

The Oral Exegesis of Ning Imaz Fatimatuz Zahra (A Study of the Concept of *Kafa'ah* in Surah An-Nur, Verse 26)

Abdulloh Dardum^{1*}, Hamid Abdul Majid Khan¹, Lailatul Farokha¹, Qomaruz Zaman¹, H. Abdullah¹

¹ UIN Kiai Haji Achmad Siddiq Jember

Jln. Mataram, No.1 Karang Mluwo, Mangli, Jember 68136, INDONESIA

*Corresponding Author: dardum87@gmail.com

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30880/ahcs.2025.06.01.019>

Article Info

Received: 19 May 2025

Accepted: 27 May 2025

Available online: 10 Jun 2025

Keywords

Oral Interpretation, *Kafa'ah*,
Discourse Analysis

Abstract

The application of the concept of *kafa'ah* in marriage aims to find equal degrees for each prospective partner in order to achieve *sakinah mawaddah warahmah* and avoid post-marriage inequality. Ning Imaz Fatimatuz Zahra revealed that *kafa'ah* serves as a parameter in determining the ideal partner according to personal priorities. Apart from the 4 principles in *kafa'ah* that have been determined by the scholars, Ning Imaz added two types of considerations that can be used in determining the criteria for the desired prospective partner, namely intellectual and educational scales. This addition was certainly born from her adjustment to the needs of modern society and the journey of her personal experience conveyed in the NU Online channel. This research uses Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis approach with qualitative research methods resulting from the observation of the main source of research in the form of YouTube videos. As a result, it was found that the discourse delivered by Ning Imaz fulfills most of the dimensions of discourse in Norman Fairclough's level of discourse analysis, namely the textual dimension in the form of several diction in text production. The discourse dimension shows that YouTube is a means of spreading discourse. Finally, the socio-cultural dimension is a factor that influences Ning Imaz's discourse production related to *kafa'ah* such as situational, institutional and social levels.

1. Introduction

Most tradition of exegetical throughout the centuries until today can not be separated from voice and speech. As time goes by, this type of exegesis is referred as oral exegesis. In the field of Qur'anic studies, the term "oral exegesis" defined as the interpretation of the Qur'an orally. This kind of interpretation has existed since the era of the Prophet Muhammad, even this interpretation is considered as the earliest form of Qur'anic interpretation. As we know that, the Prophet Muhammad explained the every single verse of Qur'an orally. According to Andreas Gorke, oral exegesis generally occurs in group of study where a teacher or a student reads a book aloud

and others listen. In the middle of that activity, sometimes the teacher gives additional information or commentar to each topic. Gorke said that oral exegesis is especially needed in non-Arabic cultures where the verses of Qur'an must be translated and explained (Gorke, Andreas., 2014).

According to Gorke, some contemporary and modern exegetical works were first presented as radio and television shows or even public lectures. However, as time goes by transcribed into written form. With the advancement of technology many Qur'anic lectures have been captured on audio tapes, furthermore many interpretations of Qur'an are available online as podcast and also video (Gorke, Andreas., 2014). Thematic interpretations that appeal to younger audiences such as marriage, match making, and youth issues are popular among religious influencers. When the influencer provide those kind of informations It attracts larger following on social media. This article also explains about the concept of *Kafa'ah* (Compatibility) as one of popular theme among young audiences.

According to the Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), *Kafa'ah* refers to the equality between potential of bride and groom where guarantees that neither side experiences any hesitancy or burden that could prevent them from pursuing their goal of marriage (Karimullah, Suud., 2022). *Kafa'ah* is not an obligation, however it's guideline that must be fulfilled to help both to find an ideal partner based on the principles formulated by Islam (Fauziyah, Amira., 2021). One of the criteria of *Kafa'ah* as outlined by *Ulama'* (scholars) is derived from The Qur'an and Hadits which claimed that women are married for their wealth, ancestry, beauty and religion.

