

INTERPERSONAL TRUST RELATIONSHIP WITH COLLEGE STUDENTS' MARRIAGE READINESS

Annisa Fitria Suherman^{1*}, Rina Nurhudi Ramdhani²

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

Annisa Fitria Suherman, *e-mail*: annisafitria02@upi.edu

Abstract: This study aims to investigate the description of interpersonal trust and marriage readiness in college students. The method used in this research is a case study with questionnaire and interview techniques to obtain in-depth understanding. This research seeks to answer the research question, namely how the level of interpersonal trust influences marriage readiness in students. The aim is to understand the relationship between interpersonal trust in shaping marriage readiness among students. Apart from that, it also serves as a guide in developing guidance and counseling programs to increase marriage readiness among students. The results of the analysis show that the average student has a high level of interpersonal trust and marriage readiness.

Keywords: Interpersonal Trust, Marriage Readiness, Early Adulthood, College Student

INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of marriage today are influenced by various factors. In facing a complex married life, it is essential for an individual to be well-prepared. Marriage is derived from the fundamental word "nikah," which means an agreement between a man and a woman to officially enter into a marriage bond, becoming husband and wife, and creating a family. Meanwhile, readiness refers to the maturity in accepting and implementing certain behaviors (Sofia, 2000). Therefore, it can be concluded that marriage readiness is a condition where someone is willing to build a relationship, accept responsibilities, and engage as husband and wife (Duvall & Miller, 1985). Marriage readiness is the first step in fulfilling the developmental tasks of an adult individual. Blood (1978) stated that early adults need readiness to engage in a marriage relationship, making marriage readiness a crucial aspect and an important stage in their life development.

According to Erikson's psychosocial development theory, young adults (ages 18–35) are in the "intimacy vs. isolation" stage, where they strive to form meaningful relationships while avoiding feelings of isolation and loneliness (Erikson, 1968). Successfully navigating this stage leads to the development of close bonds and a willingness to commit, which are essential components of marriage readiness. On the contrary, failure to achieve intimacy can result in difficulties forming deep connections and reluctance to engage in long-term commitments,

such as marriage. Therefore, marriage readiness can be viewed as a developmental task that builds on the success of earlier stages, particularly identity formation during adolescence.

Attachment theory, proposed by Bowlby (1969) and expanded by Ainsworth (1979), further explains how early attachment experiences influence adult relationships. Secure attachment, characterized by trust, emotional availability, and reliability, fosters the ability to form healthy and stable relationships. Conversely, individuals with insecure attachment may struggle with trust and intimacy, potentially impacting their marriage readiness. For example, anxious attachment might lead to fear of abandonment, while avoidant attachment could result in discomfort with closeness. These attachment patterns influence interpersonal trust, which is foundational for developing a stable and committed relationship. Students in the process of forming their identities and building interpersonal relationships may display varying levels of attachment security, which subsequently shapes their readiness for marriage.

Interpersonal trust theories provide valuable insights into the relationship between trust and marriage readiness. Rotter (1971) emphasized that trust is a generalized expectancy that others' actions will align with one's expectations. In romantic relationships, trust involves expectations of honesty, reliability, and emotional support (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985). High interpersonal trust facilitates open communication, conflict resolution, and emotional bonding—key elements of a successful marriage. On the other hand, low trust may increase relational insecurity, hinder emotional closeness, and create barriers to commitment. For university students, navigating significant developmental transitions, interpersonal trust is critical for fostering the confidence needed to enter a committed marital relationship. The concepts of marriage readiness and interpersonal trust are interconnected and integral to student development. Marriage readiness involves emotional maturity, responsibility, and the ability to navigate relational challenges (Sofia, 2000; Duvall & Miller, 1985). This readiness aligns with the developmental trajectory outlined by Erikson, attachment theory, and interpersonal trust theories, emphasizing the importance of trust and relationship skills in preparing for marriage. Strengthening interpersonal trust through experiences of secure attachment and successful relational interactions can enhance marriage readiness.

