

Living Sufism: Journal of Sufism and Psychotherapy

Diterbitkan oleh Program Studi Tasawuf dan Psikoterapi
Fakultas Ushuluddin Universitas Annuqayah (UA) Guluk-Guluk, Sumenep
Volume 3, Number 2, December 2024, 119-131
E-ISSN: 2964-9188, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59005/ls.v3i2.555>
<https://journal.ua.ac.id/index.php/ls/index>

SPIRITUAL WELL BEING IN RURAL WOMEN WHO MARRY LATE IN SUMENEP

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Received	Revised	Accepted	Published
14 November 2024	02 Desember 2024	09 Desember 2024	15 Desember 2024

Abstract

Spiritual well-being is interconnected with mental health and significantly contributes to health maintenance and recovery from mental illness for all individuals, especially women who marry later in rural regions. The unfavorable perception of rural communities towards individuals who delay marriage manifests in stereotypes such as “old maid,” leading to gossip and labels like unmarketable, selective, playing hard to get, ugly, and very career-oriented. The research aimed to identify the conditions and factors affecting spiritual well-being in rural women who marry later, employing a qualitative phenomenological methodology. Fisher's theory of spiritual well-being was utilized for data analysis, as it offers a comprehensive conceptual framework that accommodates the diverse perspectives articulated in public discourse on spirituality and the viewpoints of historical figures. The study indicates that the spiritual well-being of rural women in Bilapora Rebba Village aligns with four aspects or domains of spiritual well-being, though it does not entirely encompass every element within each domain. The determinants affecting the spiritual well-being of village women who marry later in Bilapora Rebba Village encompass identity, life meaning, forgiveness, respect, kindness, environmental harmony, creator worship, peace with God, prayer practices, self-awareness, and relationships with nature and its wonders.

Keywords: *Spiritual Well-Being; Village Women; Marry Late.*

Abstrak

Kesejahteraan spiritual saling terkait dengan kesehatan mental dan berkontribusi secara signifikan terhadap pemeliharaan kesehatan dan pemulihan dari penyakit mental bagi semua individu, khususnya perempuan yang menikah di usia lanjut di daerah pedesaan. Persepsi masyarakat pedesaan yang kurang baik terhadap individu yang menunda pernikahan terwujud dalam stereotip seperti “perawan tua”, yang

mengarah pada gosip dan label seperti tidak laku, selektif, suka cari gara-gara, jelek, dan sangat berorientasi pada karier. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi kondisi dan faktor yang memengaruhi kesejahteraan spiritual pada perempuan pedesaan yang menikah di usia lanjut, dengan menggunakan metodologi fenomenologi kualitatif. Teori kesejahteraan spiritual Fisher digunakan untuk analisis data, karena teori ini menawarkan kerangka konseptual komprehensif yang mengakomodasi beragam perspektif yang diartikulasikan dalam wacana publik tentang spiritualitas dan sudut pandang tokoh sejarah. Studi ini menunjukkan bahwa kesejahteraan spiritual perempuan pedesaan di Desa Bilapora Rebba selaras dengan empat aspek atau domain kesejahteraan spiritual, meskipun tidak sepenuhnya mencakup setiap elemen dalam setiap domain. Faktor penentu yang memengaruhi kesejahteraan spiritual perempuan desa yang menikah di usia lanjut di Desa Bilapora Rebba meliputi identitas, makna hidup, memaafkan, menghormati, kebaikan, keharmonisan lingkungan, pemujaan kepada Sang Pencipta, kedamaian dengan Tuhan, praktik doa, kesadaran diri, dan hubungan dengan alam beserta keajaibannya.

Kata Kunci: Kesejahteraan Spiritual; Perempuan Desa; Menikah di Usia Lanjut.

Introduction

Spiritual well-being plays an important role in efforts to maintain mental health and cure mental illness, therefore Spiritual well-being has a link to mental health. Spiritual well-being means spiritual well-being and according to Fisher Spiritual well-being is an affirmation of one's life about oneself, others, nature or the environment, and God (Fisher, 2010). Spiritual well-being arises from an individual's active engagement with the divine. It enables a person to respond positively to life's challenges and confront difficulties with a sense of empowerment, fostering self-confidence and a constructive perspective, ultimately facilitating the ability to overcome personal obstacles and extend forgiveness to others (Tumanggor & Dariyo, 2021).

