
The Childfree Phenomenon in Emile Durkheim's Sociology and Qur'anic Perspective: A Classical and Contemporary Interpretation

Latipah Salsabil Nikmah¹, Kharis Nugroho², Kyeyune Hamidu³

^{1,2}Qur'an and Tafsir Study Program, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia

³Department of Islamic Studies, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia, and
Department of Management, Kyambogo University, Kampala, Uganda

¹g100231058@student.ums.ac.id, ²kn812@ums.ac.id, ³ahkyeyune2018@gmail.com

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Abstract

Objective: This study aims to analyze the childfree phenomenon from the perspective of Emile Durkheim's sociology and the view of the Qur'an, to understand the dynamics of social and religious values in Indonesian society. **Theoretical framework:** The theoretical framework refers to Durkheim's concepts such as social facts, organic solidarity, anomie, and collective morality, as well as classical and contemporary interpretations of the Qur'an on the value of heredity in Islam. **Literature review:** The literature review includes Durkheim's theory of social transformation and the mufasir's interpretation of the importance of heredity in Islam, both from classical (At-Thabari, Al-Qurtubi) and modern (Al-Misbah, Al-Azhar) interpretations. **Method:** This study uses a descriptive qualitative method with a literature study approach. Data were collected from literary sources such as the works of Emile Durkheim and classical and contemporary interpretations of the Qur'an. The analysis was carried out interpretively to understand the social and religious meaning of the childfree phenomenon in the context of Indonesian society. **Results:** The phenomenon of childfree reflects a change in values in modern society according to Durkheim, while in Islam heredity is considered a mandate and part of worship, as affirmed in various interpretations. **Implications:** The childfree phenomenon needs to be understood as a reflection of social and spiritual change, which demands an integrative approach between individual freedom and collective values. **Novelty:** This research is unique in that it combines sociological and theological analysis in examining the issue of child freedom, offering a cross-disciplinary perspective that is relevant to the context of Indonesian society.

Keywords: childfree, emile durkheim, sociological interpretation, family, social values.

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of *childfree*, i.e. the decision not to have children voluntarily, has become a growing trend in various countries, including Indonesia. This choice is often driven by a variety of reasons, such as concerns about economic conditions, a desire to focus on a career, a fear of the great responsibility of parenting, and changes in social values that prioritize individual freedom [1]. In modern society, this phenomenon affects not only family

dynamics but also broader social structures, considering that the family is the basic unit of society [2].

In the Indonesian context, this phenomenon shows a significant impact on traditional family patterns that normatively place offspring as an important element in marriage. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2022, it is known that Indonesia's total fertility rate (TFR) only reached 2.14, close to the minimum population replacement limit of 2.1. This trend poses potential demographic risks, such as an aging population and a decline in labor productivity in the future, as well as which has been an experience for countries such as Japan and South Korea, who are now facing major challenges in the economic and social system due to the low birth rate [3].

On the other hand, the phenomenon of *childfree* gave rise to ethical and theological debates, especially among Muslim communities. In Islam, having offspring is considered one of the main purposes of marriage, as affirmed in Verses 49-50 of Surah Ash-Shura and verse 31 of Surah Al-Isra [4]. These verses show the importance of viewing children as God's gifts that carry great responsibilities [5]. However, the child-free trend raises profound questions. To what extent can this decision be understood within the framework of Islamic values? How does the interpretation of the Qur'an, which includes the approach of previous scholars and contemporary thinkers, provide a view of this phenomenon?

From a sociological point of view, Emile Durkheim emphasized the importance of social solidarity in maintaining the stability of society. The choice to have no offspring can be considered a form of changing social norms that have an impact on the social structure and function of the family. According to Durkheim, the family plays an important role in maintaining organic solidarity in modern society [6]. Choice *childfree* that challenges these traditional norms need to be analyzed to understand their impact on social stability, especially in the context of Indonesian society that still upholds family values.

The urgency of discussing this theme lies in several important aspects. First, the results of *childfree* have the potential to change the role and function of the family in society, which ultimately impacts the overall social order. Second, the low birth rate due to this decision can trigger demographic challenges, as has happened in many other developed countries [7]. Third, this phenomenon demands a review of religious views and traditional values to respond to the needs and challenges of modern society without losing the essence of spiritual values.

Thus, this study aims to answer an important question: how can the phenomenon of *childfree* be understood from the perspective of Emile Durkheim's sociology, and how does this view compare to the perspective of the Qur'an explained through classical and contemporary interpretations? This research is aimed at providing a significant role in understanding the *childfree* phenomenon, not just as a social phenomenon, but also as a problem that has complex philosophical, theological, and sociological dimensions.

Implications and Novelty. The findings of this study have significant implications for understanding the evolving perceptions of family, reproduction, and religious obligations in modern Indonesian society. The *childfree* phenomenon is not merely a personal lifestyle choice but reflects broader transformations in social norms, individual autonomy, and the role of religious authority. From Durkheim's sociological lens, it indicates a shift from mechanical to organic solidarity, where collective morality is challenged by individual preferences. In contrast, Islamic teachings view lineage (*nasab*) and procreation as part of spiritual responsibility and divine trust, emphasizing continuity of faith and family.