Low readiness for marriage often occurs in couples who marry at an early age. Individuals who are not ready for marriage are very likely to experience conflicts in relationships, higher divorce rates, mental and emotional stress, delays in personal development, dissatisfaction in relationships, and even poor mental health (Adam, 2020). This is supported by the perception of the younger generation who consider marriage to be something difficult and complicated (Permana & Medynna, 2021). The millennial generation, which refers to those born between 1982 and 2000 (Howe & Strauss, 2000), often feels reluctant to commit to marriage, postponing or even avoiding it altogether (Hartanto, 2016). Marriage, which was once considered a positive step in life, is now increasingly overlooked and valued differently by millennials (Wang & Taylor, 2011). They tend to delay marriage and believe that it is not urgent or even important to marry quickly (Wang & Taylor, 2011). Furthermore, millennials are more likely to live together without marriage, value parenthood more than marriage (Wang & Taylor, 2011), and are more open to being single parents. The rise of social issues such as divorce and domestic violence (KDRT) often leads to a crisis of confidence, influencing the younger generation's decision to delay marriage.

Trust is one of the most important elements in an intimate relationship. It is complex, fluctuates, and has a significant impact on relationships (Cosentino, 2012). Trust is a vital element in forming interpersonal relationships and communication. When individuals believe that others will not harm them, they are more likely to open up to those people. According to Rempel et al. (in Buntara and Helmi, 2015), trust develops from past experiences and previous interactions, forming mature relationships. Strong interpersonal trust can enhance the quality of relationships, facilitate effective communication, and strengthen involvement and commitment in relationships, which ultimately can influence an individual's readiness for marriage. However, low or absent interpersonal trust can hinder relationship development, increase uncertainty, and lead to conflicts and disharmony in relationships (Arikewuyo, Eluwole, & Özad, 2021). Therefore, understanding the relationship between interpersonal trust and marriage readiness is important for further research, especially in the context of students, a group often in the process of searching for their identity and preparing to enter the phase of family life. This study aims to analyze the relationship between the level of interpersonal trust and marriage readiness among university students aged 19-23, as well as to identify specific factors such as family background, previous relationship experiences, and social support that influence these variables. The findings of this research are expected to serve as a foundation for designing empirically-based marriage counseling and guidance programs, focusing on enhancing interpersonal trust and marriage readiness.

METHOD

The sampling technique used in this research was purposive sampling, a non-probability method where participants were selected based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. As explained by Sugiyono (2012), purposive sampling is effective when researchers need to focus on informants who possess characteristics or experiences critical to answering the research questions. In this study, the informants were three students from the Indonesian University of Education who met the predefined criteria, ensuring their relevance and suitability for the study's focus on interpersonal trust and readiness for marriage.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the quantitative questionnaire, several steps were taken. First, content validity was evaluated by consulting experts in educational psychology and research methodology to determine whether the questionnaire items accurately represented the research variables and objectives. Revisions were made based on their feedback to improve the clarity and alignment of the items. Next, construct validity was tested by examining the correlation between each item and the overall score for the corresponding construct using Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation (Arikunto, 2013). Items with a correlation coefficient below the standard threshold (e.g., 0.3) were modified or excluded. Reliability was then measured using Cronbach's Alpha, with a coefficient above 0.70 indicating a high level of internal consistency (Cresswell, 2012).

For the qualitative in-depth interviews, trustworthiness was ensured through triangulation and member checking. Triangulation involved comparing the qualitative interview data with the quantitative findings to strengthen the credibility of the results. Member checking allowed the informants to review and confirm the accuracy of the transcriptions and interpretations of their responses, ensuring that their views and experiences were authentically represented. By

applying these steps rigorously, the research instruments were verified as valid and reliable, allowing the study to gather robust and comprehensive data to achieve its objectives.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Results

1. Demographics

Based on the instrument that has been created, this questionnaire contains 52 statements which are measured on a 1-4 Likert scale. In detail, there are 30 statements for the marriage readiness variable and 22 statements for the interpersonal trust variable. To date, the questionnaire has been completed by 46 respondents with the maximum age range being 19 years, totaling 21 respondents. Details of respondents are presented in the following statistical analysis table

