

Bridal Shower in Yogyakarta: The Shifting of Meaning and the Shaping of Social Class



Bridal Shower di Yogyakarta: Pergeseran makna dan pembentukan kelas sosial


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ARTICLE INFORMATION	
<p>Keywords <i>Bridal shower, Lifestyle, Social class, Symbol</i></p>	<p>ABSTRACT <i>Bridal shower, a modern ritual of Indonesia modern society, has as well been practiced by people living in Yogyakarta. The adopted “American bridal shower” had been the representation of high-class society for it emphasized on luxurious symbols. Now, the trend has spread to the middle-class and has become a part of pre-wedding events. Yet, although people have started making the bridal shower ritual, they seem to be reluctant to abandon the Javanese bridal showers. This study conducts interview to four party planners in Yogyakarta. The result shows that the bridal shower trend is shaped and maintained continuously by party planners, parallel with the growth of the trend in other big cities in Indonesia. Interestingly, among the middle-class society, an image of becoming a part of a higher social class is produced when they throw a bridal shower and publish the event on social media. The findings of this research also indicate that the meaning and the values of bridal shower in Yogyakarta have shifted, which is believed to be the result of the misunderstanding of the very origin of the bridal shower.</i></p>
<p>Kata Kunci <i>Bridal Shower, Gaya Hidup, Kelas Sosial, Simbol</i></p>	<p>ABSTRAK Bridal shower, sebuah ritual modern pada masyarakat Indonesia, juga dipraktikkan oleh masyarakat di Yogyakarta. Ritual ini mengadopsi praktik ritual ‘American bridal shower’ yang merupakan representasi dari kehidupan kelas atas dan ditunjukkan dengan menggunakan simbol kemewahan-tempat acara, dekorasi, aksesoris, dan lainnya. Saat ini, praktiknya juga merambah kelas menengah. Acara ini menjadi bagian dari rangkaian acara menjelang pernikahan. Penelitian ini menggunakan wawancara pada empat <i>party planner</i> di Yogyakarta. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tren bridal shower dibentuk dan dipelihara oleh penyedia jasa <i>party planner</i>. Seiring dengan berkembangnya ritual ini di kota besar lainnya- Jakarta, Bandung dan Surabaya. Bridal shower yang meriah merupakan simbol kemewahan. Bagi kelas menengah, citra untuk menjadi bagian dari kelas atas diproduksi melalui acara bridal shower dan mempublikasikannya melalui sosial media. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan adanya pergeseran makna dan nilai tentang bridal shower di Indonesia, yang dikarenakan adanya perbedaan pemahaman mengenai bridal shower di negara asalnya.</p>
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Introduction

Lifestyle, a pattern of acts that differs an individual from another, is one of the characters of modern society through which an individual can differ her character from another person. Performing a particular lifestyle also helps an individual understand its constructed meaning. Shown through various things—including the consumption of cultural products e.g. fashion, hobby, tourism, celebration, etc.—lifestyle is the material by which an individual constructs her social identity (Ibrahim, 2011).

The fulfilment of the modern lifestyle, however, has resulted in the emergence of a consumptive society. The growth of modern-consumptive society in Indonesia is parallel to the history of economic globalisation and the transformation of consumptive capitalism, indicated by the mushrooming of shopping centres, the rise of the beauty industry, culinary, luxurious housing area, etc. (Ibrahim, 2011). Besides industrial advancement, the media also contribute to promoting modern lifestyle. The globalisation of the media industry has penetrated Indonesia through foreign magazines with Indonesian language special editions targeting audiences from various ages, either female or male, from adults to children (Ibrahim, 2011). The media, through their content packaging, rubrics and columns, have illustrated the more interesting, up-to-date and popular lifestyle. Furthermore, by promoting the joy of possessing or consuming particular products, the media control the public's 'appetite'. Nowadays, social media play important role in the dynamics of modern society. From the viewpoint of capital owners, social media are strategic instruments for gaining profits (Marta, 2012). The power possessed by social media produces images that are consumed and practiced by individuals in society to show their existence.