Spiritual well-being plays a significant role in health maintenance for all demographics, particularly for rural women who marry later, as marriage holds considerable importance for women in rural communities. Moreover, parents concerned about the societal implications of their older, unmarried children fear they may become the subject of gossip, be stigmatized as spinsters, perceived as undesirable, very selective, excessively costly, unattractive, or excessively career oriented. A society that maintains a distorted perspective and harbors negative stigmas, such as the old maid stereotype, compels parents to admonish their children to marry promptly and even to seek partners on their behalf. The community's tradition posits that girls who remain unmarried past the age of 20 would be regarded as old maids and perceived as a familial disgrace. It is unsurprising that women who marry later (beyond 20 years of age) become topics of discussion, particularly when other peers of the same age are already wed. There are individuals who still arrange marriages for their children at ages 17 to 20, as this practice is prevalent and often

deemed necessary within their community. This societal norm contributes to the phenomenon of early marriage, which has persisted since the royal era (Munawarah et al., 2020).

People who still have a traditional mindset consider that women do not need to get too much education because women's nature is only to take care of household affairs and also women who are still pursuing their education can be considered late in marriage because it takes a long time to complete their education and fear from the male side feeling inferior due to women's higher education (Asih & Anzari, 2021). Madurese people, according to Fathurrosyid, generally still have the view that marrying young is a must that must be carried out, because this has even become a new culture passed down from ancestors that must be maintained and preserved (Mun'em, 2024). So with these phenomena, it certainly affects the *Spiritual well being* of rural women who marry late in rural areas. All of these things are the background of this research.

Spiritual well-being plays an important role in maintaining health and helping to deal with depression and health problems, as revealed in research by Dian Ratna Elmaghfuroh et al. (2022) that efforts to implement spiritual activities or spiritual support can help the elderly live life more calmly and the elderly can easily interact well with those around them.

The attainment of spiritual well-being can foster positive values. These positive values might enhance one's happiness in life. Conversely, retaining positive attributes diminishes an individual's worth. This is demonstrated in the research conducted by Narmiyati et al. (2021), which focuses on prostituted women. The positive outcomes of achieving spiritual well-being include the recognition of the need to return to the correct path, submission to God, a lack of complaints while engaging in activities at the orphanage, the ability to exhibit patience and composure, learning from experiences, and discovering one's identity as a woman.

A harmonious and stable life, attributed to proximity to God, is a consequence of an individual's elevated Spiritual well-being. Research by Widwi Mukhabibah (2017) indicates that 85% of Al-Qur'an memorizers at Padjadjaran University exhibit high Spiritual well-being (SpWB), while 15% demonstrate moderate SpWB. Individuals with elevated spiritual well-being scores predominantly engage in memorization through participation in a tahfidz institution, possess a flexible schedule, and are intrinsically motivated to memorize the Qur'an.

In contrast, a diminished state of spiritual well-being is marked by a disconnection from spiritual power and a pessimistic view of life devoid of such influence. This was evidenced in research conducted by Khusnul Khatimah (2017) on students who engaged in self-injury, revealing that three respondents exhibited this low spiritual well-being condition, while two others demonstrated a moderate level of

spiritual well-being, characterized by a relatively close relationship with spiritual power and an endeavor to integrate spiritual influence into daily life, correlating with optimism in life experiences.

Fisher posits that an individual who attains spiritual well-being derives positive affirmation from oneself, God, nature, and others. Fisher describes spiritual well-being (SWB) as per the National Interfaith Coalition on Aging (NICA), which characterizes SWB as an affirmation of one's being about God, self, society, and the environment, aimed at preserving wholeness. Fisher identifies four dimensions of spiritual well-being that might assess an individual's spiritual state, including;

The initial part pertains to the personal domain, which concerns an individual's relationship with oneself, namely intra-relationships associated with meaning, purpose, and value in life. Self-awareness is the intrinsic motivator for an individual in discovering their own identity and self-esteem. The second aspect is the communal domain, which pertains to the quality of interpersonal relationships between individuals. This domain is interconnected with morality, culture, and religion, and is manifested through forgiveness, trust, hope, faith in humanity, and love. The third aspect is the environmental domain, which pertains to an individual's relationship with the environment.