These differing perspectives suggest a growing tension between secular-modern values and traditional-religious norms. Therefore, an integrative approach is needed to mediate between the rights of the individual and the expectations of the religious community. Policy-makers, religious scholars, and educators must engage in contextual dialogue to address these changes without dismissing the spiritual and moral dimensions involved. The novelty of this

research lies in its interdisciplinary approach, combining classical sociological theory with Qur'anic exegesis—an area rarely explored in depth. By bringing together Emile Durkheim's theory of social transformation and Islamic theological insights, this study offers a new framework for analyzing moral and social change in Muslim-majority societies, particularly within the Indonesian context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The childfree phenomenon, referring to individuals who voluntarily choose not to have children, has emerged as a growing trend in contemporary society. This decision has sparked sociological and religious debates, particularly concerning its implications for social norms, family structure, and moral values. Emile Durkheim, a founding figure in sociology, emphasized the centrality of the family as a moral institution essential to the cohesion of society. In *The Division of Labor in Society and Suicide*, Durkheim argued that weakening familial bonds could lead to social instability and anomie, where individuals become detached from collective norms. From Durkheim's classical viewpoint, the child-free choice could be interpreted as a deviation from socially expected reproductive roles, potentially weakening collective consciousness.

Conversely, Islamic discourse on reproduction is deeply rooted in the Qur'anic worldview. Children are viewed as blessings and responsibilities, as reflected in verses such as Qur'an 42:49–50, which emphasize that God alone grants offspring according to His will. However, the Qur'an does not explicitly condemn childfree decisions made for legitimate reasons, such as health or psychological well-being, indicating the need for nuanced interpretation. Contemporary Islamic scholars debate the permissibility of being child-free, especially when the choice is based on individual autonomy rather than external constraints.

This research bridges classical sociological theory and Qur'anic ethics to explore the moral, social, and spiritual dimensions of the child-free lifestyle, offering both traditional and contemporary interpretations of its implications in Muslim-majority societies.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a library research method. The main source of this research comes from the works of Emile Durkheim in the field of sociology, as well as classical and contemporary books of tafsir that discuss Qur'anic verses about descent and family, including *Tafsir Al-Misbah* by M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Azhar* by Buya Hamka, *Tafsir At-Thabari*, and *Tafsir Al-Qurthubi* [8].

Data collection techniques are carried out by studying relevant documents, books, scientific articles, and verses of the Qur'an. The collected data is then analyzed using the content analysis method, which is by interpreting the meanings contained in the text and connecting them with the social context [9]. An interdisciplinary approach between sociology and interpretation of the Qur'an is used to understand the phenomenon of *childfree* comprehensively, both from the point of view of modern society and Islamic spiritual values.

This research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach supported by library research, focusing on textual and contextual analysis. It emphasizes an interdisciplinary methodology that combines sociological theory and Qur'anic interpretation to explore the childfree phenomenon. Data were gathered from scholarly sources, classical tafsir, and Durkheim's sociological works. The content analysis technique is employed to extract meanings from texts and relate them to modern social realities. This approach allows for a deep understanding grounded in both academic and religious frameworks [9].

Table 1. Research Method

Aspect	Description
Research Approach	Descriptive qualitative
Method	Library research
Primary Sources	Emile Durkheim's works in sociology Classical and contemporary tafsir books: <i>Tafsir Al-Misbah</i> by M. Quraish Shihab <i>Tafsir Al-Azhar</i> by Buya Hamka <i>Tafsir At-Thabari</i> <i>Tafsir Al-Qurthubi</i>
Data Collection	Document analysis of books, scholarly articles, and Qur'anic verses relevant to descent and family
Data Analysis	Content analysis: interpreting textual meanings and connecting them with the social context
Analytical Approach	Interdisciplinary: combining sociology and Qur'anic tafsir
Focus of Analysis	Understanding the childfree phenomenon from sociological and Islamic spiritual perspectives

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Childfree in Durkheim's Sociological Perspective

A Brief Biography and History of Durkheim's Thought. Émile Durkheim was born on April 15, 1858, in the town of Épinal, Lorraine, located near Strasbourg in northeastern France [10]. At the age of 21, he began his education at the Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris, in 1879, a prestigious institution where he was known as an intelligent, diligent, and critical student. There, his thinking developed, influenced by two important figures, namely *Coulanges Hull* and *Emile Boutroux* [11]. After completing his education at the Ecole Normale Supérieure, Durkheim taught philosophy in high school *Lycée Louis-le-Grand* in Paris from 1882 to 1887 [12]. He also studied psychology in Germany under the tutelage of Wilhelm Wundt. In 1887, he was appointed lecturer in Social Sciences at the Faculty of Education and Social Sciences, University of Bordeaux [13].

Durkheim was the first French sociologist to follow the formal academic path of sociology. He is known as a scientist in the social and educational fields, especially in his research work in the social field [14]. During his fifteen years of living in Bordeaux, he produced three monumental works, including his dissertation entitled "The Division of Labor in Society" or "*The Division of Labour in Society*"(1893)) written in French, and a Latin dissertation on *Montesquieu* [15]. In 1902, he was appointed lecturer in Sociology and Education at the Sorbonne University, Paris. His interest in the role of religion in social life is reflected in his major work *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912), which was later translated by Joseph.

Ward Swain became *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1915). In the book, Durkheim tried to identify the basic elements that make up religion [16].