One of the lifestyles growing in Indonesia today is the bridal shower celebration. Imported from the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, the bridal shower is originally a moment to hand out gifts (usually household appliances) to the bride to ease her burden as she enters married life (Laili, 2018). It is a common practice that the bride gets surprises from her female friends. A bridal shower event usually includes gathering and breaking bread, handing out gifts, playing games, and taking photos together—it is not infrequently that they wear matching clothes (Sabri and Ramli, 2020). However, embraced by the Indonesians, the bridal shower has become a mere celebration with cute accessories and luxurious ornaments. At first, only Indonesian celebrities adopted the event. Yet, as it becomes more and more popular, it is now practiced by the broader public. The budget to throw a bridal shower event in Indonesia is not inexpensive. Generally, people rent a restaurant or a hotel

room for a bridal shower. They also buy accessories such as sash, cupcakes and trinkets. Compared to the original bridal shower, it is not quite similar.

The growth of the bridal shower trend, however, cannot be disconnected to the intervention of many stakeholders, one of which is the event organisers (EO) which have succeeded in transforming this practice significantly. The EOs have made bridal shower looks more interesting and 'sweet'. Referring to Salbiah (Salbiah, 2018) as a response to the popularity growth of bridal shower, the EOs have focused on imaging the trend as a special moment as well as developing it into a culture. One of the EOs, as told to Salbiah (Salbiah, 2018), hoped this trend could continuously grow so that they could still perform as the facilitator for interesting, unique and unforgettable bridal shower. As an effort to sustain the trend and to make them attractive to the youth, the event organisers have to be creative and innovative.

In Yogyakarta, the City of Students and the City of Culture, the bridal shower trend has arrived. However, although it has to compete with long-lasting pre-wedding traditions, namely *siraman* and *midodareni*. *Siraman* is a self-cleaning ceremony (physical and spiritual) for the bride and groom, while *Midodareni* is a ceremony to ask for blessing from God to give smoothness at the wedding (Pratama & Wahyuningsih, 2018). Unlike *siraman* and *midodareni* which are held at home, involving extended family, inviting neighbours and acquaintances, the bridal shower is celebrated at a hotel or restaurant and is based on friendship values.

The bridal shower phenomenon has come to the attention of social science researchers. Febrina, Zuber and Haryono (Febriana et al., 2019) studied bridal showers practised by females in Surakarta. The research has unearthed the internal and external dimension of a bridal shower. The internal dimension consists of the curiosity to try a new experience and the expectation to improve the existence in the virtual world, whereas the external dimension involves the exposure of social media e.g. seeing the photos of artists celebrating their bridal shower. In Kenya, Njonjo (Njonjo, 2013) has found that a bridal shower is more likely to focus on matters concerning the division of roles between male and female in marriage life and sexuality issues.

To anticipate the growth of bridal shower, particularly in Yogyakarta, which has its authentic pre-wedding traditions, it is important to understand how the meanings in bridal shower shift from the original and by which means it shapes social class. Furthermore, this study will illustrate, as well as examining and criticizing, the way of life of a modern society which puts forward consumptive lifestyle.

