DISCOURSE ON IDEAL FAMILY AMONG GENERATION Z
IN FAMILIES EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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Abstract This study aimed to explore the discourse on ideal families and partners among Generation Z members from families experiencing domestic violence. A qualitative method was employed, with informants drawn from Generation Z in families experiencing domestic violence. The study revealed that Generation Z holds discourses on ideal families and partners, which are described as families that respect each other's rights and obligations, create happiness, accept partners as they are, and foster a loving attitude. This study concludes that the discourse on ideal families among Generation Z is influenced by social media, which plays a significant role in their daily lives. Discourse on ideal family and partner in Generation Z women focuses on aspects of economics, psychology, gender equality, comfort, partner support and independence. In contrast, Generation Z men focus on comfort, career support and personal development without reducing emotional closeness.

Keywords: ideal family, ideal partner, ideal parents, Generation Z, domestic violence.

Discurso sobre a família ideal da geração Z em famílias vítimas de violência doméstica

Resumo Este estudo teve como objetivo explorar o discurso sobre as famílias e os parceiros ideais entre os membros da geração Z em famílias vítimas de violência doméstica. Foi utilizado um método qualitativo, com entrevistados da geração Z em famílias que sofreram violência doméstica. O estudo revelou que a geração Z possui discursos sobre famílias e parceiros ideais, que são descritos como famílias que respeitam os direitos e obrigações uns dos outros, criam felicidade, aceitam os parceiros como são e promovem uma postura afetuosa. Este estudo conclui que o discurso sobre as famílias ideais entre a geração Z é influenciado pelas redes sociais, que desempenham um papel importante no seu quotidiano. O discurso sobre a família e o parceiro ideais das mulheres da geração Z centra-se em aspetos económicos, psicológicos, de igualdade de género, conforto, apoio do parceiro e independência. Em contrapartida, os homens da geração Z centram-se no conforto, no apoio à carreira e no desenvolvimento pessoal, sem reduzir a proximidade emocional.

Palavras-chave**:** família ideal, parceiro ideal, pais ideais, geração Z, violência doméstica.

Discours sur la famille idéale de la génération Z au sein de familles victimes de violences conjugales

Résumé Cette étude vise à explorer le discours sur les familles et les partenaires idéaux parmi les membres de la génération Z, au sein de familles victimes de violences conjugales. Les entretiens menés auprès de membres de la génération Z issus de familles ayant subi des violences conjugales reposent sur une méthode qualitative. L'étude révèle que la génération Z a des discours sur les familles et les partenaires idéaux qui sont décrits comme des familles respectueuses des droits et obligations de chacun, suscitant le bonheur, acceptant les partenaires tels qu'ils sont et favorisant les comportements aimants. Cette étude conclut que le discours sur les familles idéales parmi la génération Z est influencé par les réseaux sociaux qui jouent un rôle important dans son quotidien. Le discours sur la famille et le partenaire idéaux des femmes de la génération Z est axé sur l'économie et la psychologie, sous certains de leurs aspects, l'égalité des sexes, le confort, le soutien du partenaire et l'indépendance. À l'inverse, les hommes de la génération Z se focalisent sur le confort, le soutien à la carrière et l'épanouissement personnel, sans pour autant amoindrir la proximité émotionnelle.

Mots-clés : famille idéale, partenaire idéal, parents idéaux, génération Z, violences conjugales.

Discurso sobre la familia ideal de la generación Z en familias víctimas de violencia doméstica

Resumen Este estudio tuvo como objetivo explorar el discurso sobre las familias y las parejas ideales entre los miembros de la generación Z con víctimas de violencia doméstica. Fue utilizado un método cualitativo con entrevistados de la generación Z en familias que sufrieron violencia doméstica. El estudio reveló que la generación Z posee discursos sobre familias y parejas ideales que son descritos como familias que respetan los derechos y las obligaciones tanto el uno como el otro, crean felicidad, aceptan a las parejas como son y promueven una postura afectuosa. Este estudio concluye que el discurso sobre las familias ideales entre la generación Z está influenciado por las redes sociales que desempeñan un papel importante en su vida cotidiana. El discurso sobre la familia y pareja ideales de las mujeres de la generación Z se centra en aspectos económicos, psicológicos, de igualdad de género, de comodidad, apoyo de la pareja y la independencia. En cambio, los hombres de la generación Z se centran en la comodidad, en el apoyo a la carrera y en el desarrollo personal sin aminorar la proximidad emocional.

Palabras-clave: familia ideal, pareja ideal, padres ideales, generación Z, violencia doméstica.

Introduction

Domestic violence is a significant issue and a criminal act that violates individual rights. It is a form of gender-based violence occurring in personal relationships and can take various forms, such as physical, psychological, sexual violence, and household neglect. The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 23 of 2004 concerning the elimination of domestic violence states "Domestic violence is an act against someone, especially women, which results in physical, sexual, psychological misery or suffering, and/or domestic neglect, including threats to commit acts, coercion, or unlawful deprivation of liberty within the household."

In Indonesia, the National Commission on Women, through its annual reports (2022, 2023, 2024), documented that in 2021 there were 6,985 cases, then 7,123 cases in 2022 and 7,500 cases in 2023. This means that based on National Commission on Women's Annual Records the increase in reports related to domestic violence amounted to 5 - 6%. The Women's Life Experience Survey (2022,

2023, 2024) also revealed that 23.3% of women experienced domestic violence in 2021, then increased by 30% in 2022, and 35% in 2023. Based on these two sources, there is a consistent upward trend of 3 - 6% annually in reported cases. This data also shows that awareness of victims to report has increased by 35% - 40% every year.

Various programs to overcome the problem of domestic violence have been carried out by various parties, namely the government through the National Commission on Women of The Republic of Indonesia, the Women's Empowerment Service, social institutions, local institutions, non-governmental organizations, etc.). Despite this, various cases of violence still occur. It frequently garners headlines in national media, including cases of husband's abuse of his wife (Detiksulsel, 16 November 2024), husband burning his wife (Kompas, 2024), husband killing his wife while live (Detiksumut, 2024), and even mutilating his wife's body (CNN Indonesia, 2024).