The environmental domain encompasses harmony with the environment and a commitment to its preservation, ensuring both physical and biological integrity while delivering ecological advantages. The fourth part is the transcendental domain, which pertains to one's relationship with entities beyond the human realm, including God, ultimate concerns, transcendental realities, and cosmic forces that involve belief and adoration of the divine. Fisher's four domains seek to establish a coherent conceptual framework that encompasses the varied perspectives articulated in public discourse on spirituality, as well as the viewpoints of historical individuals (Fisher, 2011).

Fisher's assessment of spiritual well-being is termed the Spiritual Well-Being Questionnaire (SWBQ), referred to as SHALOM. It encompasses four domains—personal, communal, environmental, and transcendental—each comprising 20 items, with five items allocated to each domain. The elements from each domain encompass the personal domain, which includes identity, self-awareness, life satisfaction, inner tranquility, and existential significance. Within the communal sphere, encompasses affection for others, forgiveness, interpersonal trust, mutual respect, and kindness.

The environmental domain encompasses a connection with nature, admiration for stunning vistas, unity with the natural world, harmony with the environment, and a sense of 'magic' within it. The transcendental realm encompasses personal contact with the Divine, worship of the Creator, unity with God, reconciliation with God, and a life of prayer (Fisher, 2010).

This research aims to elucidate the spiritual well-being of rural women who marry later in life, a topic previously unexplored. It employs Fisher's theoretical framework to characterize spiritual well-being in this demographic by addressing two research questions: the current state of spiritual well-being and the factors influencing it among rural women who marry later, specifically in Bilapora Rebba Village, Lenteng District, Sumenep Regency.

Research Methods

The employed research approach is qualitative, as it offers a descriptive elucidation through words and language, aimed at comprehending the phenomena associated with individuals or subjects, including behaviors, activities, perceptions, and motivations. The research employed aims to elucidate, examine, characterize, and identify traits and social influences (Nasution, 2023). The employed methodology is phenomenological, as the research aims to comprehend the significance of an event, behavior, or experience, and how an individual perceives their reality (Salim and Syahrul, 2012).

The source of data is obtained directly from the phenomenology of the experiences of village women who are late in marriage at an age above the ideal age of marriage (21 years) because for the village community at an age above this figure it is appropriate to immediately marry, with data collection techniques by direct oral question and answer interviews between two or more people with the aim of obtaining research data, conversations conducted by two parties, namely the interviewer (interviewer) who asks questions to obtain data and the interviewee who provides answers to the interviewer's questions as an informant of the data needed.

Interviews are designed to elucidate individuals, events, actions, organizations, emotions, motives, needs, and concerns, while observation involves the methodical collection and documentation of facts about research subjects. Researchers initially examined the research site, Bilapora Rebba Village, along with the community's traditions, behaviors, and habits. Subsequently, they observed informants, focusing on their behaviors, responses, expressions, and roles within the community (Hardani et al., 2020). In the analysis of the data utilizing the Miles & Huberman technique, the model has three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Miles et al., 2013).

Results and Discussion

The research findings and collected data are examined through theoretical frameworks. The researchers employ Fisher's Spiritual Well-Being Theory, and the data analysis will be presented accordingly.

The spiritual well-being of rural women who marry later is initially examined through the research findings related to the primary informant, LT. The state of

spiritual well-being in the initial informant, LT, resides inside the personal domain. This personal domain pertains to the relationship with oneself or one's self-perception. (Fisher, 2011). From the findings of the interview with the first informant, LT, in the *personal* or *personal domain* aspect of the informant LT lies in the sense of identity or sense of identity (Fisher, 2010). This is evidenced by the informant's sense of identity in himself and his own life, as evidenced by the informant's statement, namely; "*I am me, not other people, I know, let them do their own business and I also have my own business*". The next personal or *personal domain* of informant LT lies in the meaning in life section, because the informant said that life must be lived without thinking about things that make him dizzy, "*Life is not a headache, just live it, don't listen too much to what people say, this life is my life, not other people's lives, so yes, don't serve too much*".