All scholars agree that religion is the primary benchmark for *Kafa'ah*. However, they had different opinion related to another criterias. For example, Imam Maliki restricts that *Kafa'ah* solely to religious compatibility. While Imam Syafi'i incorporates *Kafa'ah* includes lineage, freedom (not being enslaved), and also social status (Az-Zuhaili, Wahbah., 1985). One notable perspective comes from Ning Imaz Fatimatuz Zahra, a prominent as Indonesian Moslem woman known for her lectures on social issues -especially about marriage- in Islam. Ning Imaz is the daughter of the cartaker of the Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School in Kediri. She frequently speaks at Islamic gathering about gender, marriage and also worship. She is a well-known as influencer with 352.000 instagram followers. She explained about *Kafa'ah* based on Surah An-Nur verse 26 of the Qur'an in a video that was posted on youtube exactly on NU Online channel.

Along with social developments, The prevalence of couples with unequal educational background is one of the new marital issues. Differences in educational background can lead to internal conflict of family such as poor communication because of differing mindsets, behaviors, and psychological conditions. Those factors might eventually result in divorce. Effective communication fosters superior human relationship that emphasize openness, emphaty, supportive attitudes and also equality. The quality of communication also significantly affects satisfaction within the marital relationship (Pangaribuan, Lisbon., 2016). Economic factors are one of the main caused of divorce, as the stability of financial is an important element in *Kafa'ah*. According to data reported by Kompas.com from the Central Statistic Agency that there were 516,344 recorded divorce cases in 2022. This indicates that *Kafa'ah* should be considered as a factor before entering into life of marriage.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that in addition to economic issues, a new factor contributing to divorce cases is education or intellectual compatibility. Therefore, in her video explanation, Ning Imaz gave additional criterias on *Kafa'ah*. It includes education and intellectual capacity. She argues that this can include similar educational levels and compatible ways of thinking. She also believes that this can be a solution to help prevent divorce in this era.

Ning Imaz often uses popular contemporary terms such as quarter life crisis, mental health and also trust issue in her explanation because of her audiences consists largely of generation Z (Gen Z). This paper seeks to uncover the underlying factors behind the discourse produced by Ning Imaz using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach. CDA is a discourse analysis model used to determine whether a discourse is influenced by specific intentions and to explore its impact on the target of audience (Ratnaningsih, Dewi., 2019).

2. Method

This study uses qualitative research of the ethnographic type, which is a type of qualitative research that examines culture (Ambarwati, Kusmayra., 2022). In this study, the culture studied is social media culture or commonly called netnography. Meanwhile, data collection in this study uses a library study method with documentation techniques whose primary source is the NU Online Youtube channel video uploaded on July 26, 2024 and entitled "The Meaning of Equal Marriage According to Ning Imaz Fatimatuz Zahra," and secondary

data are references in the form of books, research articles, and other videos related to the video. The data is then analyzed using the Miles, Huberman and Saldana model, which has three stages, namely data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing (Mouw, Erland., 2022).

3. Biography of Ning Imaz Fatimatuz Zahra

Ning Imaz Fatimatuz Zahra, popularly known as Ning Imaz, was born in Cirebon on October 6, 1985. She is the daughter of the KH. Abdul Khaliq Ridwan and Nyai Hj. Eeng Sukaenah, caretakers of the Lirboyo Islamic Boarding School in Kediri, specifically the Al-Ihsan Female Islamic Boarding School (Maysaroh, Siti Nur., 2024). Ning Imaz is married to Gus Rifqil Muslim Suyuti, the son of the caretaker of the Mambaul Hikmah Islamic Boarding School in Kaliwungu, Kendal. She comes from a respected religious family—her grandfather was the author of *Siraj ath-Thalibin*, Sheikh Ihsan Muhammad Dahlan al-Jampasy. Her knowledge was passed down from her father and grandfather, eventually making her an expert in Islamic jurisprudence and a hafidzah (memorizer of the Qur'an).