Table 1. Age Frequency of Respondents

No	Respondent's Age	Frequency
1.	17	1
2.	18	7
3.	19	21
4.	20	8
5.	21	8
6.	22	1

Table 2. Respondent Gender Frequency

No	Gender	Frequency
1.	Man	7
2.	Woman	39

Table 3. Semester Level Frequency of Respondents

No	Semester	Frequency
1.	2	29
2.	4	7
3.	6	8
4.	8	2

The questionnaire is aimed at students in general so that respondents do not only come from the Indonesian University of Education but also several other universities and agencies such as ISBI Bandung, Bandung State Polytechnic, Jember State Polytechnic, Sebelas Maret University, Jendral Achmad Yani University, and Gajah Mada University.

2. General Descriptive Statistics Results

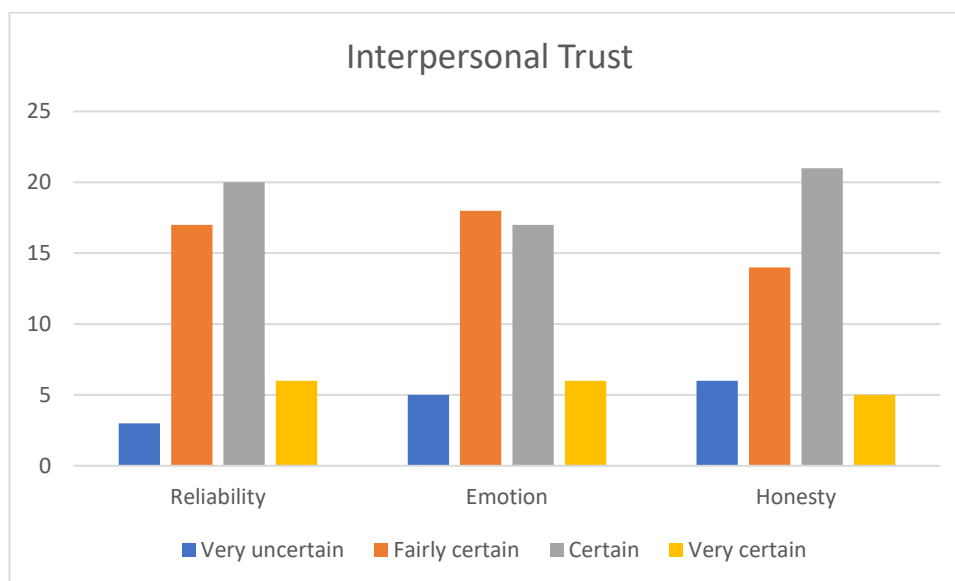
Attached below are the results of the questionnaire data obtained by the respondents

Table 4. General descriptive statistics results

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Interpersonal Trust	46	45.00	67.00	57.2609	4.91905