The condition of *Spiritual well-being* in informant LT lies in the *communal domain*. the domain is related to other people. In this communal domain, informants can be classified in the *forgiveness towards others* section. This is because informants can forgive and accept other people's mistakes, because the words of the informant are; "*Everyone must have made a mistake so I learned to forgive him*". Then LT can apply *respect for others* (Fisher, 2010) or respect for others, because LT informants still respect other people who talk about when the informant will get married, "*Yes, sometimes there are people who ask me when are you getting married, so I answer when it's time, eee like that*". Then in the last communal domain of the LT informant lies in the *kindness towards other people* or kindness towards others, this is evidenced by the informant who is willing to help take care of the kiai's daughter's son, and become a servant of the ndalem, which the LT informant said; "*Since leaving MA, I decided to go straight to nyalap only until now I am still very much at home in the boarding school, I entered the dhelem deck, so the guardian of the kiai's son*".

The subsequent domain is the environmental domain, which pertains to an individual's dimensions as they evolve from concern for physical and biological elements to a sense of unity and attachment to the environment. This encompasses relationships with the environment characterized by a natural affinity, fulfillment derived from peak experiences, appreciation of nature's beauty, and the capacity to sustain the environment for the benefit of the community. It includes aspects of stewardship, engagement, relationships with nature, and peak experiences that evoke admiration (Fisher, 2011).

The environmental domain of the LT informant aligns with ecological harmony, as demonstrated by the informant's assertion that personal responsibility is essential for maintaining environmental cleanliness within his pesantren. "*In the boarding school, it is imperative to prioritize environmental stewardship, particularly within the institution itself. Typically, a cleaning department is present; thus, students must uphold the cleanliness of the premises. However, it is a common tendency among students to litter and accumulate dirty*

laundry, often influenced by their peers. This behavior perpetuates a cycle of neglect regarding cleanliness. Consequently, I have resolved to initiate personal efforts in maintaining cleanliness."

Furthermore, in the *transcendental domain* which relates to human relationships with something or circumstances above the human level such as cosmic powers, transcendental reality or God relating to relationships with the transcendent. The transcendental domain of informant LT is located in the *worship* of the *creator* section, which means worship of the creator, because the informant said that everything that has been received must still be grateful, *"Even if God does not give according to what is prayed for, eee surely that is the best and we must remain grateful for what we have, e'e like that"*. The next part of the transcendental domain of informant LT is located in *peace with God* or peace with God (Fisher, 2010) surrendering the informant's life to God and always carrying out orders from God, the informant's words are; *"Must always carry out God's orders, never leave them, no matter how busy. And always surrender life to God"*. This is expressed in research by Narmiyati et al., that one of the positive values of *spiritual well being* is someone who surrenders to God even though there is still uncertainty in his life (Narmiyati et al., 2021). Then another part of the transcendental domain in informant LT lies in the *prayer life* section which means prayer life, the informant said, *"I often hear that never stop praying even if God does not give according to what is prayed for eee surely that is the best."*

The next result is an analysis of the results of research findings on the second informant, namely AK, the condition of *Spiritual well-being* in the second informant AK in the first domain, namely the *personal domain* or personal domain where in this domain related to relationships with oneself is in the *self-awareness* section which means *self-awareness* (Fisher, 2010). This is evidenced by the informant's words; *"Trying to accept my own shortcomings, eee even though I feel a lot of shortcomings in myself but the word is that you have to love yourself and accept what you are"*. Thus, the informant is aware of the shortcomings in himself and chooses to accept what these shortcomings are and learn to love himself. In this personal domain or personal domain, informant AK also has a *meaning of life* or meaning in life, this is because informant AK interprets life that life is only once, so the informant said that life must be *enjoyed*, *"Life is only once, it must be enjoyed well even though many trials and tests must be passed well so far, this is called life."* the informant also defines life as to worship God, *"Yes, he said life is to worship God."* This is in line with research by Afmi Puspita and Ira Puspitawati that according to Paloutzian and Ellison *Spiritual well being* is measuring the purpose of life that a person has or *existential well being*, as well as how a person's relationship with God or also called *religious well being* (Fuad & Puspitawati, 2017) .