Her expertise in the field of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) has been apparent since junior high school (Madrasah Tsanawiyah). She actively engages in discussions on Islamic scholarship, particularly fiqh, within the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) pesantren environment. Her strong educational background motivated Ning Imaz, at the age of 39, to engage in religious preaching via social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. She addresses issues that remain unclear or are still debated, such as religious practices, gender in Islam, parenting, matchmaking, and contemporary topics like the permissibility of living childfree

Ning Imaz completed her higher education at the Tribakti Islamic Institute in Lirboyo, Kediri. She also studied at the Qur'anic memorization boarding school Hidayatul Mubtadiaat Fi Tahfidzi Wal Qiraat, founded in 1985 CE / 1406 AH by KH. M. Anwar Mansur and Nyai Hj. Ummi Kultsum. Ning Imaz grew up and spent her youth in the Lirboyo pesantren environment. Even through high school, she remained a student there until she entered college. During her time in the pesantren, she deeply studied fiqh, which remains the main subject of her lectures, whether delivered online or offline.

In the *bahtsul masail* (religious discourse forum), she often discusses complex religious issues or new challenges faced by society. She not only gives lectures offline but also actively appears online. Aside from interpreting fiqh, she also interprets Qur'anic verses, many of which are uploaded to NU Online's YouTube channel, TikTok account, and Majt TV. One example of her interpretation is regarding QS. Ali Imran verse 14, posted on NU Online's TikTok with the title "Men in Heaven Get Maidens, What Do Women Get?"

The explanation regarding *kafa'ah* in Surah An-Nur verse 26 was later uploaded to the YouTube platform under the title "The Meaning of a Compatible (Equal) Marriage According to Ning Imaz Fatimatuz Zahra." She first entered the digital world during the Covid-19 period, a pandemic that made her popular across various social media platforms. Accustomed to receiving invitations to speak at offline religious gatherings, she had to stop completely due to the Covid outbreak. From that point on, she began to utilize Instagram, aiming to continue spreading religious knowledge during the pandemic. Over time, Ning Imaz became accustomed to preaching online and can now be found across various platforms.

4. Description of Ning Imaz Fatimatuz Zahra's Interpretation on YouTube

This research aims to describe Ning Imaz's interpretation of the concept of *kafa'ah* in Surah An-Nur verse 26, as presented on a YouTube video uploaded by NU Online on July 26, 2024, titled "The Meaning of an Equal (Compatible) Marriage According to Ning Imaz Fatimatuz Zahra." As of August 13, 2024, the video has been viewed 4,013 times. The channel has 1.29 million subscribers and more than 5,100 videos. The video was recorded during an event called Nongkrong Tobat with the theme "A Soulmate to the Other Side of the Planet," held by Santren Ndelik on July 19, 2024, on Jl. Kalilalang Lama, Semarang.



Fig. 1. NU Online Youtube Channel

In the video, Ning Imaz states that the concept of *kafa'ah* is derived from Surah An-Nur verse 26:

الْخَبِيثَاتُ لِلْخَبِيثِينَ وَالْخَبِيثُونَ لِلْخَبِيثَاتِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ لِلطَّيِّبِينَ وَالطَّيِّبُونَ لِلطَّيِّبَاتِ أُولَئِكَ مُبَرَّءُونَ مِمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ

Meaning: “Wicked women are for wicked men, and wicked men are for wicked women. And virtuous women are for virtuous men, and virtuous men are for virtuous women. The virtuous are innocent of what the wicked say. They will have forgiveness and an honourable provision.”

She emphasizes the phrase “And good women are for good men” (*waṭ-ṭayyibātu liṭ-ṭayyibīn*), explaining that this part of the verse is used by some fiqh scholars as the basis for choosing a spouse. However, this should not be seen as a strict requirement for marriage. Instead, scholars propose it as guidance to achieve the goals of marriage—tranquility (*sakinah*), affection (*mawaddah*), and compassion (*rahmah*).

According to Ning Imaz, the purpose of *kafa'ah* is to ensure that a person marries someone who is not significantly different from themselves so that harmony in marriage can be attained. She outlines several parameters of *kafa'ah* which can be selected based on personal priorities. These include lineage (*nasab*), wealth, lifestyle, knowledge, and even ways of thinking.