Readiness for Marriage	46	31.00	111.00	74.3261	18.27816
Valid N (listwise)	46				

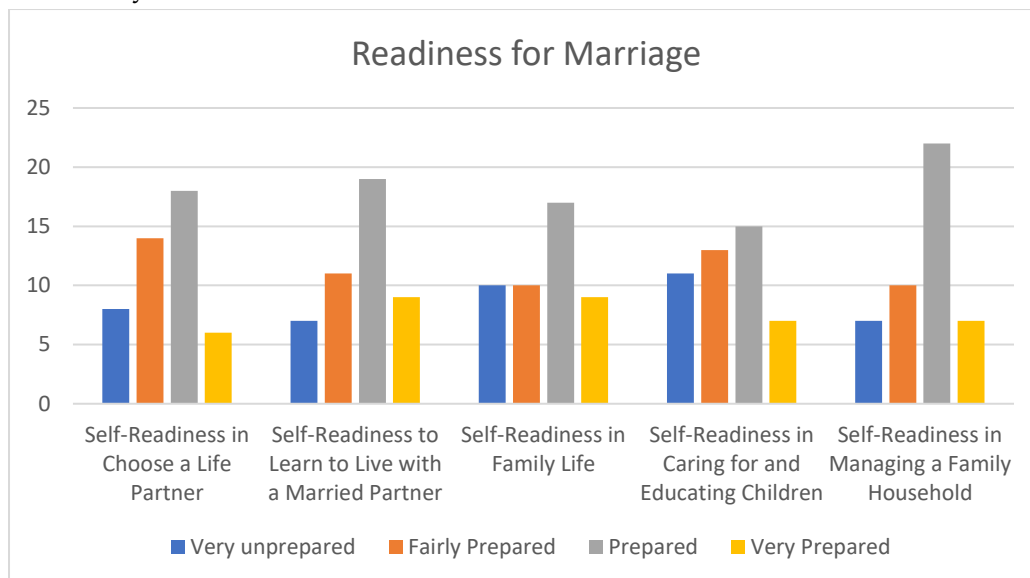
Based on the results of this statistical analysis, it can be concluded that the respondent's tendency towards the Interpersonal Trust variable is on a scale of 3 or confident. This is shown by the average response of respondents which is dominated by scale 3 with the average frequency of each statement amounting to 20 respondents. In addition, the Interpersonal Trust variable has a minimum value of 45 and a maximum value of 67 with an overall average of 57.2. Likewise, the results of statistical analysis show that respondents' tendencies in the Marriage Readiness variable are on a scale of 3 or ready. This is shown by the average respondent's answer being dominated by scale 3 with an average frequency of each statement totaling 26 respondents. In addition, the Interpersonal Trust variable has a minimum value of 31 and a maximum value of 111 with an overall average of 74.3. When viewed through percentages and statistical analysis results from the answers given, it can be concluded that in the interpersonal trust variable, students have been able to develop trust in the people around them. This is indicated by the high average calculation results on the confidence scale based on several items that accurately reflect aspects of interpersonal trust.



Graph 1. Data Processing Results for the Interpersonal Trust Variable

Based on the aspects of interpersonal trust used, aspects that indicate high to low levels of trust are honesty, reliability and emotion. In the aspect of reliability, respondents can be said to have been able to develop interpersonal trust by paying attention to the extent to which other people can be relied on to deal with problems, protect secrets and feelings. This is indicated by the average results which are close to a scale of 3, namely confident. Then in the emotional aspect, respondents can be said to have been able to develop interpersonal trust by paying attention to the extent of the influence of interactions with other people on their emotional management. This is indicated by the average results

which are close to scale 2, namely confident. Then in the aspect of honesty, respondents can be said to have been able to develop interpersonal trust by paying attention to the extent to which other people can be trusted in the form of keeping promises, as well as appropriate words and actions. This is indicated by the average results which are close to a scale of 3, namely confident.



Graph 1. Results of data processing for the Marriage Readiness Variable

Meanwhile, regarding the marriage readiness variable, students can also be said to be ready to face marriage. This is indicated by a high percentage on the ready scale. Based on the aspects of marriage readiness used, aspects that indicate high to low levels of readiness are self-readiness to learn to live with a married partner, self-readiness in managing a family household, self-readiness in caring for and educating children, self-readiness in family life, and self-readiness in choose a life partner. In the aspect of Personal Readiness in Choosing a Life Partner, respondents can be said to be ready to face married life by developing their own capacity to choose the right life partner. This readiness is supported by several components such as physical, psychological, emotional, financial, social, moral and religious readiness. This is indicated by the average results which are close to scale 3, namely ready. Then in the aspect of Self-Readiness to Learn to Live with a Married Partner, respondents can be said to be ready to face married life by developing their own capacity to learn to live with a partner after marriage. This readiness is supported by a readiness to understand the rights and obligations of husband/wife. This is indicated by the average results which are close to scale 3, namely ready.

Next, in the aspect of Personal Readiness for Family Life, respondents can be said to be ready to face married life by developing their own capacity for family life. This readiness is supported by a readiness to understand family members and the various changes involved in becoming parents. This is indicated by the average results which are close to scale 3, namely ready. In the aspect of Personal Readiness in Caring for and Educating Children, respondents can be said to be quite ready to face married life by developing their own capacity in caring for and educating children. This is indicated by

the average result on scale 2, namely quite ready. Then in the aspect of Personal Readiness in Managing the Household, respondents can be said to be quite ready to face married life by developing their own capacity in managing the family household. This readiness is supported by readiness to carry out the role as husband/wife, implement agreed rules, and manage family finances. This is indicated by the average results which are close to scale 3, namely quite ready.