Furthermore, in the second domain, namely the *communal domain*, which means that it is related to the relationship between humans and others, in informant AK this

domain is in the *kindness towards others* section or kindness towards others, this is because informants often help others (Fisher, 2010) as well as guarding their neighbor's shop, as said by the informant; "*Sometimes in the afternoon hanging out in front of here, there are people selling pentol, so I help serve buyers, right the shop has its own neighbor.*", sometimes informants also help with their parents' work, according to the words of informant AK; "*Usually helping here, helping parents such as cooking, washing, sometimes also helping in the fields, like harvesting rice.*"

Followed by the third domain, namely the *environmental* domain or called the environmental domain, informant AK has this domain in the *connection with nature* section, which means a relationship with nature and *a sense of 'magic' in the environment* which means a sense of 'magic' in the environment (Fisher, 2010) and this is evidenced by the informant's role in protecting the environment, because the informant also believes that if the environment or nature is well cared for it will also provide goodness, this is what gives rise to a sense of 'magic' in the environment). These things are in accordance with the words of the informant; "*Emm..the environment is well taken care of, the environment and nature that provides livelihoods such as land and rice fields, if it is well cared for, good plants will grow too.*"

The last domain is the *trancendental* domain, which means that this domain is related to a person's relationship with God. In this part of the domain found in informant AK is *peace with God* which means peace with God (Fisher, 2010). This is evidenced by the existence of informant AK who said that the obligations of God must be carried out immediately because the informant said that life is to worship God, "*If the obligations of God must be done immediately, such as prayer, yes, he said life is to worship God.*"

From the results of the analysis of the condition of *Spiritual well being* in the two informants, there are differences that show how the condition of *Spiritual well being* in the two informants. The difference lies in the domains of the aspects of *Spiritual well-being* that have been described. In the first informant LT, there are two parts to the personal domain, namely a *sense of identity* and *meaning in life*. While in the *communal* domain there are three parts, namely *forgiveness towards others* or forgiveness towards others, *respect for others* or respect for others and *kindness towards other people* or kindness towards others. Then in the *environmental* domain there is one part, namely *harmony with the environmental* or harmony with the environment. The last is in the *trancendental* domain there are three parts, namely in the *worship of the creator* which means worship of the creator, *peace with God* or peace with God and *prayer life* which means prayer life.

In the second informant, AK, there are two parts to the personal domain, namely *self-awareness* which means self-awareness and *meaning of life*. While in the *communal* domain there is one part, namely *kindness towards others* or kindness

towards others. Then in the *environmental* domain there are two parts, namely *connection with nature* which means connection with nature and *a sense of 'magic' in the environment* which means a *sense of 'magic' in the environment*. And in the *transcendental* domain there is one part, namely *peace with God*, which means peace with God.

Thus the two informants only filled in some of the items from each domain, meaning that the two informants did not have a good or perfect *Spiritual well being* condition, due to Fisher's own theoretical framework, which measures four domains, namely *personal*, *communal*, *environmental* and *transcendental* domains consisting of 20 items and each domain has 5 items. Which are the four domains of *spiritual well being* as Fisher's theoretical foundation, progressive adjustments that lead to a measure of spiritual health and life orientation.

When compared, the first informant, LT, has a fairly good *Spiritual well being* condition than the second informant, AK, this is because the number of item parts of all domains of the first informant, LT, is more in number than the second informant, AK (Fisher, 2010). The results of the difference in these conditions are also due to the first informant, LT, having a higher age than the second informant, AK, this is reinforced by Indah Dwi Febrina's research which explains that age can affect a person's *Spiritual well-being*, because the older a person's spirituality tends to increase, because they consider the transcendental relationship with God to be more important (Febrina, 2022).

There are several factors that influence *Spiritual well-being* in women who marry late. In the first informant, namely LT, the factors that influence *Spiritual well being* in the informant.

First, there is a sense of identity of the informant towards his own life and his life. This is because the informant realizes that his life is his own path and is his business, according to the informant, everyone has their own path and life affairs. This is described in the research journal by Faricha Andriani that one of the things that affects a person's well-being or *well being* is when a person is able to be himself and accept himself with everything that is in him (Andriani, 2018).

Second, there is a meaning of life from the informant because the informant has the principle that life is his own life not someone else's so the informant chooses not to bother too much and serve the words of others, this is in line with research by Agustina Rifa and Dewi Gayatri who explained that spiritual well-being is a search for the meaning and purpose of life which fundamentally unites the various dynamics of human life (Rifa & Gayatri, 2023).

Third, is forgiveness of others, this is because informants have been able to forgive other people's mistakes and realize that everyone must have made mistakes, this is reinforced by research conducted by Raja Oloan Tumanggor that someone who

develops *Spiritual well-being* can also forgive other people's mistakes even though other people do so do not have to be required to apologize for their mistakes and obtain unconditional forgiveness even though these mistakes can cause material loss or mental suffering (Tumanggor & Dariyo, 2021).