How to determine which parameters to prioritize, according to Ning Imaz, starts with self-assessment: what one needs and desires. For example, if intellectual compatibility is the priority, then education becomes the key parameter. Similarly, lifestyle can be a measure—whether it differs greatly from one’s own or aligns with aspirations for self-improvement.

Ning Imaz emphasizes that *kafa'ah* is essentially a tool for self-assessment—evaluating suitability and compatibility between the bride and groom, and their families, before entering into a marriage contract. Since *kafa'ah* is a personal measurement, its priorities are also individualized and optional—be it in terms of religious devotion or other elements. She asserts that seeking a perfect match in all aspects is impossible; there will always be similarities and differences. Therefore, choosing a life partner is a matter of personal prioritization, best undertaken by those who are emotionally mature and have gone through life’s complexities—typically those aged 25 and above who have surpassed the quarter-life crisis phase.

When asked, “What if we’ve been matched with someone who initially seemed compatible but now we have doubts?” Ning Imaz answers that a soulmate is someone you have already married—regardless of whether the marriage lasts or not. The task then is to maintain and preserve the marriage. She reiterates: marriage defines the soulmate, and making that person your lifelong partner, even in the afterlife, requires effort and commitment.

She shares her own matchmaking story with Gus Rifqil Muslim Suyuthi, which unfolded rapidly. She believes that ease in the process is a sign of divine blessing. During their six-month *khitbah* (engagement), while she was still in a period of religious service (*khidmah*) at her pesantren, she often had doubts and felt they were mismatched in communication—citing her fiancé’s “dad jokes” as an example of their disconnect.

She then refers to Surah Al-Baqarah verse 216:

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ.

Meaning: “Fighting has been made obligatory upon you ‘believers’, though you dislike it. Perhaps you dislike something which is good for you and like something which is bad for you. Allah knows and you do not know.”

Using this verse, she relates it to the mental health issues often discussed by Gen-Z—like trust issues, excessive suspicion, and jealousy—which she attributes to upbringing. She reflects that what she lacked due to her own upbringing was actually fulfilled by her husband, saying, “Now I understand.”

Finally, she stresses the importance of careful consideration when choosing a spouse. She recounts her confusion about why her husband loved her unconditionally, even though she didn’t “do anything.” Having grown up only being validated for achievements or obedience, she initially found this kind of love unfamiliar. This personal experience illustrates the wisdom in the verse: what you initially dislike may, in fact, be what you need.

According to Ning Imaz, differences in early stages of marriage are normal, as long as the marriage was built upon thoughtful deliberation, including family approval, prayerful consideration (*istikharah*), and aligned visions. Such a foundation is key to achieving *kafa’ah*—a harmonious, affectionate, and compassionate family.

What is most important in marriage is not rigidly fulfilling the standards of *kafa’ah*, but rather mutual acceptance, which is far more essential. Ning Imaz’s explanation offers insight to young couples preparing for marriage—emphasizing that marriage should be based on mutual respect, love, and understanding, not merely the fulfillment of social requirements.

The most crucial step in meeting the criteria for a potential partner or *kafa’ah* is to begin by improving oneself first, reaching a stage of maturity and readiness for marriage. She emphasized, “When we desire the best life partner, the first thing we must build is ourselves. Because getting married is easy, but what matters is that both individuals have resolved their personal issues, understand themselves, and know the kind of partner they truly need.”

5. Analysis

Kafa’ah was developed as a means to create a harmonious family life, or *sakinah*, *mawaddah*, and *rahmah*. Its primary references include QS. An-Nur verse 26 and the hadith of the Prophet narrated by Aisyah:

تَخَيَّرُوا لِنُطْفِكُمْ فَأَنْكِحُوا الْأَكْفَاءَ وَأَنْكِحُوا إِلَيْهِمْ

Meaning: “Choose carefully for your offspring. Marry those who are compatible and marry them off to those who are compatible.” (Majah., Ibn., 2009).