The results of interviews with 3 students at the Indonesian University of Education can be described as follows:

Table 5. Conclusion of Interview Results

No	Informant	Conclusion of Interview Results
1.	GF	GF states that interpersonal trust is key in relationships, especially in the context of marriage. He emphasized the importance of open communication, consistency and honesty as the main indicators of trust. GF's personal experience of a close friend's betrayal made her more careful in trusting others. Support from family and close friends is very important for GFs in strengthening confidence. He believes that trust influences readiness for marriage because it provides a strong foundation for long-term commitment. GF also sees that the role of both parties in building trust is crucial and readiness for marriage requires good communication, trust and emotional readiness.
2.	NK	NK recognizes that interpersonal trust is essential in relationships, especially in evaluating readiness for marriage. He highlighted signs such as mutual respect, loyalty and transparency as indicators of strong trust. A bad experience with a dishonest friend made NK more wary of trusting other people. NK seeks guidance from family, friends, and educational sources to understand and strengthen beliefs. According to him, strong trust allows couples to face challenges together, which is important for marriage readiness. NK also emphasized that both parties must play a role in building trust and that readiness for marriage requires effective communication, trust, and emotional and financial readiness.
3.	NSF	The NSF argues that interpersonal trust is an important foundation in relationships and greatly influences readiness for marriage. According to him, the main indicators of trust are honesty, good communication and a sense of security in sharing personal things. NSF has had bad experiences with unreliable people, which makes it more selective in trusting others. Support from family and friends is critical for NSF in strengthening trust. He feels that trust provides a sense of security and confidence in making big decisions such as marriage. NSF also recognizes that relationships in the campus setting can strengthen or weaken interpersonal trust, depending on teamwork experiences and social pressures. According to the NSF, marriage readiness involves emotional readiness, mutual trust, and the ability to cooperate and compromise.

B. Discussion

The research findings in this study align with and reinforce several established theories and previous research on the importance of interpersonal trust in marriage readiness. Interpersonal trust, as emphasized by Rempel, Holmes, and Zanna (1985), is a key element in determining an individual's readiness for marriage. The results of this study, which show that students' interpersonal trust and marriage readiness are classified as good, reflect this theoretical concept. All three informants in the interview highlighted the foundational role of trust in building stable relationships and expressed its importance in preparing for marriage.

As GF stated, trust creates a strong foundation for marital relationships, aligning with Rempel et al.'s assertion that trust involves honesty, open communication, and behavioral consistency. This is supported by NK, who mentioned that trust allows partners to support each other through various challenges, emphasizing the stability that trust brings to a relationship. NSF added that trust provides a sense of security and confidence in making significant decisions, such as marriage, further reinforcing the idea that trust plays a critical role in marriage readiness (Abdurrahman, 2020). These insights correspond with Rotter's (1971) theory on interpersonal trust, which suggests that trust is a generalized expectation that others will act in accordance with one's expectations, ensuring emotional and relational security.

Additionally, the interviews revealed the importance of family, friends, and external sources like counselors or seminars in strengthening trust. This finding connects with the work of Holman and Li (1997), who identified several factors influencing marriage readiness, including family support and the social environment. The informants' acknowledgment of the impact of past negative experiences in building and maintaining trust also aligns with Johnson's (in Putri & Kusumaputri, 2014) view that trust is dynamic and built through a series of actions that demonstrate reliability and respect.

The role of interpersonal trust is further underscored by the literature on marriage readiness. Studies by Sari (2013) and Aziz et al. (2021) highlighted the importance of a thorough understanding of marriage and its implications in preparing for a healthy and stable marital relationship. These findings support the current research's conclusion that students, despite feeling good interpersonal trust, often do not feel fully prepared for marriage due to inadequate physical and psychological preparation. This aligns with Ernawati's (2021) finding that many students feel they are not mature enough for marriage, as they lack the necessary preparation.