Fourth, the factor of respect for others. This is because informants can respond well to others even though they get the opposite treatment.

Fifth, there is kindness towards others. This is because the informant does good things like what the informant did. Namely, willing to help take care of the kiai's daughters, and become servants of the ndalem in their daily lives.

Sixth, there is harmony in the environment. This is because the informant can adjust and try to be in harmony with the environment because he can maintain environmental cleanliness which is a must in the environment (his cottage). Even though it is a must, the informant has an awareness in himself that this is something that must exist in self-awareness. This is reinforced in the journal by Faricha Andriani (2018) that something that affects a person's well-being or well being is when a person is able to make peace with their environment and also have a positive attitude towards the social environment.

Seventh, there is worship of the creator. This is because the informants worship by being grateful for all the blessings that have been granted and because the informants also consider that what has been given by God is certainly the best thing.

Eighth, there is peace with God. This is because informants always carry out obligations from God. In addition, informants have full trust in God by surrendering life to God.

Ninth, the meaning of the life of prayer. this is because informants believe in the power of prayer by saying that with prayer even though it is not in accordance with what we expect, of course God always gives the best.

The factors regarding the informant's relationship with God above are strengthened by the research of Alifiya et al., who explained that according to Young, the transcendental activity of spiritual well-being is formed from the individual's relationship with God which makes confidence, peace, comfort and even strength. Individuals with high spirituality will feel connected to God as well as feeling helped, pitied, guided, feeling appreciated and feeling amazed (Alifiya et al., 2023).

Then, in the first informant, namely AK, the factors that influence *Spiritual well-being* in the informant. *First*, there is a factor of self-awareness, this is because the informant realizes that there are shortcomings in himself and tries to love himself and accept his shortcomings, this is also revealed in research conducted by Hayatul Khairul Rahmat et al. that the factors that influence spiritual well-being or *Spiritual well being* are awareness and compassion for oneself (Rahmat et al., 2022).

Second, there is a meaning of life in the life of the informant, this is because the informant has a meaning for life and has a purpose in life, namely life is to worship God, the informant also has the meaning that life is only once, so life must be enjoyed even though there are certainly trials faced in life, this is reinforced by Imaddudin (in (Narmiyati et al., 2021) that spirituality is an individual who is able to find the meaning of life as a motivation that comes from transcendence which is the highest achievement of the individual, this is what makes an indicator of individual health and as a characteristic of humanity that distinguishes individuals from other creatures such as animals.

Third, kindness towards others is evident as informants alleviate the burdens of others' labor and provide benefits to them. Informants assist in their parents' daily tasks and aid their neighbors. This is substantiated by research conducted by Alifiya et al., which indicates that, according to Young, spiritual well-being can cultivate a compassionate disposition toward others (Alifiya et al., 2023).

Fourth, there is a relationship with nature, this is because informants have a reciprocal relationship with nature by utilizing nature properly, such as participating in farming and producing something good from nature in the form of crops, thus informants also help preserve nature.

Fifth, there is a belief in the miracle of the environment because informants believe that nature can produce something good if it is well cared for, thus the miracle of the environment can be started with trust in natural components or the environment.

Sixth, there is peace with God, this is because informants carry out God's orders and carry out their obligations as servants of the obligations given by God, in research by Agustina Rifa and Dewi Gayatri (2023) also revealed that spiritual well-being or *Spiritual well being* (SWB) is often assessed is an aspect of spirituality, one of which consists of the strength or comfort of faith in God.

Conclusion

The data and analysis indicate that the spiritual well-being of rural women who married late in Bilapora Rebba Village encompasses four dimensions or domains. specifically personal domain, community domain, environmental domain, and transcendental domain.

The determinants of spiritual *well-being* in women who marry later in Bilapora Rebba Village encompass a sense of identity, life meaning, forgiveness, respect, kindness, environmental harmony, creator worship, peace with God, prayer life, self-awareness, universal connection, and appreciation of the environment's magic. The objective is to compare community traditions and perceptions regarding late marriage and age limits, as well as to analyze the prevalence of stereotypical traditions

concerning elder care and early marriages in urban versus rural areas. This comparison serves as a criterion for evaluating societal habits, traditions, and views, particularly regarding the ideal age for women to marry.

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