Also, the hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah:

تُنْكَحُ الْمَرْأَةُ لِأَرْبَعٍ لِمَالِهَا وَلِحَسَبِهَا وَجَمَالِهَا وَلِدِينِهَا فَاظْفَرْ بِذَاتِ الدِّينِ تَرِبَتْ يَدَاكَ

Meaning: “Woman is married for four reasons: her wealth, her lineage, her beauty, and her religion. Choose the one with religion, and you will prosper.” (Al-Bukhari, 2001).

Islamic scholars differ in their opinions regarding the criteria of *kafa’ah*. The Maliki school includes only two criteria: religion and mutual condition, with religion referring to a person’s piety. The Hanafi school lists six: religion, Islam, freedom (not being a slave), lineage, wealth, and occupation. The Shafi’i school outlines six as well: religion, chastity, freedom, lineage, freedom from defects, and profession. The Hanbali school specifies four: religion, profession, lineage, and financial standing. Among all these, the only universally agreed-upon criterion is religion—particularly piety. Furthermore, none of these schools consider *kafa’ah* a legal condition (*shart sah*) for marriage, except the Hanbali school, which regards it as a requirement and considers marriages without *kafa’ah* invalid (Hasan, Abi., 2020).

From the above perspectives, it is clear that while *kafa’ah* is important, it is not an absolute legal condition for marriage. Abu Bakar Syatha, for example, identifies six elements in *kafa’ah*: freedom, chastity (‘*iffah*), lineage, religion, profession, and the absence of defects. Some Shafi’i scholars group chastity within religion, leaving five: freedom, lineage, religion, profession, and defect-free. Like most other scholars, Syatha

emphasizes that *kafa'ah* is not a legal prerequisite for marriage and should not be treated as such (Syatha, Abu Bakar., 1997).

Ning Imaz's explanation aligns closely with these scholarly views, especially regarding the non-obligatory nature of *kafa'ah*. However, she adds modern criteria reflective of today's societal context—particularly for Generation Z. As suggested by Amira and Wiwin in their article, *kafa'ah* can be viewed from three perspectives: religious/faith-based, social status, and material aspects (education and economy). These are considered relevant today, especially education and intellectual compatibility, which help foster effective communication in marriage (Fauziyah, Amira., 2021).

As for QS. An-Nur verse 26, which Ning Imaz uses as a foundational reference for *kafa'ah*, Qur'anic scholars offer two main interpretations of the terms *al-khabīṣāt* and *aṭ-ṭayyibāt*. The first interprets them as referring to women, suggesting that bad women are matched with bad men and good women with good men. The second interpretation sees them as referring to speech—namely slanderous accusations—arising from the incident of ḥadīṣ al-ifk (the false accusation against Aisyah). According to this view, bad speech belongs to bad people, and good speech to good people (Az-Zuhaili, Wahbah., 1991).

Al-Qurthubi in his tafsir also presents both interpretations—either women or speech. If interpreted as referring to women, the verse can support the concept of *kafa'ah*. But if interpreted in its historical context—specifically during the ḥadīṣ al-ifk incident—the terms are better understood as referring to speech, directed at the hypocrites who slandered Aisyah and Safwan (Al-Qurthubi, 1964).

The audience for Ning Imaz's video is the general public, primarily young people, since it was uploaded on social media platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram by NU Online. Her casual communication style and accessible language appeal to Gen-Z, particularly with topics relevant to their daily lives, such as *kafa'ah* in marriage. She also uses modern terms like trust issue and mental health. Additionally, some parents seeking spouses for their children also engage with the content. Audience comments include married individuals reflecting on their own experiences, validating Ning Imaz's point that *kafa'ah* should be a thoughtful consideration before marriage.

Based on the review of *kafa'ah* and its interpretations, it is evident that scholars differ on the criteria for evaluating compatibility, and that QS. An-Nur verse 26 can be interpreted either as referring to slander or to marital compatibility. Ning Imaz appears to support the latter view, framing it within the context of equal partnerships. She adds education as a new and relatable criterion for today's audiences, making it a relevant consideration before marriage. Her discourse on *kafa'ah* will be further analyzed using Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model to explore the motivations behind and social impact of the discourse she presents.