The high prevalence of domestic violence in Indonesia is deeply intertwined with the patriarchal culture prevalent in society, particularly in Javanese communities. Patriarchal culture is still part of everyday people's lives. Men are in a higher position than women. Men become leaders and heads of families. Men provide protection to women. Therefore, within the family sphere, women are obliged to submit obediently to their husbands in return for the protection provided by their wives. The wife is obliged to submit to her husband (Mas'udah, 2022).

In Javanese society, although there has been a shift towards a more egalitarian direction, the essence of patriarchy is still strongly embedded. Roles in the family are still based on patriarchy. Even though many women have entered the public sphere, women are still obliged and responsible for completing domestic work. Even though some families have involved wives in the role negotiation process, decision making is still dominated by men (Mas'udah, 2023).

In many cases, domestic violence remains unreported. Previous studies suggest that societal norms and cultural sensitivity contribute to victims' reluctance to report violence, perceiving it as a private matter or a source of family shame (Hardianto et al., 2023; Mas'udah, Megasari, and Doran, 2022). Other reasons for non-reporting range from shame, fear of societal stigma, cultural sensitivity, including fear of isolation, fear of retaliation (Vasiliauskaite and Geffner, 2020; Aborisade, 2023; Lee-Winter, 2023). In Javanese society, the patriarchal discourse that places men as the first class and women as the second class is still practiced in the family (Mas'udah, 2023).

Discourse is a system of thought and representation built in social interaction that builds identity, social norms, power structures, individual ways of speaking, thinking and acting towards social reality (Foucault, 1972). The discourse around the ideal family varies greatly, especially among dual-career families who have experienced violence, namely: conventional family, democratic family and liberal family or a combination of several family types. Even though many victims of violence want to escape the shackles of patriarchy, some victims still have patriarchal discourse (Mas'udah, 2022). Domestic violence is normalized and considered discipline. This shows how patriarchy is still deeply rooted in Javanese society.

An ideal family is typically described as one that fulfills social functions in alignment with prevailing norms and values. The concept of the ideal family is not static and universal, but rather depends on the cultural context, developing values and norms, as well as the social structure in society, including the transformation of gender relations, changes in family structure, and increasing awareness of social issues such as domestic violence (Parsons, 1955; Lammers et al., 2017).

In today's society, the discourse on the family has altered in line with the changing structure of society, making family values more fluid. The definition of family has shifted as new families develop and leave the conventional family system. The discourse of the ideal family in Asian society is primarily focused on the form of a complete family where there are values of harmony in the family. Previous research stated that the ideal family discourse in the Confucian concept refers to the virtues of Asian culture, where harmony demands women to align themselves with men in order to obscure the core cause of oppression of women by patriarchal culture (Rush 2015; Loza, 2022; Liu, 2024; Rifat-Ur-Rahman et al., 2024).

Ideal family in the construction of an Orthodox Protestant is about the ideals of family inclusion and despises divorce, contraception, and gender (Broer et al., 2024). An ideal family can manage family conflicts well to avoid divorce. This is inseparable from conventional values where family success is assessed from the point of view of maintaining the marriage. In the modern family, on the other hand, the discourse of the ideal family is more shaped by principles of gender equality in which husbands and wives are aware of and understand gender justice in the family.

The discourse on ideal family is generally portrayed by a complete family consisting of a father, mother, and children. Previous studies explained that in developmentalism studies, the ideal type of family is discussed as a family that is in line with improving family welfare and is comparable to the type of nuclear family (Sriram and Navalkar, 2012; Rushing and Powell, 2014; He and Xie, 2023). It refers to a nuclear family that is capable of meeting the family's needs while also achieving welfare as a benchmark. Family well-being, which includes harmony and financial security, is regarded as crucial in the construction of an ideal family.

The study of Andrea J. Melnikas and Diana Romero (2019) explained that prior to the 2000s, the ideal family in the United States was thought to be one with a high reproduction rate. Fertility has long been regarded as a sign of domestic success. This has both advantages and disadvantages, especially in non-fertility households. This is referred to as discrimination against infertile men or women. Meanwhile, past European studies have found that the measure of an ideal family in Europe is a fertility rate that can be controlled by having two children (Sobotka and Beaujouan, 2014; Miettinen and Szalma, 2014; Behrman and Erman, 2019).

Baxter and Pederson's study suggested that the ideal family is perceived in the form of a family that meets marital satisfaction and has ideal communication standards both for parents and children. This kind of discourse is an ideal family

discourse in a modern family, where success and ideal family are assessed by the quality of the family, such as communication and strong social ties, rather than the quantity of the family. In modern society, the ideal family is no longer one that has few disputes, but one that can effectively deal with disputes. However, this perception is still considered skeptical because many people consider the ideal family to be difficult to realize (Baxter and Pederson, 2013).

Some people still wish for the realization of an ideal family that is harmonious and full of compassion. Principle of harmony in Chinese families is based on family ideals which are used as paradigms in life (Ho, Jackson and Kong, 2018; Fauziah, 2020; Xiong, 2024). Families in East Asian society adhere to traditional values in the Confucian ideology which governs social relations and social orders and is characterized by full manners and politeness. This ideology, therefore, is used by East Asian people in their daily lives, including realizing an ideal family. It also regulates the relationship between husband and wife, children, and extended family with a hierarchical structure based on moral standards.

Meanwhile, Karhunen, Jokela, and Golovina (2023) and Driebe, Stern, Penke, and Gerlach (2023a) study found that the ideal family in Finland is associated with families who have only two children, as they are able to meet the necessities of housing, education, and insurance. This is certainly different from the stereotype of the East Asian household. The Finnish family is an example of a family that has evolved from traditional values and promotes democratic and egalitarian aspects of family life. The success of the family is determined not by the traditional life values instilled in the home, but by the family's efforts to create a pleasant environment for children.