The connection between trust and marriage readiness in this study also mirrors the findings of Campbell et al. (2010), who discussed how trust in relationships requires both the willingness to take risks (trusting) and the behavior that upholds others' trust (trustworthy). The informants' discussions about their relationship dynamics during their university years reflect this balance between trusting behaviors and the challenges presented by external pressures, such as academic demands and social expectations, as noted by Krisnatuti & Oktaviani (2011).

Furthermore, the informants emphasized that marriage readiness is not only based on trust but also requires emotional readiness, the ability to compromise, and support from the social environment. This perspective supports Holman and Li's (1997) broader view that readiness for marriage is influenced by factors like age, education, occupation, personality, and family

support, and reinforces the idea that marriage readiness is a multi-dimensional construct. The importance of these factors in ensuring a harmonious and stable marriage aligns with the overall findings of the study, suggesting that marriage readiness should be based on both relational trust and broader personal and social preparation.

In conclusion, the research findings confirm and expand upon previous theories, particularly the integral role of interpersonal trust in marriage readiness. The findings demonstrate that trust is essential not only for relationship stability but also for creating a foundation for marriage. As suggested by the informants, trust, emotional readiness, and adequate support networks are crucial components that should be considered when preparing for marriage. This deeper understanding of marriage readiness helps ensure that the decision to marry is made based on a solid foundation of trust and comprehensive preparation, consistent with the views and theories explored in existing literature.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis obtained through surveys and in-depth interviews, it was found that the majority of students possess a good level of interpersonal trust and marriage readiness. Interpersonal trust, measured through indicators such as honesty, open communication, consistency, and a sense of security, has been proven to be a fundamental foundation for building stable and harmonious relationships. Students with high levels of interpersonal trust demonstrate more effective communication skills, constructive conflict resolution, and significant emotional support for their partners. These abilities not only help them navigate relationship dynamics but also prepare them for marriage in a more mature and responsible manner.

This study provides empirical evidence that guidance and counseling programs in educational institutions, especially at the university level, can play a significant role in enhancing students' marriage readiness through the strengthening of interpersonal trust. Strategic interventions such as communication training focused on empathy and assertiveness, conflict resolution workshops to help students address differences, and individual and group counseling sessions supporting emotional exploration and the development of interpersonal skills can be systematically designed and implemented. Additionally, programs that facilitate simulations of relationship dynamics, such as role-playing, can provide students with practical experiences to better understand the realities of relationships and the challenges they might face in marriage.

The practical implications of this study are highly relevant for educational institutions aiming to contribute to shaping a generation of students who are not only academically proficient but also emotionally and socially prepared to build healthy and happy marriages. By integrating elements of relationship education into guidance and counseling services, institutions can help students develop essential skills such as interpersonal communication, emotional management, and conflict resolution. These programs will not only enhance students' readiness for marriage but also contribute to their overall well-being. Thus, educational institutions can act as agents of change, nurturing young individuals capable of establishing stable, harmonious relationships and fostering a more prosperous society.