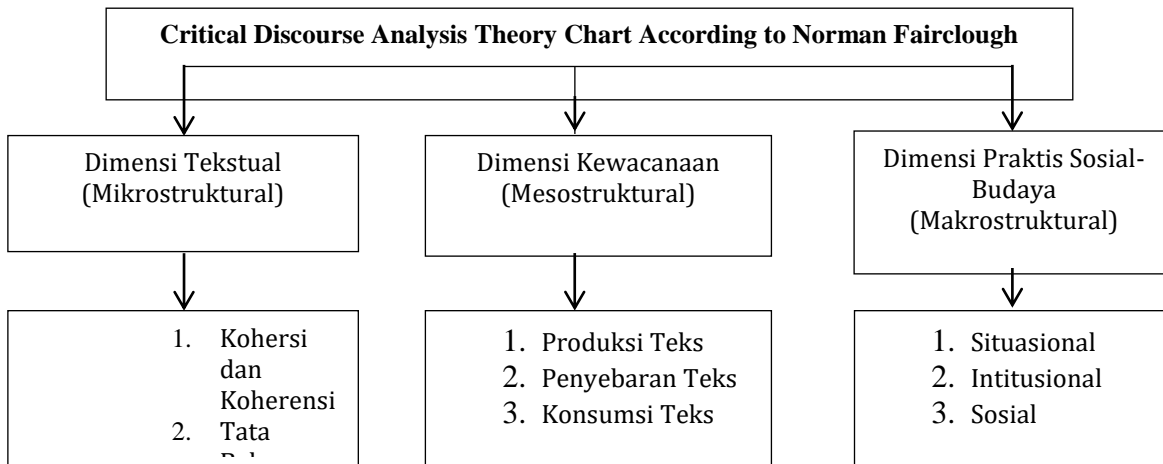
6. Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis Theory

In analyzing discourse production, Norman Fairclough's theory of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) outlines three main stages: textual description, interpretation of the relationship between text and interaction, and explanation of the relationship between interaction and social context (Fairclough, Norman., 2001). Each of these stages corresponds to a specific level of analysis: micro, meso, and macro.

Fairclough's approach serves as an analytical framework that integrates three traditions in discourse analysis:

1. Textual analysis from linguistics, particularly functional grammar developed by Michael Halliday.
2. Macro-sociological analysis of social practices, including theories of power and knowledge from Michel Foucault, although Foucault did not provide a methodology for textual analysis.
3. Micro-sociological interpretation from disciplines such as sociology, which emphasize subjective meaning-making.

Fairclough's integration of these traditions addresses the limitations of both linguistics-based discourse analysis, which often fails to reveal the deeper socio-cultural contexts behind a text, and sociologically oriented approaches that may neglect detailed textual scrutiny. In essence, discourse is seen as a representation and articulation of thought, interest, and ideology embedded within language (Munfarida, Elya, 2014).



7. Application of Norman Fairclough's Theory

6.1. Micro Analysis (Textual Dimension)

This dimension focuses on analyzing the text itself—language as a medium of discourse (Niarahmah, Dwi., 2023). The analysis targets two elements: the representation of characters (actors) and events in the video through diction. From the transcript of the video, three key diction choices reflect the representation of actors in Ning Imaz's explanation of *kafa'ah*:

a. Diction: "Saya" (I)

This pronoun frequently appears throughout the video, used 21 times in total. Examples include: "Let me clarify that the concept of *kafa'ah* originates from the verse..." and "I am married to him in this world, but our task is to become soulmates in the afterlife." The use of "I" signals that Ning Imaz is positioning herself as the central figure in the discourse, both to explain the concept of *kafa'ah* and to share her personal experience as evidence.

b. Diction: "Ulama" (Scholars)

The word "ulama" appears twice. Scholars are referred to as the authoritative figures who formulated and recommended the concept of *kafa'ah* as a means to achieve the ideals of marriage (*sakinah, mawaddah, rahmah*). They hold the authority in deriving and shaping Islamic legal interpretations.

c. Diction: "Keluarga" (Family)

This word appears three times—twice as part of an illustration about evaluating a potential partner's family acceptance, and once in reference to considering family as part of the pre-marriage assessment process.