The study of Misganu Endriyas, Gebru, and Assefa (2023) stated that one measure in demographic studies regarding the ideal family is the one that has good fertility rates. The measure of an ideal family in the context of fertility is the ability of women to control, conceptualize, or determine their fertility plans for the future (Bachan and Frye, 2013). This is a discourse in which the quantity of the family is an indicator of the perception of an ideal family. Indonesia in the New Order era (President Soeharto's regime) once adhered to this principle in the Family Planning program which has the motto "Two Children are Enough" as a manifestation of the ideal family. According to previous studies, the conventional indicator of male and female fertility is a measure of the ideal family, in which both couples can have the 'ideal number of children' (Ji, et al., 2015; Melnikas and Romero, 2019; He and Xie, 2023; Tong, Gan, and Zhang, 2023; Ruckdeschel, 2024). This shows that size or quantity is a crucial indicator for the formation of an ideal family.

Studies on the ideal family in a patriarchal society have not been widely carried out sociologically. The study of the ideal family is a fascinating subject. In Indonesian society, in almost every daily activity, the family is the subject of discussion including within the family environment, neighborhood, workplace, community, and society. This study is even more appealing because it seeks to deconstruct discourse about the ideal partner and family among Generation Z who have grown up witnessing their parents' domestic abuse. Generation Z is a

generation that has high involvement with digital technology. Pew Research Center (2020) published that 95% of Generation Z have access to smartphones and are the first group to grow up fully in the digital era. This digital connectedness allows Generation Z to access real-time information, including regarding domestic violence.

Studies that disclose the discourses on ideal family among youth are relatively uncommon. This study aims to reveal discourses on ideal family among Generation Z in families experiencing domestic violence. This study is significant as experiences in the family in childhood affect the discourse about the family and influence social actions later in adulthood. Domestic violence is a social practice. The practice of violence is part of socialization that is not intentionally carried out. Individuals' previous experiences shape their actions. Experiences in childhood have an impact on their lives in adulthood. The impact experienced not only affects the individual emotionally, but also psychologically and socially. Children who grow up in an environment of violence will internalize unhealthy relationship patterns (Evans, Johnson and Garcia, 2020). These children will grow up in situations where it is difficult to control stress, tend to repeat toxic relationship patterns, and have low self-confidence (Holt, 2022).

Domestic violence has a negative impact on the victim and family members. Therefore, efforts are needed to break the chain of violence. One effort to break the chain of violence is not to reproduce violence in the younger generation. Therefore, examining the discourse that develops among young people from families who have experience of domestic violence (families where their parents experience domestic violence) is very important. Thus, the results of this study can add to the literature related to ideal family discourse among Generation Z who come from families experiencing violence. By understanding their discourse, it can produce new insights in building a young generation without violence. This research contributes to the development of literature in the fields of family studies and gender studies.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative method and was conducted in East Java, Indonesia. The population of East Java has been indoctrinated and groomed with a patriarchal mindset since childhood. Domestic violence persists as a result of patriarchal ideology. In East Java, the majority are Javanese. The division of work and roles between men and women is still sexist. Patriarchy is implanted and reinforced through femininity and masculinity. Patriarchal discourse continues to be developed through indoctrination and socialization from childhood. This indoctrination and socialization are carried out through various social institutions, such as families, schools and religious groups. Various forms of violence are considered normal as a form of husband's discipline towards his wife and are reproduced through patriarchal culture. Domestic violence does not only occur in the lower classes but also in the upper classes, including

educated dual-career families. In fact, this act of domestic violence is normalized in a patriarchal society (Mas'udah, 2023).

The informants in this study were Generation Z women and men who came from families where their father's committed violence against their mot hers. The number of informants in this study was 31, consisting of 18 women and 13 men. Criteria for informants in this study are: Generation Z; female or male, currently studying at university level; and coming from a family that has experience of domestic violence (father committing violence against mother). Informants were selected through the snowball method. Issue of violence is a sensitive issue, so the snowball method is the right method to use. Informants who were interviewed appointed other informants who match the criteria for this research.

This research was conducted from April 2023 to March 2024. The average duration of interviews with informants was two hours per informant. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews conducted face-to-face. Interviews were conducted in special places, such as restaurants, coffee shops, and fitness centers. Interviews were conducted in a private room so that informants could freely share their stories without pressure from anyone. Informants stated their willingness to participate before the interview was conducted.

In-depth interviews were conducted using open-ended guidelines. Interviews were conducted in a flowing manner without any pressure from the interviewer, allowing informants to freely share their experiences. Questions asked to informants related to their experiences since childhood, experiences of violence in their families, sources of knowledge they obtained, use of social media, their views on marriage, ideal partners, and the ideal family. The acquired data was processed and categorized based on the research topic. After processing and categorizing the data, it was analyzed, dialogued, and discussed with theories and past studies pertinent to the topic under investigation.

Results and discussion

The ideal family is described as one that is either free of conflict or adept at managing it. Previous research suggests that the issue of ideal family size arises from conflicting relationships within the family. As a result, the ideal family is considered a strategy to ensure and sustain the community's standard of living through family stability (Hilevych and Rusterholz, 2018; Amusa and Yahya, 2019). Consequently, conflict resolution within the family is regarded as a crucial indicator of the ideal family.

Several factors influencing the discourse on ideal family size have been identified in prior studies. These include the ideal number of children, place of residence, religion, education, educational status, and standard of living adopted by both partners (Khongji, 2017). This underscores that achieving an ideal family is a multifaceted process shaped by socio-cultural and economic contexts. Agrawal's study (2012) also found that the importance of the sex composition of children being the ideal family number in India, resulting in women being pushed to have abortions on a regular basis.

Discourse on the ideal family among Generation Z in families experiencing domestic violence

The ideal family is frequently described as one that is full of happiness. Many individuals acknowledging that establishing an ideal family is a significant challenge due to the complexities involved. This was claimed by a 21-year-old female informant, NUR, who had been a victim of domestic violence. NUR emphasized her views on the ideal family, asserting that realizing such a family is difficult. This is inextricably linked to NUR's personal story, in which she frequently witnessed and suffered domestic abuse by her parents.