REFERENCES

- Abdurrahman, F. (2020). *Hubungan persepsi mahasiswa tentang keluarga harmonis dengan kesiapan menikah* (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Negeri Padang).
- Adam, A. (2020). Dinamika pernikahan dini. *Al-wardah*, 13(1), 14.
- Ainsworth, M. S. (1979). Infant–mother attachment. *American psychologist*, 34(10), 932.
- Arikewuyo, A. O., Eluwole, K. K., & Özad, B. (2021). Influence of lack of trust on romantic relationship problems: The mediating role of partner cell phone snooping. *Psychological Reports*, 124(1), 348-365.
- Arikunto, Suharsimi. (1986). *Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktek*. Jakarta: Bina Aksara
- Cash, T. F., & S
- Aziz, A. A., Budiyaniti, N., Pallah, P., & Pandoe, P. (2021). Pengaruh Pemahaman Konsep Pernikahan Terhadap Persiapan Menikah Di Kalangan Mahasiswa. *Jurnal Pasopati*, 3(2).
- Blood, M. B. (1978). *Marriage (3rd Edition)*. New York, US: Free Press
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss (No. 79)*. Random House.
- Buntara, A., & Helmi, A.F (2015). Peran Kepercayaan Interpersonal Remaja yang Kesepian dalam Memoderasi Pengungkapan Diri pada Media Jejaring Sosial Online. *Journal of Psychology*, Volume 1, No.2, 106-119
- Campbell, L., Boldry, J., Simpson, J., & Rubin, H. (2010). Trust, variability in relationship evaluations, and relationship processes. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 99(1), 14-31.doi:10.1037/a0019714. Retrieved from <http://proxy.library.eiu.edu:2052/login.aspx?direct>
- Cosentino, C. (2012). Trust in Relationships: A Study to Determine the Importance of Trust.: *Jurnal Psikologi*, 10(3), 248-257.
- Creswell, J. W. (2016). *Research Design, Pendekatan Metode Kualitatif, Kuantitaif,dan Campuran*. 4th ed. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Belajar.
- Duvall, Evelyn M. & Miller, Brent C (1985). *Marriage and family development (6th Edition)*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers.
- Erikson, E. H. (2010). *Teori Perkembangan Psikososil Erik H. Erikson*.Jakarta
- Ernawati, A. (2022). Fenomena Menikah Di Kalangan Mahasiswa (Gambaran Persiapan Mahasiswa Yang Menikah). *Jurnal Mercusuar: Bimbingan, Penyuluhan, dan Konseling Islam*, 1(1).
- Hartanto. (2016). Mereka yang Takut Menikah. Retrieved October 16, 2020, from Tirto.id: <https://tirto.id/mereka-yang-takut-menikah-bGz6>
- Holman, T. B., & Li, B. D. (1997). Prematual factors influencing perceived rediness for marriage. *Journal of Family Issues*.
- Howe, N., & Strauss, W. (2000). *Milenials Rising: The Next Great Generation*. New York City, USA: Vintage Books.
- Krisnatuti, D., & Oktaviani, V. (2011). Persepsi dan kesiapan menikah pada mahasiswa. *Jurnal Ilmu Keluarga & Konsumen*, 4(1), 30-36.

- Permana, M. Z., & Medynna, A. D. N. (2021). Ribet!: Persepsi Menikah pada Emerging Adulthood. *Psikostudia*
- Putri, M. D., & Kusumaputri, E. S. (2014). Kepercayaan (trust terhadap pengurus organisasi dan komitmen afektif pada organisasi mahasiswa daerah di Yogyakarta. *Jurnal Psikologi Integratif*, 2(1), 53-61
- Rempel, J. K., Holmes, J. G., & Zanna, M. P. (1985). Trust in close relationships. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 49(1), 95.
- Rotter, J. B. (1971). Generalized expectancies for interpersonal trust. *American psychologist*, 26(5), 443.
- Sari, F., & Sunarti, E. (2013). Kesiapan menikah pada dewasa muda dan pengaruhnya terhadap usia menikah. *Jurnal Ilmu Keluarga & Konsumen*, 6(3), 143-153.
- Sofia, E. (2000). *Hubungan antara keterampilan sosial dan toleransi stress dengan kesiapan menuju kehidupan perkawinan*. Skripsi (tidak diterbitkan). Fakultas Psikologi UGM, Yogyakarta.
- Sugandhi, N. (2010). *Model Konseling dan Konseling untuk Meningkatkan Kesiapan Diri Mahasiswa dalam Menghadapi Pernikahan dan Hidup Berkeluarga*. (Disertasi). Sekolah Pascasarjana, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung.
- Wang, J.S. (2009). Trust and Relationship Commitment Between Direct Selling Distributor and Customer. *Journal of Business Management*. (Vol. 3): 862-870.
- Wang, W., & Taylor, P. (2011). For Millennials, Parenthood Trumps Marriage. Retrieved January 17, 2019, from Pew Research Center: <https://www.pewresearch.org/socialtrends/2011/03/09/for-millennials-parenthood-trumps-marriage>