Ning Imaz's explanation of the concept of *kafa'ah* also represents events through certain diction. Based on the results of the analysis conducted on the video transcript, it is known that there are two dictions, namely *khitbah* and *khidmah*.

a. Diction: "Khitbah" (Engagement)

Khitbah is a stage before entering marriage where a man will visit the woman's family with the intention of proposing to the daughter of the family (Hasibuan, Samsinar., 2022). Ning Imaz as the speaker shared her personal experience during the *khitbah* period with her future husband. The mention of the *khitbah* diction in the video is only done once.

b. Diction: "Khidmah" (Religious Service)

Khidmah is an activity of devotion and service, in this case Ning Imaz tells her experience after the engagement asking her future husband to complete his devotion at the Islamic boarding school for six months as a condition for him to continue to the level of marriage. The mention is only done once.

6.2. Meso Analysis (Discourse Practice Dimension)

The discourse originated from a Nongkrong Tobat event held by Pesantren Ndelik, themed “Soulmate to the Other Side of the Planet.” The video was created in response to an audience question: “What if we’re compatible but not on the same wavelength?” Ning Imaz’s explanation of *kafa’ah* is a direct response to this question, addressing the reality that many modern marriages fail due to incompatibility.

For the second level of Meso Analysis, which is the dissemination process, the video uploaded on the YouTube account was also shared on other platforms, such as TikTok. It was even viewed approximately 75.5 thousand times, received 9,034 likes, and 77 comments. The large number of viewers on TikTok can lead to a broader dissemination of the information. The third level of the meso analysis is the consumption level. Since the video was uploaded via a YouTube channel, it can be accessed by anyone. However, the YouTube account itself received only a few comments—around 13 in total. The following are some public responses to the video.



Fig. 2. Viewer comments on Youtube Channel

The video of Ning Imaz uploaded on the NU Online YouTube channel has received positive responses from its viewers. One such response can be seen in the comments, where a viewer expressed gratitude to Ning Imaz, stating that through her lecture, they found solutions to questions that had previously gone unanswered.

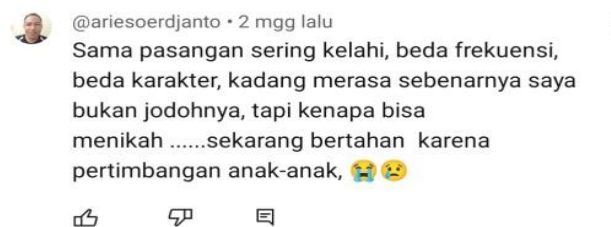


Fig. 3. Viewer comments on Youtube Channel

The comment quoted above also responds positively to the video. The commenter shares a personal experience about the lack of *kafa’ah* (compatibility) in their family. In the comment, they said, 'I feel like we were never truly meant to be together, so how did we end up getting married?' In the video, Ning Imaz explains that if two people are already married, then they are destined for each other, even if they eventually divorce. The commenter mentioned that they 'sometimes feel incompatible,' but after watching the video, they accepted what Ning Imaz said—that they are indeed destined for each other, despite the problems in their family.

6.3. Macro Analysis (Socio-Cultural Practice Dimension)

Norman Fairclough built a theoretical model to analyze the background of a discourse produced, the analysis in this section tries to reveal what the actual social context is that influences how a discourse is produced (Erawati, Ariska, et al., 2022). In the analysis of the sociocultural practice dimension consists of situational, institutional and social levels. The description is as follows:

a. Situational Level

The video was created to respond to a specific question at a live event. As the speaker, Ning Imaz felt responsible for addressing the issue clearly, even though the video only lasted about nine minutes. The definition of situational level is if a discourse is understood as a response to a certain context or situation. In Ning Imaz's video explanation regarding the meaning of *sekufu'*, it is an answer to a question asked by the audience at the event who asked what if *sekufu'* but not on the same frequency. In response to the question, he also tried to clarify the meaning of *sekufu'* which is based on the concept of

kafa'ah because in the event he was a speaker and it was his obligation to answer questions from the audience. He only gave an explanation just to answer the question so the video was only nine minutes long.