Through his writings, Durkheim expressed his main opinion on the significance of religious theory and its impact on later intellectuals. His teachers, Fustel de Coulanges, Auguste Comte, Saint Simon, and Ernest Renan were some of the people who shaped his thought process [17]. His thinking was also influenced by the significant transformations and social upheavals that took place in France in the late 19th century [18]. He developed

Comte's idea of the "reorganization of society", but with a more scientific approach, because, according to Durkheim, Comte's thought was too speculative and pragmatic [19]. He corrected it without abandoning Comte's vision of society.

Durkheim believed that the social sciences had a crucial role to play in restoring the social order that had been fragmented by the revolution of the 18th century and the devastating effects of industrialization. He seeks to show that a possible social agreement can only re-establish the values of community and order without having to sacrifice the individual freedoms that emerged after the collapse of the feudal system [6]. His thinking was strongly influenced by Comte's positivist approach, in which society was seen as an organic entity with its laws.

In his scientific method, Durkheim put forward a deterministic view, which assumes that individuals are subject to social forces that force them to conform to norms [20]. He combines the objectivity of scientific approaches and causal determinism with the belief that social science can provide solutions to problems of ethics, character, and norms that are usually the domain of philosophy [21]. This positivistic view underpins Durkheim's idea of "social facts", namely that social reality is more fundamental than individual actions [22]. Durkheim maintained the perspective that social facts are far more fundamental than individual facts.

Childfree in Durkheim's Sociological Perspective

The phenomenon of childfree, which is the couple's decision not to have offspring, is increasingly developing into a widely adopted option in modern society. This change challenges traditional norms that consider having children to be an essential part of marriage and family life [23],[24],[25]. From a sociological perspective, Emile Durkheim's theory can be used to understand this phenomenon, specifically through the concepts of social facts, social solidarity, anomie, and collective morality. The following are the social theories that Durkheim proposed:

Social Fact Theory and Value Changes About Childfree

According to Durkheim, social facts are externally imposed methods of thinking, feeling, and acting that can connect people. Social facts can be norms, values, or institutions that shape patterns of behaviour in society. In traditional contexts, social norms emphasize the importance of having children as part of family and community obligations [13]. However, in modern society, these values are changing, and the choice to be *child-free* become more acceptable. The emergence of the movement *child-free* can be attributed to changing social facts due to economic, educational, and individualization factors [26],[27]. Higher levels of education, especially for women, increase awareness of freedom of choice, including in terms of having children or not [28],[29]. In addition, economic pressures in modern life have led some couples to consider not having children for the sake of financial stability [30],[31]. These changes show that social facts are not static, but continue to evolve according to societal conditions.

Social Solidarity and the Shift in Family Roles

Durkheim distinguishes social solidarity into two types, namely mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity. Mechanical solidarity arises in traditional societies, where individuals have the same roles and functions. Strict social rules. In this context, having children is considered part of a moral and social obligation [32],[33]. In contrast, in societies with organic solidarity, individual roles are increasingly specialized, and social norms are more flexible [18],[34]. In this system, individuals have more freedom to determine the direction of their lives, including in the decision not to have children. The phenomenon of *childfree* reflects the transition from mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity, in which the family is

no longer considered an institution that must follow a uniform pattern [35],[36]. Modern society emphasizes the diversity of life choices, so the decision not to have children is no longer considered as deviant as in traditional societies.

Anomie and the Childfree Phenomenon

Anomie is a concept introduced by Durkheim to describe a situation in which social norms undergo drastic changes so that individuals feel disoriented [37]. In this context, *childfree*, some individuals or couples may experience social pressure when choosing not to have children, especially if their surroundings still hold strong traditional norms about family [1]. On the other hand, for individuals who grow up in a society that has accepted *childfree*, the old norm of the obligation to have children may be considered irrelevant anymore [38],[39]. This change in norms can create social tensions between the generation that still holds traditional values and the more modern generation [40],[41]. In some cases, individuals who choose *childfree* may experience anomie because they feel that they do not conform to the prevailing social expectations.

Collective Morality and the Transformation of Social Values

Durkheim emphasized that collective morality is the values and beliefs that govern society. In traditional societies, collective morality places the family with children as the main social unit [18]. However, in modern society, there is a shift in values where individual happiness takes precedence over social obligations [42],[43]. The choice to have no offspring can be seen as part of a transformation of collective morality that emphasizes more on the individual's right to determine his or her own life [44],[45]. With the increasing acceptance of a diversity of life choices, social norms about the family are beginning to shift from having children to more flexible choices.

Through the perspective of Emile Durkheim, the phenomenon of *childfree* can be interpreted as a component of broader social change. The changing social reality, the shift from mechanical to organic solidarity, and the anomie conditions resulting from changing norms suggest that the decision not to have children is not just an individual choice, but also the result of evolving social dynamics [46],[47]. A collective morality that increasingly recognizes the diversity of life choices reflects how modern society is increasingly accepting *childfree* as part of the variation in social structure [48],[49]. Thus, Durkheim's analysis provides a deep understanding of how social change shapes individual choices in modern life.

The Qur'an's View of Descent

Offspring as a Gift of Allah

If Allah so desires, He bestows offspring on His servants, while others are not bestowed offspring as part of His destiny.

لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۗ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۗ يَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَآءُ اِنَاثًا وَيَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَآءُ الذُّكُوْرًا ۗ يُرِوْجُهُمْ
ذُكْرًا ۗ وَاِنَاثًا ۗ يُجْعَلُ مَنْ يَشَآءُ عَقِيْمًا ۗ اِنَّهٗ عَلِيْمٌ قَدِيْرٌ

"The kingdoms of the earth and in the heavens belong to God. He made whatever He willed. He bestows upon whomever He wills men and women, renders infertile to whomever He wills, and gives daughters and sons to whomever He wills. Indeed, He is All-Powerful and All-Knowing." (QS. As-Shura verses 49–50) [50].

Buya Hamka in the commentary of *Al Azhar* said "Allah not only rules the earth and all the heavens, but He also arranges birth, which is the way Adam's descendants grow and live in this world. He is the one who determines whether a daughter, a boy, or even twins will be born, or whether the child will be barren. Humans cannot resist. Choose or accept what is offered, whether it is a girl, a boy, or a twin, like it or not. God determines what happens. According to him, some people are "bored" because more children are born than they are spent. However, the number of children is also increasing. Some humans are born with daughters, but they prefer boys. Except for the Jahiliyah Arabs, some people wanted daughters, but suddenly a boy was born. Some people have been married for years, want children, and have tried all sorts of treatments, but they still can't get pregnant. Because God has decided all of them.

Modern humans have "Family Planning" as a result of economic progress. This has developed into a significant problem, particularly in countries with rapidly growing populations, such as India, and inadequate food supplies. Islam does not prohibit humans from attempting any attempt to balance population growth with food supply, as long as it does not violate natural laws that would be destructive to humans themselves. For example, some medications can prevent pregnancy if the husband and wife take them before having sex. However, those who commit adultery also use these drugs!

For their children not to grow up, some women also perform surgeries or remove their baby's organs. After a few years, the wife suddenly felt a strong desire to have another child. I wanted to hug her and listen to her cries. But because his blood had been corrupted, his demand could no longer be fulfilled. Therefore, the issue of birth control and family planning remains an important concern for religious, moral, economic, and health professionals around the world. "Is it true that God destined the world as a place where human life does not provide enough food for humans?" is still a question. The religious leaders firmly replied: "No! That's not true! The God who rules the earth and the entire heavens has given people enough food and clothing when they are born. If that is not enough, it is humans who do not know the secret. Therefore, humans must continue to search for the existence of that supply. As long as man continues to try, God will show it, for the progress made in development over the centuries is also the result of God's direction. However, one thing must be avoided: using violence to stop humans from developing freely. Therefore, the last words of this verse—"Verily, He is All-Knowing, All-Powerful" are the focus of the attention of the believers." [51].

Meanwhile, in the book *Jami' al-Bayan fi Ta'wil al-Qur'an* commonly called Tafsir At Thabari, the mufassir writes "What is meant is, to Allah belongs the kingdom of the seven heavens and the earth. He did whatever He wanted in His kingdom, created what He willed to be created, and gave daughters to whomever He willed, that is, by decreeing that all that His wives conceived were female fetuses.

His Word, "And give sons to whomever He wills" means that God gives to whomever He wills a son, that is, by stipulating that each of His wives conceived is a male fetus, not a female, between the two. *Gan both sexes male lak de Fang female,*" that is, or make it male and female, i.e. by stipulating that the wife's womb is once male and once female. That's what a pair is called. He said, "And He made it barren. whomever He wills," that is, Allah makes any of them unproductive and childless." [52].

The Commandment to Protect Posterity and Family

Islam emphasizes the importance of having and maintaining righteous offspring.

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا

"And those who say, 'O our Lord, grant us our spouses and our descendants as comforters of (our) hearts, and make us leaders of the righteous.'" (QS. Al-Furqan (74) [50].

This verse shows that having good offspring is a gift and prayer taught in Islam. This can be used to criticize *child freedom* from the perspective of Islamic values, which consider the family and children as part of worship and happiness.

According to Imam Al-Qurtubi "*Kitab Adh-Dhahhak Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an*," "That is, they obey You." As mentioned earlier, in this situation it is permissible to pray for the welfare of the offspring. The singular and plural forms of the word ذُرِّيَّةٍ (dzurriyah) are both possible. Regarding its application to one (singular) person, the verse رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً رَاطِبَةً reads like this: "O my Lord, grant me from Your side a righteous son." As for its use in the plural, as Allah SWT ضِعْفًا ذُرِّيَّةً said "Weak children." And the origin of it has been explained in the commentary of Surah Al-Baqarah. Nafi', Ibn Kathir, Ibn Amir, and Al-Hasan read it ذُرِّيَّتِنَا. While Abu 'Amr, Hamzah, Al-Kisa'i, Talhah, and 'Isa recite it ذُرِّيَّتِنَا in the singular form. فُرَّةٌ أَعْيُنٍ "For our hearts, as a cooler,"

