



Asia Pacific Public Relations Research and Education Network  
Symposium &  
International Cross-Cultural Communication Conference

# ABSTRACTS

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**Bridal Shower as a ‘New Ritual’ in Yogyakarta (The Analysis of the Shifting of Values and Social Class in Bridal Shower Ritual in Yogyakarta)**

**(iCCCC)**

Rebekka Rismayanti, Irene Santika Vidiadari, Universitas Atma Jaya Yogyakarta, Faculty of Social and Political Science

Adopting a lifestyle, a behavioral pattern differentiating an individual from the others, is one of the characters of modern society. Through lifestyle, a person can build his/her social identity. The lifestyle fulfillment in this modern era—through fashion, hobby, tourism, or various kinds of celebration—has resulted in the emergence of consumptive social groups. In Indonesia, the consumptive modern society grows hand in hand with economic globalization and the transformation of consumptive capitalism indicated by the boom of shopping places, the growth of industries e.g. beauty, culinary, luxurious housing area, etc. (Ibrahim, 2011, p. 8). One of the lifestyles currently adopted in Indonesia is “bridal shower.” The bridal shower grew in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand and was originally a moment to give presents (usually household equipment) for the brides to help them as they enter married life (Laili, 2018). In Indonesia, however, the adopted ritual is luxurious celebrations, practiced by high-class society and even celebrities. It is not at all cheap because. The bridal shower is usually held at a restaurant or hotel room with food, decorations, and accessories This modern Indonesian ritual has become different from that of the bridal shower in other countries. Business actors, particularly event organizer (EO), see it as an opportunity by facilitating the adopted ritual. Ironically, many cultural communities in Indonesia have quite similar an event like a bridal shower. Yogyakarta, a city which still preserves its culture, for instance, has a pre-wedding ritual called siraman or midodareni. The aforementioned facts have triggered us to study and describe the shift of values and social class occurring in Yogyakarta. This qualitative research applies case study methods. The primary data is



gathered by in-depth interview and non-participant observation. The research subjects are 5 (five) big, oldest event organizers in Yogyakarta. The data are analyzed with Miles and Huberman's technique (in Narendra, 2008), namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion making. The result shows that even though the request for the bridal shower comes from various social classes, most of the clients are middle-class. Moreover, the informants unveil that more complex and time-consuming price negotiation usually occur when they are dealing with middle-class clients. Such clients throw bridal shower to create an image of certain social class and post it on social media, yet they want it done in a very minimum budget. The client's economic ability does not only influence budget offering but also the concept of the event. The clients who pay more usually want a simple, minimalist event, whereas the clients who pay less usually request for festive bridal shower decorated with various ornaments, as the festivity is regarded a symbol of luxury. According to the informants, event organizers in Yogyakarta tries to organize bridal shower events following the costumer's request. For the promotional purpose, they also post the events on social media, resulting in the clients choosing to throw a bridal shower instead of midodrine. For the sake of business, the EOs overlook the original definition of the bridal shower. The EOs become the actors which put highlights on the luxurious aspects of bridal shower ritual in Yogyakarta. It is illustrated on the eagerness of all the informants to say that it is important to show that a bridal shower is unique and luxurious; because the costumers want something different out of this ritual. The EOs able to organize unique and luxurious events will satisfy the clients. As a result, they will get a positive image as event facilitator. Eventually, the EOs contribute to the shift of the values contained in the bridal shower in Indonesia. "Western bridal shower" in Indonesia was once the representation of the high-class society because it emphasized more on luxurious symbols—the venue, decoration, accessories, etc. As time goes by, it is now adopted by middle-class society, which make it part of pre-wedding procession without abandoning "Javanese bridal shower" (siraman or midodareni). This finding shows that the meaning of bridal shower in Yogyakarta has changed from that of the origin. This study helps us understand the meaning and value shifting of bridal shower in Indonesia, particularly when the business actors get the financial benefit (profit) from

the misunderstanding. Every individual needs to rethink their cultural understanding to avoid misconception and to look back to their authentic cultural roots (e.g. their genuine cultural ritual). In academic contexts, it is also important to study the shift of bridal shower meaning in other regions in Indonesia beside Yogyakarta.

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