Cultural Studies and Communications

The theory of cultural studies is a communication theory that discusses the division of strong and weak cultures in the social structure of society. West and Turner (2013) assert that the theory focuses on the ideological practices of cultural discourse. From the viewpoint of communications, this theory emphasises the role of the media in the communication process in general (macro-level), i.e. the media as a means to represent ideology within society. The media, originating from and controlled by the elite, shape the information spread to the public. Thus, information derives from a dominant, controlling culture. The theory of cultural studies chiefly examines how the elite, dominant groups, such as the media actors, practise their power to the sub-ordinates (low class) (West & Turner, 2013). This theory observes the following assumptions: (a) culture is spread to and invades all sides of human behaviour; (b) an individual in a society is a part of a hierarchical power structure. The first assumption relates to culture and ideology. A culture is a community of meaning, which is then defined differently by this theory. Norms, values, ideas, as well as perceptions that serve as tools to interpret reality, are parts of the ideology of a culture. Cultural practices and institutions affect an individual's ideology. An individual who lives in a diverse cultural community often struggles with meaning, interpretation, identity and control. Such struggle is termed as 'culture war', which leads to different perceptions about the importance of a condition or event that relates to a particular culture. The second assumption is associated with the idea that human is an important part of the power hierarchy. The power restrains the uniqueness of identity and sets limitations to the levels in the human social sphere. In this regard, power is something that is sought by the subordinates but is impossible to be owned. Therefore, should a struggle occur, the winning party is people with authority or even those sitting on top of the social hierarchy (West & Turner, 2013). The media is one of the sources of power within society and influences the spreading issues. It is necessary to note that culture contains meanings that are agreed upon collectively. Meanings within a certain culture are shaped by the media. Subsequently, the issues and behaviours, including the class division of society, that are thought of as important by the media, also become important for society. For example, an article from Wahjuni (2015) about the commodification of cultural celebration named Grebeg Suro. This article explained about how the government dominated the local society through this cultural celebration and gain the economy capital from this event.

Ritual as a Commodity

Culture, according to Hall (in Barker & Jane, 2016), is the actual grounded terrain of practices, representation, language and customs of any specific society, along with the contradictory forms of common sense which have taken roots and shape popular life. Culture concern with shared social meanings generated through signs. Furthermore, Althusser (in Storey, 2018) emphasizes that culture contains ideology and is represented through material practices such as ritual, custom, lifestyle, and mind-set reproduced through state apparatuses. In modern society, the material practices of culture encounter value shifting from traditional value, as an effort to fulfilling sociocultural responsibility within society, to exchange value, as a commodity.

Referring to Mosco (Mosco, 2009) commodification is the process of value transformation from functional to exchangeable. The transformation process is closely related to the effort to maintaining capital flow in the capitalist system and is aimed at collecting a bigger amount of capital. Every good with use-value has the bigger possibility to transform into a commodity which possesses exchange value before eventually commercialised to extract profit. In the commodification process, the media play an important role in text production: concept, issue, ideology, genre, production process, program schedule and the layout of printed media. Moreover, the media also choose symbols employed as the representation of economic and political interests. The use of symbols is what makes the media text a battleground for the struggles of meaning resulting in the commodification practices (Fernandez, 2011).

Ritual itself is a series of behaviour which communicates information through a system of sign (Eller, 2007, in Humaeni, 2015). The ritual practice, according to Bell (1992, in Humaeni, 2015), is a cultural strategy that is particular, controlling the acts and activities to differentiate something sacred from profane. In practice, a ritual, which is regarded as possessing a deep meaning for a particular community, involves society.

These days, the rituals and beliefs have transformed into commodities with exchange value. One of the actors working behind the commodification process of ritual and belief is the mass-media. The shifting conforms to the business logic; that culture, as well as religion, attracts the media consumers. The consumption process, however, goes further than watching. It is followed up by the audience, the consumer, by practising values transmitted through the media. Rustandi (Rustandi, 2018) argues that the emerging pop culture emphasizes the aspects of commercialisation and commodification alters religious values into products that could be sold to the market. One of the examples is the *da'i* (Islamic preacher) contests on television. The contests commodify religious values, shifting the sacred values. The symbolic

simplification of religion in mass-media shallows the understanding of the religion itself, which makes the meaning of religion is limited to the symbols appearing on the surface. On the other hand, the audience is also turned into a commodity, including that of religious television programs. Yusuf (Yusuf, 2016) argues that the audience becomes a commodity sold to the advertisers. The rating reflects the number of audiences watching a program and determines the amount of profit gathered by the television company. As with religion, the commodification process also occurs in local cultural scenes. The perpetrator of commodification is not only the media but also the local government which perceives that a cultural ritual can increase the regional revenue. In a research conducted in Karanganyar, Widyastuti (Widyastuti, 2011) found that a supposedly religious ceremony, Saraswati, was presented as a tourist attraction, the main component of tourism marketing. It shows us that a tourism policy could potentially turn religious rituals into a mere show.