This is as the Prophet PBUH said to Anas: اللَّهُمَّ أَكْثِرْ مَالَهُ وَوَلَدَهُ، وَبَارِكْ لَهُ فِيهِمَا "O Allah, add to him wealth and children, and bless him." This has been explained earlier in the Surah of Ali 'Imran and Surah Maryam. This is because when a person is endowed with wealth and children, his heart feels at peace with his children and family, until when he has a wife, then the tranquillity is one with him, such as his beauty, his authority, and his sense of belonging, or he has children (descendants) who always maintain obedience to Allah and always ask for His help to carry out religious and worldly obligations. His wife did not look at other people's wives and neither did other people's children. His heart became calm because he no longer looked around and his eyes no longer glanced around. It can be done when he has felt at peace with his children and wife. فُرَّةٌ أَعْيُنٍ The singular word is فُرَّةٌ Because it is a mashdar. You say, "فُرَّتْ عَيْنُكَ فُرَّةٌ" (your heart is calm). فُرَّةٌ العَيْن Possible origin of the word القرار (calm), and can also be derived from the word القرّ which is الأشهر (several months), and القرّ also means البرد (cold), because Arabs are bothered by the hot weather and calm by the cold. In addition, the tears of happiness felt cold and the tears of sadness felt warm. From here it is said, أَقْرَ اللَّهُ عَيْنَكَ (May Allah comfort your heart), and أَسْحَنَ اللَّهُ عَيْنَ الْعَدُوِّ (May Allah heat [disturb] the hearts of the enemy)" [53].

In the commentary of Al Azhar, it is stated, "Ibadur Rahman always begged his Lord to make his wives and children as children of the eye games, a panacea that relieves fever, eliminates all wounds in the soul, and an antidote to all heartbreak in life. No matter how pious and religious a father's life is, he will not be willing to close his eyes if his son's life is not by the institutions that he has set. The same is the case with a husband. No matter how inclined a husband's heart is to build virtue, if there is no response from the wife, then the husband's heart will also be hurt. The balance of leadership in the household is the unity of direction and purpose. The life of a Muslim is a life of congregation, not a life of passion.

In the hadith of the Prophet s.a.w. it is stated: "This world is the jewel of life, and the best jewel of the world is a pious wife." Millions of billions of dollars, houses, magnificent buildings, cars with the latest models, everything you want can be because of wealth, all of that is meaningless if the wife is unfaithful. If in the household, the husband wants to go downstream and the wife wants to go upstream. Eventually, such a household will dissolve, or become a living hell until one of them dies."

Not to mention children. All of us who have children and descendants feel for ourselves that the essence of wealth is the filial sons, the sons who succeed in their lives. The filial son is the medicine of the heart when the energy is weak. What are the results? He is knowledgeable and he is faithful, he is religious and When he grows up, he will be able to stand alone in his home and face life's challenges. This young person will continue the family tradition. And this is a never-ending happiness. When death comes, the father will close his eyes in peace.

He repeated his plea to Allah to appoint him as an Imam for the devout at the end of the prayer. The father or husband, who is in charge of leading his wife and children on that path, prays that he will become an Imam, walks before him, and guides them to the Way of Allah, after praying to Allah that his wife and children will become the children of his heart, playing with his eyes because of his obedience to Allah. The prayer of a believer must be sincere. He should be a disciple and a priest at home. How strange is it for a father or husband to inspire his wife and children to become devout Christians if he is unable to do the same?

That is the—"Ibadur Rahman"—those who have prepared their souls and bodies to be servants of Allah and are proud of that servitude. His face was always calm and his attitude was gentle. Easy to socialize, and not tired of serving stupid people. Wake up to worship in the middle of the night, bringing his soul closer to God. Stay away from evil because they are converted to the punishment of the fire of hell.

In the middle of the night, he woke up to pray, perform tahajjud, and ask for forgiveness from God, hearing the call to Fajr he immediately prayed Fajr, if he could, he should go to church. He did not elevate himself because perhaps his "class" in worldly society was highly respected. He spreads a smile and a polite attitude to fellow humans. After praying, he walked on the earth of Allah to seek the sustenance that God had provided because he was striving. And when the sustenance is obtained, it is well used. No, he is royal and careless, nor is he wicked and miserly. And it is not them, because they are so diligent in praying at night, that they are no longer strong enough to strive during the day.

He is so firm in monotheism that there is no place for fear and trust, except for Allah, he does not worship any other God, because there is no other God. Only Allah. He does not kill or even has evil intentions towards his fellow human beings, his genitals are pure from adultery, and he does not bear false witness, does not like to interfere with nonsense and he is diligent in listening to the truth. He did not think only of himself and his own body, but also of his wife and children, he gave an example as a good Muslim" [51].

The Role of Descent in the Sustainability of the Muslim Generation

Children have a role in maintaining the teachings of Islam and passing on the values of goodness.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

"O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from the fire of Hell..." (QS. At-Tahrim verse 6) [50].

This verse highlights how important it is for parents to continue to teach Islamic values to their children. This perspective is in contrast to *childfree*, which in some cases rejects the role of parents in the family.

M. Quraish Syihab said in his commentary, Tafsir Al Misbah "The above verse advises the believers about the events that occurred in the Prophet's household as explained in detail in the previous verses: O you who believe, take care of yourselves, among others by imitating the Prophet, and also take care of your family, namely your wives, your children, and all those who are in your dependents, By instructing and educating them, so that all of you may be spared from the fire of Hell whose fuel is the disbelievers and stones made into idols, among other things. Above them, those who take care of Hell and are in charge of torturing its inhabitants are the angels who are hard-hearted and in their treatment, who are harsh in carrying out the task of torment, who do not disobey Allah in what He commands them so that the punishment they give - even if harsh - is not less and no more than what Allah

commands, that is, according to the sins and mistakes of each of the inhabitants of Hell and they are always and always at any time to carry out easily what Allah commands them.

