

**BRIDAL SHOWER PHENOMENON AMONG WOMEN IN SURAKARTA CITY
(A Phenomenological Study on Consumptive Behavior due to Globalization Current)**

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed (1) to explain internal and external dimensions of bridal shower, and (2) to describe consumptive behavior of bridal shower. The informants selected consisted of 5 Muslimah women who have ever held bridal shower activity. This study employed descriptive qualitative method with phenomenological approach. The data used consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through in-depth interview with informants, while secondary data was collected using documentation through the informants' social media account. In this study, data validation was carried out using source triangulation. Data analysis was conducted through phenomenological description, phenomenological reduction, and phenomenological interpretation. The result of research showed that (1) there were internal and external dimensions in bridal shower. Internal dimension in bridal shower included the self desire of the actor who was interested in bridal shower, her curiosity to try novelties, assumption that bridal shower can improve her self-existence particularly in social media. Meanwhile, external dimension in bridal shower included many artists holding bridal shower, the actor's friends holding bridal shower likewise, the attempt of making bridal shower a tradition before marriage in the friend group; and (2) bridal shower was not only held simply, but the actors also try to make their party as cheerfully and interestingly as possible. Thus, they held it in café, restaurant, or hotel; even they should hire event organizer to decorate the room and it must take much money.

KEYWORDS: bridal shower, consumptive behavior

INTRODUCTION

The series of complex processes rather than a single process is called globalization¹. Globalization is a process of establishing organizational and communication systems between communities throughout world to follow the same certain systems and norms². Currently globalization process and information and cultural distribution from outside to inside a state run very fast and more easily; it is because of the more developing and sophisticated science and technology. One of globalization products is bridal shower prevalent currently in Indonesia.

¹Giddens, Anthony. *Runaway World*(Jakarta: GramediaPustaka Utama, 2002), p.21.

²Nurdiaman, AA. *Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan 3: Kecakapan Berbangsa dan BernegaraUntuk Kelas IX SekolahMenengahPertama/Madrasah Tsanawiyah*(Bandung: PT. PribumiMekar, 2009), p.32.

Bridal shower is defined as a celebration to leave single period around the wedding day³. In this event, the bride usually gets surprise party from her female friends by assembling in a mutually agreed place. This event involves assembling together, giving gift or present, playing game, having meal, and taking picture. In addition, they sometimes wear certain dress code and most importantly upload the moment onto their personal social media account.

This activity appeared in 1890 in Netherland and develops until today in America, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. This early history of bridal shower appearance came from a story about a kind young man who fell in love with a rich girl. Unfortunately, this kind young man comes from poor family with no money to propose his dream girl. The girl's father refused his proposal. Seeing the young man's sorrow, his friends and all villagers collected money and any objects to propose his adored girl. Then, the proposal was accepted by the girl's father and both of them could get married finally⁴.

Considering its implementation in Indonesia, including place selection, decoration, and event series held, this activity must take much money. Therefore, this becomes an interesting topic to study, in which people are entrapped in consumptive behavior with an excuse to follow globalization trend. It is in contrast to what occurs in western countries where bridal shower is an activity conducted to make "list of gifts" to be given by the bride's best friends on her wedding day⁵.

For that reason, the author is interested in conducting a research entitled "BRIDAL SHOWER PHENOMENON AMONG WOMEN IN SURAKARTA CITY (A Phenomenological Study on Consumptive Behavior due to Globalization Current). This research aims (1) to explain internal and external dimensions of bridal shower, and (2) to describe consumptive behavior of bridal shower.

Bridal shower is celebration to leave single period around the wedding day⁶. In the event, the bride usually gets surprise party from her female friends by assembling in a mutually agreed place. This event involves assembling together, giving gift or present, playing game, having meal, and taking picture. In addition, they sometimes wear certain dress code and unforgettably upload the moment onto their personal social media account.

Anything done by an individual and another and real in nature is called behavior⁷. Behavior, according to Chaplin, has two definitions: broad and narrow. Broadly, the definition of behavior involves anything done or experience by an individual, while narrowly, it involves all observable

³Montemurro, Beth, *Something Old, Something Bold: Bridal Showers and Bachelorette Parties* (United States of America, 2006), p.64.

⁴ Ibid. p. 67.

⁵Berardo, Felix M. *The Groomal Shower: A Variation of the American Bridal Shower.* (Jstor, 1981), p.38.

⁶Montemurro, Beth, op.cit. p.64.

⁷Sarwono, SarlitoWirawan. *Psikologilingkungan*(Jakarta: Grasindo, 1992), p.56.

reactions⁸. The use of industrial result products and daily utility products⁹. The word *consumption* comes from Latin words: *consumere* and *consummare*. *Consumere* means using totally or completely. Meanwhile *consummare* means compiling, summing, or complementing¹⁰.

Baudrillard revealed that contemporary society situation is composed of a reality that human beings are now encircled by consumption factor. In fact, human beings will have never been satisfied with their needs. The rationality of consumption in consumer society system has changed much, because currently people buy product not as the attempt of fulfilling their need but as the attempt of meeting their wish. The need is produced as a consumptive power¹¹.