> I think the ideal family is difficult to realize. I'd better call it a happy family because the ideal family is very complicated. The achievements of each family are also different. This happy family, in my opinion, is one in which family members open up to one another and are filled with gratitude. Suppose in an unstable economy, all members of this family can understand, feel happy with what they have. Furthermore, the most important thing is to keep disagreement to a minimum. We must also accept our partners for who they are. [NUR, 21 years old]

Based on NUR's statement, it is clear that defining the ideal family is a challenging task for her. She prefers to use the word "happy" to describe a successful family. This perspective is inextricably linked to her experience of growing up in a tumultuous household, where her father was a frequent perpetrator of domestic violence against her mother. As a result, NUR considers the concept of the ideal family unattainable, but she considers the term "happy family" to be sufficient.

The formation of an ideal family is subjective and varies from person to person. As NUR stated, a happy family is one that can cultivate gratitude and minimize family conflicts. According to NUR, family conflict is inevitable, hence a family is said to be happy if it can prevent conflict as much as can. The formation of an ideal family sometimes follows religious norms as a benchmark. Previous research suggests that Malawians' ideal family preferences are linked to their education and religious identity, with educational institutions playing a key part in forming an ideal family (Swindle, 2017; Behrman, 2015; Yeatman, Sennott and Culpepper, 2013).

For many people, the ideal family structure is defined by its composition. Some view a father, mother, and children as the most important components of a perfect family. The study conducted by Ambrosetti, Angeli, and Novelli (2019) found that the ideal family was formed by the high class which was eventually adopted by all circles, including the lower class, which limited the number of children in the household. This indicates that the construction of the ideal family is often tied to societal and economic realities and includes a role model.

For some people, the quantity or number of their family is unquestionably the most essential factor. The ideal family is characterized as a complete family, according to the informant MEI as well. The ideal family, according to MEI, is difficult to materialize if it is not in the form of a full family because the entire family performs

the most important function among family members.

> For me, the ideal family consists of a father and mother, as well as children. Each member of this family has a specific function to play in order to be a support system. Give and appreciate one another, love and protect each other, and live in a peaceful household atmosphere. [MEI, 19 years old]

MEI's statement highlights that the ideal family is one that functions as a cohesive system, where members support one another. This notion is reinforced by the intactness of the family, which aims to achieve harmony. Families that are separated due to divorce or death are not included in MEI's definition of the ideal family. MEI views an ideal family as one characterized by mutual love, protection, and a peaceful environment. MEI's motivation for declaring these are inextricably linked to her experience as a child seeing domestic violence. MEI noted that a family has to love, protect, and live in a peaceful environment, becoming a reflection of her wish to find a family that is not like the one she is now experiencing.

Discourse about the ideal family varies among individuals. A family that always supports its members, according to MEI, is directly tied to the division of roles in the family because MEI stated that the family seeks to be a support system. According to previous studies, the ideal family discourse in the Netherlands has been formed by gender roles since women were young through their parental messaging (Ruitenberg and de Beer, 2014). This is a type of traditional family in which members of the family are assigned certain roles in order to achieve the ideal family standard. Furthermore, the ideal family discourse, which is built on family roles, is prone to discrimination and subordination, particularly among women. Women, burdened with dual responsibilities, frequently become the focal point of efforts to create an ideal family. Previous studies have also noted that ideal family discourse discriminates against women by emphasizing reproduction, fertility, and family planning as women's responsibilities, while men's involvement is rarely addressed in terms of contraceptive use (Das et al., 2013; Mistik et al., 2013). These findings demonstrate that gender roles remain a primary reference point for defining an ideal family, despite the fact that women are subjugated objects.

Furthermore, the burden of creating an ideal family is predominately placed on women, especially in policy contexts. For example, family planning programs aim to limit births and declare an ideal family model. Poelker and Gibbons (2017) found that achieving the ideal family often relies on contraception to regulate the number of children, linking it to women's empowerment. This indicates that the achievement of the ideal family is related to the demographics of the population. Costa, Trumble, Kaplan, and Gurven (2018) discovered that the ideal family discourse also includes children's welfare, which is always linked to the number of children in the family. Modern family planning programs frequently equate the ideal family with a small nuclear unit, emphasizing the economic and social welfare of its members.

Nonetheless, for some people, indicators for the realization of the ideal

family do not have to be based on the quantity and responsibilities of family members who are linked to one another. For instance, the number of families cannot be the primary criterion because some families, such as those without children, are unable to meet it. This was revealed by the informant SAV who has a different view of the ideal family.

> The ideal family is one in which every family member feels at ease and recognizes the importance of a family. If the ideal family in some cultures is a family with two parents and children, I consider a husband and wife to be a family even before they have children, it can be considered that they have created an ideal family if they have been able to build a peaceful, pleasant, and safe atmosphere in their marriage. [SAV, 20 years old]

SAV's statement demonstrates a progressive effort to move beyond the conventional emphasis on quantity as a defining characteristic of an ideal family. The ideal family, according to SAV, can be realized through promoting values in order to achieve family harmony. The number of families is not the most critical factor for SAV in determining the realization of an ideal family because quantity discriminates against incomplete families. Families with or without children, intact families, or divorced families, according to SAV, can be perfect families as long as the family members feel comfortable living at home.

Although SAV's statement aligns with a more modern understanding of family, many parties have set a standard of ideal family form as a reference for other families. Previous research has shown that, in Australia, the government promotes an ideal family model characterized by a heterosexual relationship with a single breadwinner, mainly the husband, and the wife caring for the children and that these values affect economic rationalist ideas (Dodd, Saggers, and Wildy 2009; Murphy 2002; Nolan 2003). This occurs in a number of countries, particularly in traditional and patriarchal communities. In many Asian nations where family values are founded on traditional beliefs, the image of an ideal family in the shape of a heterosexual couple is still commonly used. Likewise, Rauscher, Young, Durham, and Barbour (2016) observed that the ideal family comprises of heterosexual parents who are happy in their marriage, raising healthy children, and reflecting the roles of their own parents.