The angel's constant cry during the time of torment is: O disbelievers who refuse to obey Allah and His Messenger, do not seek justification, which is an excuse to alleviate your suffering and guilt in this life. For now is not the time to beg for forgiveness or to make excuses; Instead, it's time to enforce the consequences. You are now only rewarded for what you have done during your life on Earth.

The sixth verse above illustrates that da'wah and education must start at home. The above verse, although addressed to men (fathers), does not mean that it is addressed only to them. This verse is addressed to women and men (mother and father), just as similar verses (e.g. verses that command fasting) are also addressed to men and women. This means that both parents are responsible for their children as well as their respective partners, just as each is responsible for their behavior. A father or mother alone is not enough to create a household that is full of religious values and is shaded by harmonious relationships.

That humans become the fuel of hell is understood by Thabathaba'i in the sense that humans burn by themselves. According to him, this is the same as the OS. Al-Mu'min [40]: 72. Angels who are depicted with madness/rudeness are not in the crude sense of their flesh as in some interpretation books, because angels are subtle creatures created from light. On this basis, the word must be understood in the literal sense of their treatment or speech. They have been created by Allah specifically to handle hell. Their "hearts" are not compassionate or touched by cries, cries or pleas for mercy, they were created by Allah with a sadistic nature, and because of that they are (stas) syidad/hard-hard, namely creatures who are hard-hearted and hard in their treatment" [54].

In Tafsir Al Qurtubi it is said, "Al-Qushayri said that when this verse came down, it was the word of Allah: "O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from the fire of Hell..." (QS. At-Tahrīm: 6), Sayyidunā 'Umar said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ "O Messenger of Allah, we can protect ourselves, but how can we protect our families?" So the Prophet ﷺ He said: "Forbid them from what Allah has forbidden you, and command them what Allah has commanded you." Muqātil (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "The meaning of protecting oneself and one's family from the fire of Hell is one's duty to oneself, one's children, his family, and his male and female slaves, to educate them and guide them to goodness." Therefore, a person is obliged to teach religious knowledge, good morals, and noble morals to his family." [55].

Descent as a Test and Trust

Children are not only a gift, but also a test for parents.

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ

"And know that your wealth and your children are only a test, and indeed with Allah is a great reward" (QS. Al-Anfal: 28)

The childfree phenomenon often arises from the desire to avoid the responsibility or burden of having children. Islam teaches that heredity is a test that must be undergone honestly and patiently. As Buya Hamka said in Tafsir Al Azhar, "This verse explains that children and property are slanderous which means trial. As responsible parents, we feel very happy to have offspring. Day and night we try to make a living for our children, including our wives. That means our household is a dependent. For this, we also need to have property.

Love for children is an intrinsic human instinct, even the instinct of all living beings. This is because children are a continuation of life and a continuation of generations. Happiness in old age, willingness to face death, when children grow up and achieve their goals. Therefore,

it is not surprising that we see that half of humanity, when they have children, no longer have children, and continue to devote all their life activities to thinking about children. Finding material possessions to support and provide for children. People think about the future of their children. Day and night thinking about children. And children!

In this verse, it is stated, as in other verses, that children are more important than possessions. Because, no matter how rich you are, if you don't have children, life still feels empty. But when we have children, we are actively looking for treasures. And if you already have children and property, then there will be pride in life and joy. This is where titnah begins to come, which is the trial. People can forget the person who gives the favor because they are amazed by the favor. There is a hadith narrated by Abu Ya'la from Abu Sa'id Al Khudri:

"Children are babies, and indeed they are the cause of cowardice, the cause of greed, and the cause of sorrow." "The heart is the author of the heart," is the saying of our nation about children. Because people's children can be cowards, afraid of fighting, afraid of dying, afraid to appear to do great work. Because the child tied his legs. Children give birth to greed, do not want to sacrifice, do not want to give alms, do not want to help others. However, children often bring sadness. After the big boy, there will be children who will make the hearts of fathers and mothers sad, eating hearts embroidered with hearts. And having two and three children, his temperament and fate were different. It's nice to see what works, but sad to see what fails. Because of children and property, people can face titnah or great trials.

People can only devote their entire lives to children and property. This is a danger. In addition to our obligations to our children and accumulating wealth, we must also not forget our obligations to Allah. Every parent sacrifices his life for the sake of his children, even though they will grow up and have a family. They will also give birth, just as we gave birth to them. One day a boy will be born and a daughter will follow her husband. If we live a long life, we will live in solitude, and then die. What provisions do we bring to face God? So when we raise children and accumulate wealth, remember that God is the one who will repay our kindness. Children and wealth will not be able to help us. Indeed, the great reward is only with Allah.

So, take good care of your children and property to seek rewards from Allah. Give children a good education, so that they will become pious people in the hereafter. Spend your wealth for good, so that it will be a provision in the hereafter. If this is not the case, then children and wealth will bring their harm, because they have been separated from Allah. We will abandon our children and possessions, or they will abandon us. However, we will return to Allah." [56].

*Thabari in The Book of Jami' al-Bayan fi Ta'wil al-Qur'an, writes, "Jonah narrated to me, he said: Ibn Wahab reported to us, he said: Ibn Zaid said, about the verse, **وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا آمَوَالُكُمْ** **وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ** "And know that your wealth and your children are only a trial," he said, "which means a slander of trials. God tests man with it." Then he read the verse, **وَنَبْلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً** "We will test you with evil and good as a trial. And it is to Our Allah alone that you will be returned." (Qs. Al Anbiyaa' verse 35) [52].*

The Qur'an's View on the Role of Wives and Mothers

Women have a noble role in building families and educating offspring.

Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala said:

وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلِينَ كَامِلِينَ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُنَّمَّ الرِّضَاعَةَ ۗ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ لَا تُكَلِّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۗ لَا تَضَارَّ وَالِدَةٌ بِوَالِدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَالِدِهِ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ

ذَلِكَ ۚ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا إِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا
جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

"Mothers should breastfeed their children for two whole years, for those who want to improve their breastfeeding. And the father must feed and clothe him well. No one is burdened except according to his ability. Let not a mother suffer for her child, nor let a father suffer for his child. The same is true for heirs. If both of them want to wean (before two years) based on agreement and deliberation between them, then there is no sin against them. If you want to breastfeed your child (to someone else), then there is no sin for you if you pay in a good way. Fear Allah and know that Allah is All-Seeing of what you do." And mothers should breastfeed their children for two whole years, that is, for those who want to perfect their breastfeeding" (QS. Al-Baqarah: 233).

This verse can be used to highlight how Islam views the importance of the role of mothers in the family, including in raising and educating children. As stated in the book of Tafsir Al Misbah, "The word *al walidat* in the use of the *Qur'an* is different from the word *ummahat* which is the plural form of the word *umm*. The word *ummahat* is used to refer to the biological mother, while the word *al-walidit* means mother, both biological mother and not. This means that the *Qur'an* has outlined from the beginning that breast milk, whether natural or not, is the best food for babies up to the age of two. However, of course, breast milk is better than others. By breastfeeding from the biological mother, the child feels calmer, because according to scientific research, at that time the baby hears the sound of the mother's heartbeat that he has known specifically since the womb. The heart rate differs from one woman to another. From birth to the full age of two years, mothers are instructed to breastfeed their children. Two years is the maximum limit of breastfeeding perfection. On the other hand, the figure also suggests that breastfeeding after that age is not legal breastfeeding which results in breastfeeding children having the same position in some ways as the biological child who breastfeeds it.

Breastfeeding for two years, although ordered, is not an obligation. This is understood from the verse that states, for those who want to improve breastfeeding. However, this is a very emphatic recommendation, as if it were a mandatory command. If both parents agree to shorten the period, then it doesn't matter. However, it should not be more than two years, because two years have been judged perfect by Allah. On the other hand, the determination of the two years is intended as a benchmark if there is a difference of opinion, for example, the mother or father wants to extend the period of breastfeeding. The period of breastfeeding does not always have to be 24 months, because in QS. *al-Ahqaf* [46]:15 It is stated that the period of pregnancy and breastfeeding is thirty months. This means that if the fetus is conceived for nine months, then the lactation period is twenty-one months, while if the fetus is conceived for only six months, then the lactation period is 24 months.

Of course, breastfeeding mothers need money so that their health is not compromised, and their breast milk is always available. On that basis, the verse further states that the person must whom he was born, i.e. the father, to feed and clothe the mother if the mother of the breastfed child has been divorced by *bai'n*, not *raj'iy*. Meanwhile, if the mother of the child is still in the status of a wife even though she has been rejected by *raj'iy*, then the obligation to provide maintenance and clothing is an obligation based on the relationship between husband and wife, so if they demand compensation for breastfeeding their child, then the husband is obliged to fulfill it as long as the compensation claim is considered reasonable." [57].

Analysis of Sociological and Islamic Integration on the Childfree Phenomenon

The child-free phenomenon is a contemporary social reality that challenges traditional norms regarding marriage and family. The decision not to have children cannot be separated

from the influence of modern values such as individualism, rationalization, and personal freedom. To comprehensively understand this phenomenon, it is necessary to integrate the sociological perspective of Emile Durkheim and Islamic views based on classical and contemporary interpretations. The following is the analysis:

Social Facts vs. Divine Will

Durkheim explained that social facts refer to mindsets and behaviors that are external to individuals, but coercive. In traditional societies, having children is a strong social fact, supported by religious and cultural norms. But in modern society, this social fact is beginning to change due to the development of the values of freedom and rationality [58]. Meanwhile, the Qur'an (QS. Ash-Shura: 49–50) through classical commentaries such as *At-Tabari* and *Al-Azhar*, affirms that offspring are God's will and are a gift, not merely the result of human choice [59],[60]. This interpretation shows that Islam values offspring as part of the divine order, but still gives room for the fact that not everyone is blessed with children [61].

Integration, the change in values that occurred in modern society caused the social facts regarding the importance of having offspring to undergo a shift [62]. However, from an Islamic point of view, the decision not to have children cannot be solely justified by changing social facts, because in Islam, children are not only cultural values but also part of the divine decree and form of sustenance given by Allah [63],[64]. Thus, although individuals have the right to choose in modern society, such choices should be aligned with the principle of faith and the realization that life is not only influenced by rational worldly considerations but also by God's will and decree [65],[66]. In this case, the integration of Durkheim's and Islamic perspectives opens up space to understand that modern social facts need to be framed spiritually so that they are not separated from the awareness of the role of human beings as servants and leaders on earth [67].