Social Class and Social Status in Consumer's Behaviour

The consumer's behaviour explains the process undergone by the consumers in determining, seeking, purchasing, as well as in throwing away a product. It is related to the personal needs of self-identity. The personality of the product would be connected to the personality of the consumer. Furthermore, the product consumption pattern of a consumer would determine one's social status within society. Social class departs from social status. The social status itself is a degree of prestige between a member of social class and the others. The social class is determined by several factors, namely wealth (the amount of asset or economic property), power (the degree of influence of an individual over others), and the amount of esteem (awards and recognition) received by an individual from other individual/party (Schiffman & Wisenbilt, 2015).

Social comparison theory (Schiffman & Wisenbilt, 2015) asserts that an individual compares her wealth with the others to determine their social status. It is observable in a materialist society, where social status is often connected to the purchasing power. As a result, an individual who possesses more wealth with high purchasing power is regarded as having a high social status. On the contrary, an individual with limited wealth with low purchasing power will be assumed as of the lower social class. Nevertheless, there are other factors determining one's social status, namely the job and educational achievement.

The categorisation of social class is a hierarchy, from the lowest to the highest. As a result, individuals who belong to a certain social class compare what they have and what they do to what others have and do. The member of the social class will regard other members as

having lower or higher social status. What one consumes is the sign/symbol hinting her social status—products or certain activities—which will indicate her position, either lower or more superior than others, in the social class (Schiffman & Wisenbilt, 2015). Schiffman and Wisenbilt (2015) have also asserted that the categorisation of social class is benefited by the marketers to set the consumer segmentation. The members of a certain social class incline to share values, attitudes and priorities of all aspects of their life, including the consumer's behaviour and purchasing decision-making. Furthermore, the consumption pattern reflects the hierarchy of the social class of individuals. A consumer tends to buy and consume certain products because it is favoured, a trend, among her social class as well as among higher social classes.

Method

This qualitative-descriptive study focuses on the bridal shower, a new trending ritual in Yogyakarta. The subjects were party planners offering bridal shower organizing service. This research endeavours at understanding the value transformation of the bridal shower, how the trend is shaped and maintained, and whether or not the value shifting has contributed to shaping social class and status. The informants were the representatives of party planners in Yogyakarta: (1) FB from Adorable, (2) DW from Kunena, (3) TK from Kartanala, (4) AL from Daffodil, and (5) DN from Anisa. The party planners were chosen for these two reasons: (1) they had bridal shower event package as one of their service products and (2) they had held bridal shower more than 10 times. The data were gathered by conducting in-depth interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The information from the business actors helps us understand the shifting of cultural values and the shaping of social class.

Results and Discussion

Bridal Shower: A Ritual and New Commodity for Party Planners

Ritual, from the perspective of consumer's behaviour, is a sacred moment separated from daily habits. The forming of value in ritual is not only originated from the habitual acts but also an experience. Unlike a habit, a ritual could occur to more than one individual and in a long period (Servadio, 2018). FB, one of the informants, told that the bridal shower trend in Yogyakarta, a city inhabited by many migrants from other regions in Indonesia, had started since 2015 following the trend in big cities such as Surabaya, Jakarta, and Bandung. The first time FB organised a bridal shower was after she was requested by one of her friends to create a bridal shower package.