Need is the most advanced form of rational systematization of production power at individual level, in which consumption uses logical and important delivery of production. Object and need world will be an evenly distributed hysteric world. Just like body organs and functions in the change of hysteria into a big paradigm by designating it in other languages or words. Consumption is an ideology and a communication system, and it can be viewed as enjoyment exclusivity. In this case, enjoyment is not the objective of consumption, but merely a rationalization. The actual objective is to contribute to the object system. Production and consumption is a single same logical process in developing and reproducing productive powers and controlling them¹².

METHOD

This study was a descriptive qualitative research with phenomenological approach. Phenomenology explains cognition structure in human experience¹³. The informants were selected using purposive sampling technique. Bungin stated that purposive sampling is the commonest strategy to select informants in a qualitative research, selecting the participants group to be informant according to the inclusion criteria relevant to research problem¹⁴. Using purposive sampling technique, informants were expected to provide data relevant to the problem of research conducted thereby giving in-depth understanding on the problem studied. The informants of research consisted of 5 women who have ever held bridal shower.

The data used consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through in-depth interview with informants, while secondary data was collected using documentation through the informants' social media account. In this study, data validation was carried out using source

⁸Chaplin, J.P., *Kamus Lengkap Psikologi (Translated by Kartini Kartono)* (Jakarta: Raja Grasindo Perkasa, 2001), p.16.

⁹Badudu, J.S., and Zain, S.M., *Kamus Umum Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan, 1994), p.48.

¹⁰Falk, Pasi. *The Consuming Body* (Sage Books, 1994), p.70.

¹¹Baudrillard, Jean. *Masyarakat Konsumsi* (Jakarta: Kreasi Wacana, 2006), p.29.

¹² Ibid, p.33.

¹³Creswell, John W. *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design, Choosing Among Five Approaches, Second Edition* (USA: Sage Publication, 1984), p.104.

¹⁴Bungin, M. Burhan. *Penelitian kualitatif; Komunikasi, Ekonomi, Kebijakan Publik, dan Ilmu Sosial Lainnya* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2011), p.71.

triangulation. Data analysis was conducted through phenomenological description, phenomenological reduction, and phenomenological interpretation.

RESULT

The result of research conducted through interviewing the informants and documentation shows that:

1. There are internal and external dimensions in bridal shower implementation

The findings of research indicate that there is a factor encouraging an individual to hold bridal shower in this case called internal and external dimensions. Internal dimension of bridal shower implementation includes, among others: (1) the desire coming from inside the actor who is interested in bridal shower because as aforementioned bridal shower is not Indonesian original culture and it is considered as new and interesting so that many people are interested in holding it, (2) curiosity to keep trying novelties becomes one of internal dimensions in bridal shower implementation because bridal shower is new and is becoming trend currently, and (3) an assumption that bridal shower can improve self-existence particularly in social media; it can be true because today people tend to use social media as a means of achieving popularity.

Meanwhile, external dimension of bridal shower includes, among others: (1) many artists holding bridal shower and even they also popularize this activity through their social media, (2) the actor's friends holding bridal shower likewise, sometimes an individual's reason of holding bridal shower is due to surprise from her friend or an attempt to give surprise to her friend who will get married, and (3) the attempt of making bridal shower a tradition before marriage in the friend group.

2. Consumptive behavior of bridal shower

Bridal shower is an event held by the bride's friends to enlist the gifts of utilities needed to hold a wedding, but along with time development, this tradition is defined more as a celebration to leave single period before marriage. If formerly bridal shower is usually held as the surprise from the bride's friends, now many bridal showers are held on the initiative of the bride herself. The reason is of course not longer because of the need, but for self-satisfaction.

Because of this different definition, bridal shower is held not merely simply but also with attractive and cheerful party. Even some of it is held in café, restaurant or hotel. Furthermore, many people usually want beautiful decoration for the event so that they should hire event organizer to decorate the room and it takes much money, of course.

DISCUSSION

Bridal shower is one of globalization products, the emergence of which in Indonesia is due to information and technology development making any thing distributed more quickly and easily. However, the product of globalization tends to have materialism and pragmatism characteristics in which people tend to consume something based on not its function but the "image" built by it.

Similarly, in bridal shower people hold the activity not based on the need but based on the “assumption” wants to be obtained from doing the activity. Thus, people compete for making bridal shower party as interestingly and uniquely as possible to get “wow” image from others. For that reason, they are willing to spend much money to realize their dream party. It is then called consumptive community by Baudrillard because currently the people buy product not as the attempt of fulfilling the need but as the attempt of meeting their passion¹⁵.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Considering the result of research on Bridal Shower Phenomenon among Women in Surakarta City (A Phenomenological Study on Consumptive Behavior due to Globalization Current), the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. There are internal and external dimensions in bridal shower implementation. Internal dimension in bridal shower included the self-desire of the actor who was interested in bridal shower, her curiosity to try novelties, assumption that bridal shower can improve her self-existence particularly in social media. Meanwhile, external dimension in bridal shower included many artists holding bridal shower, the actor’s friends holding bridal shower likewise, the attempt of making bridal shower a tradition before marriage in the friend group.
2. Bridal shower is not only held simply, but the actors also try to make their party as cheerfully and interestingly as possible. Even they often hold it in café, restaurant, or hotel. Furthermore, many people usually want beautiful decoration for the event so that they should hire event organizer to decorate the room and it takes much money, of course.

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¹⁵ Baudrillard, op.cit. p. 33.

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