Furthermore, heterosexual couples are a proxy for the development of an ideal family in many cultures. According to previous surveys, the ideal family discourse in Hong Kong will be a family with heterosexual parents, and same-sex marriage will not be acknowledged (Scully-Hill, 2016). This clearly does not apply to a society that adheres to liberal and secular values. Meanwhile, because they are linked to religious ideals and biological impulses to reproduce, heterosexual couples are markers of ideal families. Snider (2016) also revealed that for years, the ideal family was defined as a heteronormative nuclear family (HNF), which required a monogamous heterosexual spouse and the presence of offspring, and these norms were considered sexist.

Based on the results of interviews with informants, this study found that the discourse about the ideal family in Generation Z varies greatly. Based on gender, the discourse about the ideal family among Generation Z men shows that they are

more fluid in their views on family. For them, the definition of family is more flexible, such as inclusive families and child-free families as stated by the FAI:

> It doesn't matter if the couple doesn't want to have children. "For men, it only fertilizes... for women, it's more difficult (FAI, 20 years old)

However, some male informants were less open to equality due to lingering influences and example of parents and/or extended family, as revealed by GIL and SAT:

> The law is obligatory if the man…. "Since I went to college, I've been thinking... I've had more responsibilities, I've been thinking far ahead because I realize that in the future I'll be the head of the household, wife and children, the husband will be in charge, I can't be bothered about that (GIL, 19 years old)

> I used to think that men should be the ones who 'lead' the household, but now I see that it doesn't have to be like that. Everything can be shared (SAT, 20 years old).

Generation Z as a whole appears to view the ideal couple and family as a mutually supportive team. They emphasize the importance of healthy relationships, open communication, and equal partnership. Generation Z crave complete affection, career support and personal development, without compromising on emotional closeness. They idealize healthy couple relationships without pressure and children being given space to have opinions and choices. This is as told by IRF:

> There is no justification for violence, whether it is a partner or family, we must support each other. I have seen for myself how my parents hurt each other, I don't want to be like that. If you feel that home and child matters should be a priority for your wife, it is better not to work, but there is no compulsion, right now you don't have to work in the office, you can sell services or goods, like MSMEs. If that happens, I'm sure there will be a healthy couple and family (IRF, 20 years old).

For Generation Z, social media serves as a vital means of communication with partners and family members, including parents and children. Social media has a very important function in family relationships. Even though they live far from their extended family, they can still communicate via social media. As stated by DIM:

> In social media posts, that's for sure, if there's an important moment, it's a form of happiness. If you post anything, don't post it. This is for me, social media is more of a means of communicating with my partner, later if I have children then with my children, with my parents, other extended family because they may live far away. So social media has more of a function in that direction (DIM, 21 years old)

The ideal family discourse among Generation Z women is: the division of family roles is not always based on traditional ones, but marriage is very important. Couples and families must avoid conflict and domestic violence. This is as stated by SAL:

> In my opinion, the ideal family must be both well-established first, emotionally established, physically established, and don't forget financially established. I have seen and heard a lot, not only in the extended family but also from stories from neighbors, relatives, friends, and many on social media where problems ranging from violence to murder are caused by financial factors, whether it is not having money, debt, to borrowing and online gambling. So in my opinion, a family not only respects each other, can chat, and has no pressure, but is also financially stable too. Because everything can be destroyed just because of money (SAL, 20 years old)

Generation Z women also emphasize gender equality in their ideal family discourse, particularly regarding the role of fathers in household duties and childcare. They view couples and families as partnerships and a place to grow together emotionally, financially and in other practical ways. Spouses are solid partners. As stated by AND:

> For me, apart from accepting shortcomings, family also respects my partner's opinions and decisions, loving each other is also important. I believe that without sincere love, there cannot be an ideal family. "Because I saw my aunt and uncle often fighting, I thought that families are not always happy, therefore there must be sincere love and good communication, mutual respect (AND, 20 years old)

Generation Z women further advocate for awareness of family diversity in terms of religion, background (seeds of weight), and sexual orientation. They value partners who are independent, support personal independence, on the one hand care about emotional relationships, full of respect, affection and quality time together. This is as stated by HAL:

> There are bound to be fights, it's impossible for a family not to fight. I saw it myself, heard it myself, even from stories, yes it's normal. Just don't fight to the point of violence, just resolve it with good communication. So that all family members can feel safe, appreciated and support each other. There is no fear, and the house is truly a home, everyone has room to grow (HAL, 20 years old)

For Generation Z women, marriage remains an important institution, but they prioritize the quality of the relationships and mutual happiness over traditional markers. A family is considered ideal if parents give their children freedom to develop. Social media is not only a communication medium, it also serves as a means of sharing moments with partners and family.

This study found that the discourse about the ideal family was more varied than previous studies. Discourse about the ideal family and partner in Generation Z women emphasizes economic, psychological, gender equality, comfort, partner support and independence. In contrast, Generation Z men focus on comfort, career support and personal development without reducing emotional closeness. However, the influence of parents and extended family often results in some men maintaining patriarchal perspectives, as reflected in their views on gender roles.

Previous studies highlighted that achieving an ideal family depends on the quality of family relationships, as measured by the availability of family support (Bai, Lai, and Guo 2016). This demonstrates that family support, particularly for spouses and children, is an important feature of achieving the ideal family. Meanwhile, support for the family is reflected in a loving attitude toward the family, which is often the standard of ideal partners. Additionally, earlier research suggests that women commonly envision the ideal husband as hardworking, be financially supportive, loyal, and disciplined head of the household. However, many women express disappointment when with partners fail to meet these expectations, either as providers or as caring fathers (Adjei, 2015).

Discourse on parents and ideal partners among Generation Z in families experiencing domestic violence

As a child who grew up in a family where domestic abuse was prevalent, the informants in this study shared diverse perspectives. The term "ideal partner" is often used to describe a life partner, typically a "husband" or "wife." The ideal partner, according to the informant ILA, is a discourse that is quite complicated to define. However, she believed that by doing nice things in the family, anyone may be an excellent partner.