My party planner has been providing bridal shower packages since 2015. At that time, we only made by request from a friend, but after that, we got a similar request. So, we conducted research to see how the trend is in other cities such as Jakarta and Surabaya (FB, Adorable party planner, interviewed on January 7, 2020)

FB sought references from party planners in Surabaya and Jakarta. When she was collecting information, FB realized that in those cities bridal shower had become a trend. In a ritual, the meaning is oriented to the goals related to the values believed by all members of the society (Servadio, 2018). In other words, the bridal shower is viewed by the party planners as a trend, with certain shared values, which could produce profits. That is the reason why the bridal shower is organised following certain 'rules' even though they are held in different regions. In Indonesian modern society, particularly among the youth, bridal shower seems like the representation of the lifestyle which gives certain symbols to the people who do it. It is perceived as more interesting than the traditional pre-wedding rituals which have been preserved for generations, e.g. *siraman* and *midondareni*.

Party planners facilitate the trend adoption by offering packages full of symbols and other creative elements. FB admitted that she sees bridal shower as not only an event for gathering with close friends for the sake of nostalgia before the bride takes the vow, but also as a celebration which is 'arranged' and even led by a master of ceremony (MC). However, FB usually organises quite a similar event for different clients. The default schedule is as follows: (1) opening, (2) opening speech from the bride, (3) games, (4) testimony from the close friends of the bride, (5) scribbling on the face of the bride, (6) photo session, (7) giving souvenir and (8) eating together. The schedule indicates that bridal shower inclines to be a positive ritual by doing which people will obtain happiness. Subsequently, the bridal shower also contains positive values. However, a ritual is beyond the matter of positive or negative; it is deeper. A ritual can unite people because it tends to bind people personally with a sense of togetherness (Servadio, 2018). A bridal shower can be viewed as a gradual symbol. It is not merely a pre-wedding event, but also a moment for nostalgia as well as a means to cement the friendship between people involving in the event. Everyone plays their role in making the bridal shower a success, including the party planner.

Almost 5 years managing party planning business, FB realized that there was a change of demand in the bridal shower. In the past, clients only requested for decorating service. Today they want something more practical. They ask for a complete bridal shower with MC and documentation. The price is inexpensive. For a bridal shower event with six (6) guests, a client must prepare at least 3 million rupiahs. FB also told that she got a client who invited 25 people

and had to spend around 6 million rupiahs (around 450 USD). Another informant, TK from Kartanala, recalled the moment when she entered the bridal shower organising business. In 2015, when the party planning service that she co-founded with her university friends was just operating, she got a client who was about to hold a bridal shower and asked her to create a package. She accepted the challenge. Afterward, she started finding references on the internet about how the bridal shower was organised and eventually succeeded in making the price plans for the client. Then, she got used to organizing the bridal shower and knew what kind of decorations to prepare as well as how to document the event to make it attractive to the clients. TK said her party planner had three price plans: IDR4,4 million, 3,5 million and 1,5 million.

Nonetheless, how the event and price plans are designed by the party planners has resulted in the emergence of new elements on the ritual. The price depends on the ritual artefacts—decoration, food, location and other creativity put on the event. In other words, the artefacts of the bridal shower indicate the purchasing ability of the client. The more expensive the package, the more creative and luxurious the event is. The decoration, food variant and location would be different. Moreover, the informants admit the importance of sharing the experience on social media, which does not only show the ability to hold an interesting bridal shower but also to show social class and status. The clients will be satisfied when the bridal shower is festive and attended by many friends.

Meanwhile, the default script of the bridal shower—the event schedule, the concept, etc.—reflects the shared values of the party planners. Even though the price plans are not necessarily the same, the values they want to convey tend to be quite similar: the bridal shower is a moment for nostalgia and to cement a friendship. In other words, the differences in price plans do not necessarily produce a different set of core values. Everyone attending the bridal shower, either the bride or her friends, in which case is called the ritual audience, seems to agree upon the meaning of bridal shower as not only a mere modern pre-wedding ritual.

