showed that most nursing profession students had a negative marriage is scary perception, with the most dominant indicators being relationship change and adaptation, followed by identity and personality. This indicates that respondents' concerns about marriage were mostly influenced by their ability to adjust to relationship changes and to maintain their identity and personality after marriage. Generation Z tends to view marriage as full of challenges due to high expectations of married life, which can trigger disappointment when reality does not match expectations (Tirta & Arifin, 2025). This finding is in line with Rahmawati (2025), who found that marriage is scary among Gen Z tends to be negative and is associated with fear, as well as Arocho et al. (2022), who revealed that the adaptation process in romantic relationships influences how individuals view marriage. Excessively high expectations of marriage can lead to disappointment when reality falls short (Prisiaharyani, 2025). In addition, education level plays a role in shaping critical thinking skills when assessing information about marriage (Cifci et al., 2022), while individuals who prioritize education and career tend to postpone marriage until their personal goals are achieved (Coleman, 2025).

2. Mental Readiness for Marriage among Nursing Profession Students

   The results also showed that almost all nursing profession students had low mental readiness for marriage, with the dominant indicators being norm compliance and sexual readiness. This condition indicates limitations in psychological readiness to carry out the roles and responsibilities of married life, consistent with Nikmah et al. (2025), who revealed that low mental readiness for marriage is marked by a lack of understanding of married life, including readiness in communication, reproductive health, and emotional readiness. Individuals with low mental readiness tend to have difficulty adjusting to new environments and rules and taking responsibility for household roles (Kholifah et al., 2023).

3. Relationship between Marriage is Scary and Mental Readiness for Marriage among Nursing Profession Students

   The statistical test results showed a significant relationship between marriage is scary and mental readiness for marriage with a moderate relationship strength. This is in line with Ainiyah & Rosiana (2025), who found a significant positive relationship between emotional maturity and marriage readiness, as well as Ode et al. (2025), who found that 93.9% of respondents considered the marriage is scary trend a real representation of Generation Z's concerns about marriage. The higher the concern of nursing profession students about marriage, the lower their mental readiness for marriage, and vice versa. However, 27 respondents (54%) with a positive marriage is scary perception still fell into the low mental

readiness category, indicating that a positive perception of marriage is not necessarily followed by adequate mental readiness if it is not accompanied by emotional maturity and other psychological readiness (Najmudin et al., 2025). Conversely, 4 respondents (4.8%) with a negative perception had high and moderate mental readiness, indicating that marriage readiness is also influenced by other factors such as emotional maturity, conflict management ability, and commitment to a partner (Adira et al., 2024; Annisa et al., 2024).

Overall, marriage is scary is significantly related to mental readiness for marriage among nursing profession students, although with a moderate relationship strength, indicating that this perception is not the only factor influencing mental readiness for marriage. Mental readiness for marriage is also influenced by emotional maturity, life experience, family and environmental support, financial readiness, spiritual values, communication skills, and conflict management ability. The findings imply the importance of efforts to improve mental readiness through seeking positive information, improving self-understanding, and developing relational competence and self-efficacy in relationships. This study is limited by its use of an online questionnaire and the rotating clinical practice schedule of nursing profession students, which may have affected respondents' seriousness and availability in completing the questionnaire.

CONCLUSION

Marriage is scary among nursing profession students at Universitas Bina Sehat PPNI Mojokerto was mostly in the negative category, dominated by the indicators of relationship change and adaptation and identity and personality. Mental readiness for marriage was mostly in the low category, dominated by the indicators of norm compliance and sexual readiness. The Fisher Exact test showed a significance value of 0.001 ($p<0.05$) with a Contingency Coefficient of 0.410, indicating a significant relationship with a moderate relationship strength between marriage is scary and mental readiness for marriage, meaning that the more negative the marriage is scary perception of nursing profession students, the lower their mental readiness for marriage. Educational institutions and health services are suggested to develop premarital education and self-development activities, while future researchers are recommended to use more varied data collection methods and include additional variables such as fear of commitment, religiosity, social support, and financial readiness.

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