> In my perspective, the ideal partner is someone who can accept my strengths and shortcomings, remind and guide me to always do good, love, and care for me without being stingy. When there is a problem between me and my in-laws, the best partner is one who can mediate rather than defending only one side. Couples also have a responsibility to support their families. [ILA, 21 years old]

ILA's perspective highlights that the ideal partner is defined based on individual attitudes and personalities. ILA did not address other factors in the statement, such as the economy or the couple's family background, instead of focusing solely on the personality and attitude of the pair. The perfect companion, according to ILA, is someone who can accept oneself for who they are, pay attention, and mediate when there is a family conflict. This third point is one that ILA highlights since she observes a lot of tension in her home, where her father frequently assaults his mother.

The ideal partner as described by ILA is the most common picture of a couple in society. Many people consider the perfect relationship or in Layman's language, a decent partner, as someone gentle, polite, and loving. Research by Weber and Ruch (2012) suggests that ideal partners are often characterized by partner's character strength, which is comprised of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors described in traits such as the partner's wisdom and knowledge, courage, humanity (love, kindness, social intelligence), justice (leadership), simplicity, and transcendence (gratitude, beauty, humor, religion). These are the desires of the individual to choose a spouse who meets the requirements. Warmth-trust (partner understanding, supportive), attractiveness (beautiful, gorgeous, sexy), and resource-status

(good job, success) are all included in previous studies as characteristics of the ideal spouse (Anderson 2018).

Some of the ideal standards that are desired from partners are attachment security, similarity to oneself, and similarity of ideals of self (quality and potential of partners) (Nyby et al., 2017; Driebe et al., 2023b; Broer et al., 2024). These studies suggest that individuals often desire partners who are similar to themselves, such as in terms of hobbies or careers. Previous studies have found that ideal partner preference is achieved since the partner selection process is related to the quality and future of the partner (Campbell and Stanton, 2014; Matson, Chung and Ellen 2014).

Because domestic harmony is maintained by each spouse's attitude, the description of an ideal mate is mainly connected with persons who love and respect each other. The ideal spouse, according to the informant SYA, cannot be separated from the attitudes and qualities that are comparable to her own. As a child who has been exposed to violence, SYA believed that the perfect relationship is a space where they can talk to each other and where love is always there. SYA stated this since she observed her parents as being far from perfect partners for each other.

> The perfect partner, in my opinion, is someone who is like a friend and has a higher level of religious understanding and behavior than I have. Religious knowledge and faith are also crucial for me in guiding each other in the right direction and reminding each other of the afterlife. The point is that I'd like to have a partner who has something in common, and who I can invite to share our fantasies. About life goals and perspectives, as well as accepting each other's likes and interests. And because our connection is like that of friends, no one is in power or controlled. Ideal couples also coordinate what decisions they wish to make together. Space where people can converse with one another and battle for survival. No one is happy or sad, but there is a division of labor in the house. [SYA, 20 years old]

The ideal partner, according to SYA, is one who can become a friend or is a friend. Despite the fact that religious norms suggest that the husband is the leader and is responsible for guiding the wife, SYA believes these standards should not be imposed textually. SYA sought a partner who understands gender equality in order to reduce conflict and avoid domestic abuse.

The desire to have a spouse who meets certain criteria is one way for people to realize their ideal relationship. This aligns with findings from Eastwick, Finkel, and Simpson (2018), who suggest that shared attributes and mutual enjoyment of activities contribute positively to relationships. The closeness of qualities is considered a positive aspect because both couples may spend time doing activities that they both enjoy. According to previous research, a partner's ideal standard is to have features or attitudes that are almost identical to or better than one own (Liu et al., 2018; Longmire-Avital and Reavis, 2016). This is similar to SYA's viewpoint which expresses a desire for a mate who has a higher level of religiosity. In traditional societies, this type of desire is frequently linked to gender roles, such as a woman desiring a husband who is more

successful and pious than herself, while a man wants a wife who is more diligent and capable of taking care of him.

For many people, finding the perfect partner is a challenging task. Many people have a vision of what their ideal spouse should be like, but it is not reflected in their current relationship. Individuals will approach potential partners who have viable alternatives to their romantic ideals, they will commit once they have discovered them (Markey and Markey, 2013; Seidman, 2016). This suggests that realizing the perfect spouse occurs when the individual accepts the partners for who they are and finds 'something else' to complete the ideal criteria. According to Figueredo, Sefcek, and Jones (2006), while everyone has expectations for finding an ideal spouse, no one is able to emulate all of these preferences in their current relationship.

Finally, the informant HAR discussed ideal spouses as people who promote gender equality. HAR is a 21-year-old man who comes from a tumultuous family. According to HAR, finding the ideal companion is not difficult. He highlighted that anyone, including men and women, can be an ideal partner if they have a social spirit that is not selfish, in order to avoid family conflicts.

> For me, the ideal partner is a well-educated spiritualist who is aware of herself and her surroundings, including her partner, family, society, and environment, who upholds gender equality beliefs, and who enriches each other's daily life with meaningful family practices. [HAR, 21 years old]

According to HAR, the ideal companion must be well-educated. HAR believes that couples who have a clear understanding of their rights and gender equality are less likely to engage in domestic violence. HAR noted that both his mother and father lack an understanding of gender equality, which he sees as a contributing factor to family violence. Therefore, HAR emphasized the importance of both spouses having sufficient knowledge.

For some individuals, having an educated and intelligent partner is a dream and aspiration. Because marriage is more than just about reproduction, it also involves a conversation between husband and wife, people who want a clever mate usually want a partner who can be friends and exchange views. Previous studies have shown that individuals set ideal standards for physically attractive partners and intelligent or educated partners (Gerlach et al., 2019). People who are highly educated generally apply such standards because they seek a companion who shares their interests, particularly in education. The ideal criteria wanted by individuals become the benchmark for judging their relationships, according to Yan, Wang, Wang, Uquillas, He, Cheng, and Zou (2022) this standard is used by someone for success in getting a partner who is considered ideal.