Commodification is the process of value transformation from functional to exchangeable (Fernandez, 2011; Mosco, 2009). The transformation process is closely related to the effort to maintaining capital flow in the capitalist system and is aimed at collecting a bigger amount of capital. The party planners admit that organising a bridal shower is one of their effort to make their capital flow, besides arranging other events such as child birthday parties, marriage anniversary parties, marriage proposals and weddings. According to FB and DW, bridal shower planning service is quite potential and promising, particularly when they can make use of various decorations they have. They only have to be more creative in making use of their decorative trinkets and materials. Furthermore, Vaughan (2011) asserts that, in the

commodification process, the media play an important role in producing the text. The media choose symbols as the representation of economic and political interests. The use of symbols has made the media text a battlefield of meaning which leads to the practice of commodification. It is also occurring in the commodification process of the bridal shower ritual.

The growth of bridal shower in Indonesia cannot be disconnected from the role of social media, particularly Instagram. It is admitted by FB, DW, and TK, who say that the promotion of bridal shower is very effective on Instagram, particularly when they use the hashtag (#) by which the prospective clients can easily filter the information and obtain the contact of the party planner. Syahputra (Syahputra, 2016) argues that in the mass-media industry, such as TV station, symbols, which supposed to be the reflection of religion, merely becomes a religious commodity through a symbolic simplification process. The symbolic simplification of religion in mass-media shallows the understanding of the religion itself, which makes the meaning of religion is limited to the symbols appearing on the surface. This research also finds that symbols are important to emphasize, particularly on social media. The visual nature of Instagram assists promotion. Event organisers, besides showcasing portfolios they compiled themselves, could make use of images or videos uploaded and tagged by their clients. It illustrates what was argued by Marx, that media could serve as an amplifier. Myriads of messages from the dominant class are spread and amplified by the images appearing on the media (Zulfebriges, 2003). Roland Barthes (Storey, 2018) argues that an image amplifies text, burdening it with culture, morals, and imagination. If the texts of the bridal shower were continuously spread and consumed, ‘cultural naturalization’ would occur. Furthermore, the images of the bridal shower on social media also amplify discourses that this tradition is a part of the pre-wedding ritual.

The publication of the event becomes an important matter for the client. Therefore, the values such friendship which initially becomes the very reason for making a bridal shower has transformed into the value of self-actualisation—and all must be shared on social media. The bridal shower becomes merely an event to show-off one's status and financial capability.

The Target Market and Social Class

The bridal shower package could be related to the social status and class of the clients shown through their ability to afford the price offered by the party planner. On the other hand, there are clients who ‘only want to seem to be a part of a higher social class’ although they do not have the financial capability to purchase expensive bridal shower package. DW admitted

the reason why the restaurant where she was working came up with an initiative to found a party planner was to promote the business. As a result, as they did not have to pay for the venue, the package prices were relatively cheaper than other party planners. They only had to prepare the decoration, food and bridal shower attributes (sash, throne and flower). In general, the differences in the price of bridal shower services are due to the differences in the facilities and amenities. It depends on the location, food, flower decoration, table accessories, photo properties and the concept. How the event is documented also determines the price. The more various the documentation (photo, video, etc.), the more expensive the package.

The target market of the bridal shower, as admitted by TK and FB, is young females, aged under 25 years old and usually the first one who decided to get married among their circle. Bridal shower inclines to be held by the brides whose wedding expense is financed by her parents. As a result, it is not a problem for them to spend the budget for throwing a bridal shower. Meanwhile, most of DW's clients are the 25-29 years-olds who want to have a bridal shower with a minimum budget. As she claimed, what makes her party planner different from others is that the price includes decoration and food, ranging from IDR115,000 to IDR135,000 per person, excluding the fee for MC and documentation. The price for the bridal shower plans was adopted from the standard price of the party planning service in Jakarta. However, since there are quite vast income discrepancy between Jakarta and Yogyakarta, the party planner in Yogyakarta have come up with ideas to offer various level of festivity. The more variation and creative the event, the higher the price is.