Social Solidarity and Family Function

Durkheim distinguished between mechanical solidarity (homogeneous society) and organic solidarity (complex and individualistic society). The phenomenon of *childfree* is a manifestation of organic solidarity, in which the role of the family becomes more flexible, and marriage is not always aimed at regeneration [68],[69]. On the other hand, Islam still views the family and descendants as an important unit to maintain religious values, as reflected in QS. At-Tahrim: 6 and QS. Al-Furqan: 74. Interpretation *Al-Misbah* and *Al-Qurtubi* underline the importance of the role of parents in guiding children as a mandate and a means to form a godly family [70],[71]. Integration, the concept of organic solidarity that emphasizes freedom and specialization of roles in modern society may explain why decisions *childfree* becoming more acceptable [72],[73]. However, in the Islamic view, this freedom must still be framed within the limits of sharia values that place the family as the main institution in the moral and spiritual development of the ummah [74],[75]. Islam does not reject the diversity of roles and choices but reminds us that the family has strategic value in maintaining generations, strengthening the faith, and passing on the Islamic treatise. Therefore, although organic solidarity provides space for diversity of lifestyles, Islam still calls for the importance of maintaining the function of the family as a center for value education [76]. This integration emphasizes that social freedom should remain considered within the framework of moral responsibility and the long-term vision of civilization.

Anomie and the Value Crisis

Durkheim's concept of anomie describes the conditions when social norms are weakened so that individuals lose their grip on value. In context, *childfree*, anomie occurs when society has not fully accepted this option, but also does not offer clear new value [77]. This can lead to confusion of social identity for the perpetrator *childfree* and the environment. Islam views

that spiritual norms must remain the main handle [78]. Interpretation *Buya Hamka deep Al-Azhar* emphasizes that humans must continue to carry out their role as caliphs, including in educating their descendants and maintaining generations. When religious norms are ignored for personal convenience, a crisis of values can occur.

Integration, and anomie as a social phenomenon that reflects a value gap can be minimized when society remains grounded in strong spiritual principles. Islam offers a solution to the crisis of meaning caused by the confusion of norms, by establishing the roles of the family and children as part of worship and the path to blessings [79]. By linking the teachings of Islam and Durkheim's theory, it can be seen that the weakening of social norms should not be allowed to become a destructive anomie [80]. Instead, religious values can be present as a guide in social transition, becoming a sign in the face of unlimited freedom. So the decision *childfree* needs to be weighed not only in a rational frame but also in the context of spirituality and long-term social stability.

Collective Morality and Religious Values

Durkheim called collective morality a value agreement that binds society. In traditional societies, children are a symbol of family continuity and honor. Yet collective morality in modern society is beginning to shift toward the appreciation of free will. Islam, through its verses on heredity and family, affirms that morality does not only come from social consensus but from divine revelation and values [81]. Lineage is not just a social issue but is related to trust, the sustainability of the ummah, and the charity farm [82]. Integration of the two shows that collective morality in society is not enough if it is only built based on rational agreement between individuals because it is dynamic and can change over time.

Islam exists to provide a fixed and solid foundation of values as a complement and guide for socially formed collective morality [83]. In context, although individual choices are valued by modern society, Islam still reminds us that such freedom needs to be juxtaposed with the responsibility and mission of the sustainability of the ummah [84],[85]. Therefore, a healthy social morality is not only tolerant of differences but also upholds the values of universal goodness and revelation as the guiding direction of civilization [86]. With this integration, personal choice will always be tested by its contribution to the collective good and divine command.

Conclusion of Analysis. The integration between Durkheim's sociology and Islamic views shows that *the childfree* phenomenon is a mirror of modern social change loaded with individualization and freedom of values. However, Islam offers a solid framework of values in responding to this phenomenon, not by judging, but by giving spiritual meaning and responsibility to the decisions made. Therefore, this integrative approach emphasizes the importance of combining social rationality and divine values in dealing with contemporary issues such as *child freedom*.

CONCLUSION

The childfree phenomenon is a real reflection of the changing values in modern society that increasingly emphasize individual freedom and autonomy over personal life. From Emile Durkheim's perspective, the decision not to have children is closely related to a shift in social facts, the transformation of social solidarity from a mechanical to an organic form, the emergence of anomie due to the weakening of traditional norms, and a shift in collective morality towards respect for individual rights. Durkheim placed the family as an important institution in maintaining social order, so the child-free choice marked a challenge to the traditional function of the family in the structure of society. Meanwhile, Islam views offspring not only as part of human nature but also as a responsibility and form of worship. As explained in the verses of the Qur'an, for example, QS. Ash-Shura: 49-50, QS. Al-Furqan: 74, QS. At-Tahrim: 6, and QS. Al-Anfal: 28 shows that children are gifts that bring spiritual,

social, and moral responsibilities to parents. Classical and contemporary interpretations underline the importance of educating one's descendants within the framework of Islamic monotheism and morality. Thus, the integration between sociological and Islamic perspectives confirms that *the phenomenon of childfree* cannot be understood unilaterally. Social analysis can explain the causes and dynamics of value shifts, but religious views provide direction and limits in responding to this freedom. This interdisciplinary approach recommends that any life choices in modern society need to be grounded in spiritual awareness and responsibility for generational sustainability and the values of the common good.

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Author Contribution

All authors contribute equally to the publication of this paper, all authors read and agree to this paper, and all authors declare no conflict of interest.

Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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