These standards can significantly impact marital satisfaction and happiness (Li and Fung, 2011). However, when an individual's expectations are high and their partner fails to meet those standards, the marriage is more likely to face conflict. This is influenced by the individual's attitude as well as the attitude of the partner who is unable to reach an agreement and who also refers to the ideal standard. The

study conducted by Liu, Ludeke, Haubrich, Gondan-Rochon, and Zettler (2018), Fletcher, Overall, Campbell (2020), and Driebe, Stern, Penke, and Gerlach (2023b) stated that the ideal partner standard describes that intimate relationship is related to various aspects including social, physical, and the quality of the preferred attitude of the partner. Therefore, a husband and wife who fight means that they do not find the preferred attitude of the desired ideal partner standard.

Living and being raised in a family filled with conflict and domestic violence often leads adult children to critically evaluate their parents. The ideal meaning of a spouse and parents is considered vastly different from their parents' current condition. They hold an opinion that is substantially different from what he previously stated about the ideal relationship and family. This was revealed by the informant TIA who expressed his disappointment with her parents.

> I live with my father and stepmother because my biological mother has long passed away. My stepmother was a strong-tempered individual who could express herself openly. My stepmother was not the ideal figure of a mother. She is also not an ideal partner. She is a person of strong character and able to speak openly. I had never considered my stepmother to be my mother until now. My father, on the other hand, is not an ideal father and partner. At home, he rules, and his style is highly patriarchal. He banned my stepmother from working outside of the city, put makeup, and simply going on a walk. My father, on the other hand, occasionally offered me freedom as long as I followed all of his rules. It's just that I realized that it wasn't all freedom, but the values he created to perpetuate his patriarchal values. [TIA, 19 years old]

Based on TIA's account, it is evident that her visions of the ideal relationship and family are vastly different from her reality. TIA regarded her family as unhappy. The relationship between her father and stepmother has lasted more than 15 years. To this day, however, TIA is still experiencing her parents' domestic abuse. Both TIA's father and stepmother are individuals who do not want to give in so that both can become victims and perpetrators of violence.

Collin (1987) posited in his theory that the ideal family is founded on companionship, with husband-and-wife relationships that are horizontal (not hierarchical). Collin claimed in this case that husband and wife relationships should be balanced because husband and wife are two people with equal status. Families who value the nature of companionship can achieve gender equality and avoid the patriarchal structures.

Domestic violence, particularly when women are the victims, exemplifies the persistence of patriarchy within families. According to Collin's hypothesis, it is extremely difficult for a family to become an ideal family when there is a gender discrepancy between husband and wife. This is also linked to the vertical structure, which promotes the creation of prolonged conflicts.

Conflict and violence serve as indicators of whether or not a family can be harmonious. For many, disagreements and violence are a hindrance or an obstacle in their marriage. Conflict and violence are not simply a problem of two adults, such as a husband and wife, but they also have to do with teaching children how to

behave properly. Eaton, Ohan, Stritzke, and Corrigan (2016) explained that as ideal family is defined by good parents who can educate children to have careers and educate children to become good parents. This is notably different when parents frequently quarrel, giving the impression that the family is striving for perfection. Conflicts and domestic violence, which disproportionately affect women, highlight the existence of gender imbalances within households. Prior studies have stated that the standard of the ideal partner is also related to gender inequality because partner choice preferences include a partner's financial prospects, perseverance, attractiveness, chastity, age difference, social position, education, and intelligence, as well as domestic and economic aspects and labor division (Zentner and Eagly, 2015; Grøntvedt and Kennair, 2013; Thomae and Houston, 2016).

Parents who engage in conflict and perpetrate violence in front of their children are inherently incapable of fostering an ideal family environment. They fail to protect their children from violence. This doctrine, which asserts that a family should have virtuous features, is extensively practiced in China, Japan, and Korea. In Korean society, the concept of a harmonious ideal family should not be underestimated or considered as a static innate trait, therefore family social ties must be renegotiated on a regular basis (Lim-Soh, Kim and Kim, 2024).

Many individuals aspire to create the perfect family, spouse, and parenthood. However, even those who are capable of becoming parents and partners and starting a family are unable to construct a pleasant family life. This was a personal experience for the informant AYU, who stated that becoming an ideal family was really tough for her family. Her parents, she believed, were not ideal figures.

> My mother has not yet matured into an ideal wife since, based on what I see every day when an issue arises, it is not always appropriately discussed. If there is an issue in the family, the impact will be on their children. Also, they do not respond well when asked to manage school problems. My father, like my mother, has not fully developed into an ideal husband figure because some of what he says can be considered rude. My father cannot be described as an ideal father because when I make a mistake, I am occasionally hit. He also unpleasantly speaks to the child. AYU, 20 years old]

AYU's remarks about her parents reveal that they fall far short of being ideal partners and parents. AYU, who claimed to witness marital abuse regularly, admitted that her father and mother's relationship could never achieve the ideal family dynamic she had envisioned. Her parents are people who are less supportive of the child. In addition to frequently committing domestic violence to each other, AYU's parents also easily vent their anger on their children.

The importance of family support in building a happy family cannot be overstated. AYU observed that her parents' frequent expression of anger toward their children is a form of lack of parental support for their children, in addition to the fact that they commonly conduct domestic violence. AYU also stated that it is impossible to feel happiness in the family if her parents often scolded or blamed their children.

The realization of the ideal family is achieved not only when each family member's rights are fulfilled but also when obligations such as the need to support

and love among family members are fully met. The informant HAR stated that the ideal family he was referring to was substantially different from his current family condition. According to HAR, their father and mother were selfish individuals, making it impossible to call them an ideal family.

> My mother was uneducated, could not listen to her children's thoughts, was toxic, and made me dislike going home at times. So far what she has shown is only meeting basic material needs. She does not have the awareness to give a meaningful sense of affection to me. She does not understand the importance of rewards, and since childhood, I tend to receive more punishment. After 21 years, it was discovered that the punishment was not my fault, but rather the result of my mother's character, who was a toxic parent. It was not uncommon for mistakes to be made. She often blamed other people or exaggerated problems. I was never involved in her life decisions because my parents' mindset thought I was still like a child. I'm too young to be involved. My father is like that; even if he is religious, he does not represent a pious person. My father is a patriarchal figure who doesn't recognize himself and can't accept other people's perspectives. He's also judgmental and temperamental, and he didn't even save me from mental illness. He's only made things worse. [HAR, 21 years old]

HAR admitted that neither his parents nor his partner met the ideal standards envisioned. That is why HAR mentioned right away that he desired a well-educated spouse. This is strongly intertwined with his experience as a child who was a victim of domestic violence. He developed mental health difficulties as a result of the domestic violence he observed virtually every day, and he tried alone to find a remedy for his illness.