The Shifting of the Meaning of Bridal Shower

Ritual is a series of behaviours which communicates the information by a system of sign (Eller, 2007 in Humaeni, 2015). The practice of ritual, is a cultural strategy which is particular, controlling various acts and activities to differ between sacred and profane. In practice, the ritual involves society and has a deep meaning for the people. Bridal shower in Yogyakarta, however, is a ritual which is not originated from the local culture but other parties with interests, in which case is the party planners. As a result, a shifting of meaning occurs. Developed in the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, bridal shower was originally a moment to hand out gifts (usually household appliances) to the bride to ease the burden of entering the marriage life.

The party planners have a different understanding of the meaning of the bridal shower. Without enough knowledge in the bridal shower practice in other countries, they regard bridal shower as an event with interesting decoration which can serve as moment for the clients to

show off existence and social class through social media. As a result, they need to come up with an interesting concept that will amuse the guests. DW, one of the informants, said:

‘Sometimes, when we serve the food, the guests of the bridal shower does not seem to care. They are busy taking photograph and uploading them to social media. It indicates that the decoration is an important thing in the bridal shower because they need it for their social media’ (DW, interviewed on 6 January 2020).

Here are how DW, TK, and FB comprehend bridal shower ritual: (1) Bridal shower is an event for having fun before the bride is put in the seclusion (*dipingit*). It could also be the metaphor of ‘me time’ for the bride (DW, interviewed on 6 January 2020); (2) Bridal shower is an event for the bride to hand out the uniforms for the bride's maids or a surprise event organised by a group of friends for the bride, it is usually the case with females who still have a peer group (*genk*) (FB, interviewed on 7 January 2020); (3) Bridal shower is an event for the bride and her friends to relax and have some nostalgia, to have fun, before the bride follows a series of sacred events full of rules such as *siraman* and *midodareni*, with her friends and other guests (TK, interviewed on 8 January 2020). In Yogyakarta, the bridal shower tends to be collective and involves many people. One of our informant told us that the number of guests could reach as high as 25.

The explanation above shows us that although each party planner has different understanding, there is a point upon which they agree about bridal shower: it is a moment of togetherness with friends. In Yogyakarta, for example, it is not unusual that the bride herself holding the event as the moment to hand out the uniforms to the bridesmaids. If in the original bridal shower the friends would give the bride souvenir, in the bridal shower in Yogyakarta the bride would give her friends, the bridesmaids, souvenir. The concept of the bridal shower varies—pyjama party, Betty Boop, Victoria’s Secret, flower garden, etc. In running her bridal shower planning service, FB always tries to organise an event based on the concept preferred by the clients. By doing so, the clients would be satisfied and the party planners would have a better portfolio. It is perhaps one of the reasons why the concept of the bridal shower held in Indonesia is quite different from that of the original countries; it adheres with the local cultural values.

The (mis)understanding of the stakeholders upon the origin and value of the ‘American bridal shower’—that it is a moment to have fun before entering the marriage life—has successfully made the pre-wedding ritual seem more interesting than the ‘Javanese bridal shower’. The former looks more interesting while the latter is viewed as a strict, archaic sacred-ritual which does not have anything to do with having fun.

Conclusion

The bridal shower, as a new ritual in the modern society in Yogyakarta which is adopted from the culture in other countries, has experienced the shift of meaning. Initially a moment to show friendship by handing out household appliances for the friends who are about to get married, the bridal shower has become a moment to merely show friendship and existence in social media. Also, the bridal shower, which is arranged by the party planners in a range of price, is used to showing one's position in social class. Now, instead of a simple gathering, the bridal shower has become an event with MC. And, instead of arranged by close friends, it is now arranged by party planners and has become a moment for the bride to hand out uniforms and accessories for the bridesmaids to wear on the wedding day.

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