b. Institutional Level

As the name suggests, the institutional level is the aspect of the organization or institution that underlies the production of a discourse. This aspect can come from within or from outside (Niarahmah, Dwi., 2023). So in the context of the video, Ning Imaz is influenced by external forces that determine the production of text or discourse. In this case, he is influenced by his educational background, namely an Islamic boarding school which is a religious institution that provides lessons and education to students or santri and also develops and spreads Islamic teachings.

c. Social Level

Social factors also influenced the discourse. Ning Imaz herself experienced emotional challenges due to her upbringing. Her husband's different background helped her grow and understand herself more deeply. This personal transformation is reflected in her interpretation of Surah Al-Baqarah verse 216—particularly the idea that what seems bad may actually be good for us. Her message is that modern *kafa'ah* should include intellectual compatibility and lifestyle alignment, especially for Gen-Z and millennials who face different challenges than previous generations.

In explaining the *kafa'ah* which is sourced from QS. An-Nur verse 26, it cannot be separated from her educational background which is based on NU Islamic boarding schools and her aswaja ideology. She herself, as mentioned above, is a kiai's daughter and has also been a boarding school for several years, even before getting married she still served (served) at the Islamic boarding school for six months. Service is one of the traditions of Islamic boarding schools that has a positive impact on students, by serving students will gain life through experiences during service such as teaching, leadership, skills, and also often becomes a time for students' endeavors before carrying out the marriage contract (Samsudin, 2022). In her explanation, she added aspects of education and knowledge of prospective partners as new parameters in the *kafa'ah* which are very necessary to consider today, especially for the millennial and Z generations in terms of marriage, considering that she herself is included in the millennial category.

8. Conclusion

Kafa'ah is the concept of compatibility between a man and a woman who wish to establish a household. It is intended as a means to achieve a harmonious family life based on sakinah (tranquility), mawaddah (love), and rahmah (compassion). One of its primary scriptural bases is Surah An-Nur verse 26. Qur'anic commentators differ in interpreting this verse—some relate it to *kafa'ah* (compatibility), while others interpret it as referring to speech, particularly accusations of immorality. In her video, Ning Imaz leans toward the first interpretation, treating the verse as a basis for the concept of *kafa'ah*. Ning Imaz's explanation of *kafa'ah* does not deviate significantly from classical scholars' formulations, which draw on both the Qur'an and hadith—particularly the one stating that women are married for their wealth, lineage, beauty, and religion. However, she introduces several additional criteria relevant to the modern era. Her interpretation contextualizes the traditional concept of *kafa'ah* within the realities of contemporary life.

The criteria for *kafa'ah* that Ning Imaz outlines include wealth, knowledge, intelligence, intellectual maturity, educational background, physical appearance, lineage, and social status. These criteria are prioritized differently depending on each individual's needs. Several factors influence the discourse Ning Imaz produces, as revealed through Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), including: Situational factors: such as the context of a short Q&A session during a public event. Institutional factors: including her educational background in a traditional pesantren, which informs the tone and content of her discourse. Social factors: including her personal journey, particularly her marriage, which influenced her understanding of key verses like Surah Al-Baqarah verse 216. Finally, the inclusion of knowledge and lifestyle as part of *kafa'ah* is a contextual adaptation to meet the evolving needs of modern Muslim communities. Rather than adhering rigidly to traditional criteria, Ning Imaz advocates for compatibility grounded in mutual understanding, love, and respect. She emphasizes that to find the best partner, one must first work on improving oneself.

Acknowledgement

The author would like to thank colleagues and colleagues who helped with suggestions and criticism in writing this article, and the author would also like to thank the publishing team of the University of Tun Husein Onn Malaysia journal for helping and accepting the publication of this article.

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