The realization of an ideal family occurs when each family member's rights are respected, and they fulfill their commitments to show affection for one another. This is only felt by HAR when it comes to meeting material needs. HAR believed that his life is sufficient in terms of fulfilling his physical needs, but HAR admits that his parents do not provide an affectionate function for their children.

This study strengthens Adawiah's (2013) findings, which define the ideal family as a harmonious where each member carries out their rights and obligations proportionally. In some families, however, parents are unable to carry out their rights and obligations properly to form a happy family. In fact, they do not provide affection in the way the ideal family standard is realized. Previous studies also indicated that the construction of an ideal family is described by the one that is able to realize mutual respect, trust, support, and keep promises (Shen and Shen 2013). These aspects are unfortunately rarely noticed by some people to establish a happy family or an ideal family.

This study also presents new findings that diverge from previous studies. With the rise of information and communication technologies, social media significantly influences people's views, including their views on family, especially young people from Generation Z. Generation Z, or the digital native generation, is a group that was born and grew up in the age of digital technology such as the internet and social media has become an integral part of their daily lives. Various reels, photos,

and videos about family, marriage and ideal partners decorate their social media (such as on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc.). This influences their perspective.

The information they obtain through social media influences their discourse. They discuss their family based on the information they get from social media. They do not want to reproduce the experiences of violence that occurred in their families. They discuss the ideal family as a family free from violence. They don't want the experience of violence from their families to be repeated in their lives. They do not want to reproduce violence in the family. For them, violence has a negative impact on family members. Families experiencing violence cannot find peace and happiness. Apart from that, they also discuss an independent family. Independence for women is considered important in realizing the ideal family.

Gender relations fundamentally shape family dynamics in both traditional and modern societies. In the corridors of a patriarchal society, there are deeply rooted social constructions, which are often the cause of domestic violence. Gender roles are in inequality. In reality, men are leaders and women are influences and supporters. Judith Butler (1990) believes that gender roles are not biological in nature, but are formed through social norms that tend to maintain inequality. These unequal gender roles often become the basis for relations of control and escalation of conflict which has the potential to lead to domestic violence.

For Generation Z who were born and grew up with open access to information through social media and progressive education, gender relations in the ideal family are greatly influenced by their experiences, both directly and indirectly, with the practice of domestic violence (Lehrer et al., 2021). Generation Z who experience or witness domestic violence tend to define the ideal family by emphasizing gender equality and emotional equality in relationships. Generation Z wants an egalitarian marriage and a family that is free from physical violence, full of respect, healthy communication and fairness in the division of roles (Lammers et al., 2017). An egalitarian family builds meaning based on social interaction with both family and society. The experience of trauma from domestic violence functions as a trig-gering factor that directs the formation of an ideal family discourse that is far from violence (Herman, 2015). This traumatic experience gave rise to more critical think-ing about power structures in relationships, where Generation Z then prioritized emotional security and inclusiveness in family relationships (García-Moreno et al., 2018; Hague et al., 2020).

Family dynamics and practices as well as social representations of the family greatly influence the way Generation Z interprets the concept of the ideal family. The family is not only a social institution, but also a space that is influenced by norms and values that continue to develop dynamically. Families experiencing domestic violence are often characterized by emotional tension, unequal power, and unhealthy communication patterns. Generation Z, who grew up with a high flow of information and social awareness regarding issues of inclusivity, tends to be more critical of family practices of non-violence, mutual respect and fairness in relationships. This reality shows resistance to patriarchal norms (Walby, 2013). The social representation that is developing in Generation Z is strongly influenced by social media and more open discourse regarding gender equality and human

rights. The ideal family is a small unit that supports each other and is not just a place to survive violence and oppression (Möller and Schwarz, 2018).

Conclusion

The findings reveal that Generation Z holds specific discourses about family and ideal partners, which are defined as a family that respects each other's rights and obligations, creates happiness, accepts partners as they are, and has a loving attitude. Generation Z believe that their parents are not the perfect relationship and family that they claim to be. For them, their parents are far from the categories and standards of the ideal family because their family is constantly filled with never-ending domestic violence.

Generation Z in families experiencing domestic violence have their own discourse regarding their ideal family and partner. Generation Z perceptions of families and ideal partners are influenced by their experiences of violence in families who frequently perpetrate domestic abuse. They have a discourse that ideal families and partners are realized when both partners have mutual understanding and tolerance allowing them to accept each other's shortcomings, do not hurt, and avoid conflict.

Generation Z in families experiencing domestic violence who witnessed their father's committing violence against their mothers yearns and hopes for an ideal family model that is harmonious and without violence. Their hope arose because they were traumatized by the violence experienced by their mother. They do not want to reproduce domestic violence in their family. They consider violence to be a bad experience and detrimental to the victims and their families.

This study concludes that the discourse about the ideal family that is developing among Generation Z is influenced by social media which is part of their daily lives. The reels, photos, and videos they watch influence their discourses about the ideal family. They hope that their future family will be an ideal family that is harmonious without violence.

This study also found that discourse about the ideal family among Generation Z women is more varied than Generation Z men. Discourse about the ideal family and partner in Generation Z women focuses on aspects of economics, psychology, gender equality, comfort, partner support and independence. Meanwhile, Generation Z men emphasize comfort, career support and personal development without reducing emotional closeness. They are also not completely open to gender equality, because there is still the influence of parents or extended family. This shows that the essence of patriarchy still exists in society.

The result of this study contributes to the existing literature of family studies and gender studies. This study produces new insights to build generation without violence. This study is an effort to combat domestic violence realm in order to realize gender equality, justice and social inclusion within the family.

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