

The Dynamics of an Ex-Partner's Presence at a Wedding: Between Reality, Viral Content, and Its Impact on Marital Harmony

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Abstract: This study aims to explore the reality and impact of viral content dramatizing the presence of ex-partners at weddings on the harmony of married couples and analyze this phenomenon through Erving Goffman's Dramaturgical theory. The research employs a literature study and qualitative research methods, with data sources from relevant books, journals, and websites. The data are analyzed descriptively and analytically using dramaturgical theory. The study's findings reveal that the presence of ex-partners at weddings turned into viral content, which is often a deliberate action to seek attention and public validation. This phenomenon, however, can lead to discomfort and tension for the married couple, significantly impacting the wedding atmosphere and creating psychological distress. The viral content, designed to elicit empathy by highlighting a narrative of suffering, reflects a pursuit of social media popularity that can disrupt the harmony of newly married couples. Moreover, the long-term effects of this phenomenon involve changes in social norms and individual behaviours, which are increasingly influenced by digital platforms. Using Erving Goffman's Dramaturgical Theory, this study reveals that this phenomenon can be seen as a "performance" on the social media stage, where individuals strive to control how the public perceives them. Married couples are forced to play a role in the drama created by the ex-partner, which can create tension in their newly formed relationship. Therefore, education about digital ethics and the importance of maintaining privacy boundaries becomes increasingly relevant to mitigate the negative impacts of this phenomenon, enabling society to use social media more wisely and to maintain interpersonal relationship harmony in the digital age.

Keywords: Ex-Partner, Marriage, Reality, Viral Content, Harmony

Introduction

The digital era has transformed various aspects of life,¹ including the dynamics of wedding ceremonies. A wedding is a sacred moment often marked by a range of emotional dynamics.² One intriguing

¹ Ilya Levin dan Dan Mamlok, "Culture and society in the digital age," *Information* 12, no. 2 (2021): 68, <https://doi.org/10.3390/info12020068>.

² Daniel van Leeuwen, "Merencanakan Dream Wedding Tanpa Membuat Tabungan Menjerit!," *pina.id*, Oktober 2021,

phenomenon that frequently occurs is the presence of ex-partners at weddings, which is often dramatized in viral social media content.³ Consequently, the dramatization of ex-partners attending weddings has garnered public attention, both in real life and on social media.⁴ This phenomenon is frequently highlighted in viral content that attracts widespread public interest.⁵ For instance, the presence of an ex-partner at a wedding can trigger strong emotional reactions from the newlyweds, the ex-partner, and other guests.⁶

An example of this can be seen in Suzhou, China, where a former boyfriend attended his ex-partner's wedding with the hope of expressing his lingering feelings. However, upon seeing his ex-girlfriend marry someone else, he lost control. He attempted to disrupt the wedding by hugging the groom and crying on the floor, causing a commotion among the guests and family members.⁷ Another case occurred when a bride invited her ex-partner as the photographer for her wedding with the intention of making him uncomfortable. The groom discovered this through conversations among the bride's friends. Despite the groom's strong objections, the event proceeded with an atmosphere of awkwardness and tension.⁸

<https://pina.id/artikel/detail/merencanakan-dream-wedding-tanpa-membuat-tabungan-menjerit>.

³ "Haruskah Kita Hadir di Pernikahan Mantan Kekasih?," *kompas.com*, Desember 2020, [lifestyle edisi, https://lifestyle.kompas.com/read/2020/12/15/114239320/haruskah-kita-hadir-di-pernikahan-mantan-kekasih?page=all](https://lifestyle.kompas.com/read/2020/12/15/114239320/haruskah-kita-hadir-di-pernikahan-mantan-kekasih?page=all).

⁴ Wulan, "Viral Mantan Datang di Acara Pernikahan, Sambutan Keluarga Mempelai Membuat Netizen Terkejut," *Lingkarana*, 2 Maret 2024, <https://lingkarana.id/media-sosial/viral-mantan-datang-di-acara-pernikahan-sambutan-keluarga-mempelai-membuat-netizen-terkejut>.

⁵ Gloria Setyvani Putri, "Nikah Undang Mantan, Awas Buntut dan Risikonya Besar," *kompas.com*, Desember 2020, <https://www.kompas.com/sains/read/2020/12/16/110503423/nikah-undang-mantan-awas-buntut-dan-risikonya-besar?page=all>.

⁶ Annisa Nur Fitriani, "6 Alasan Gak Perlu Datang Ke Nikahan Mantan meski Diundang," *IDN TIMES*, 10 Juli 2023, <https://www.idntimes.com/life/relationship/annisa-nur-fitriani-1/alasan-gak-perlu-datang-ke-nikahan-mantan-c1c2>.

⁷ Samantha Rose, "Wedding crasher: Ex-girlfriend storms wedding ceremony in Suzhou," *Tthaiger*, 17 November 2023, <https://thethaiger.com/news/world/china/ex-girlfriend-storms-wedding-in-suzhou-causing-online-stir-2>.

⁸ Ankrahal Shalom, "Drama at Wedding as Bride Invites Her Ex-Boyfriend to Be Her Photographer, Says She Wants to Pepper Him," *Legit*, 25 Juni 2023,

Furthermore, in Indonesia, the presence of ex-partners at weddings often goes viral on social media, eliciting various emotional and dramatic reactions. One example is a man who invited 13 of his ex-partners to his wedding, which then became a hot topic on social media. This incident sparked a range of reactions, from admiration for his boldness to questions about the motives behind the invitations.⁹ Another viral incident involved a man who attended his ex-partner's wedding dressed as a Ninja Turtle. This act surprised many and was seen as excessive humour, although it actually masked deep-seated emotional pain.¹⁰

In addition, there was an incident in Wajo, South Sulawesi, where a woman named Novianti attended her ex-partner Noki's wedding. During the event, Noki suddenly hugged and kissed Novianti while she was singing the song "Balo Lipa," before fainting due to his overwhelming emotions. This event triggered mixed reactions from the guests and went viral on social media due to its unexpected dramatization.¹¹ These examples are intriguing as they reflect the complex dynamics of interpersonal and social relationships played out in public spaces. Such content is often widely shared, evoking responses ranging from sympathy to entertainment, and can influence public perception of the institution of marriage itself.

Nevertheless, in-depth research on how this phenomenon affects the harmony of newlywed couples still needs to be completed. Most studies focus more on the general impact of social media and viral content on society as a whole. For instance, Usharani Narayana observed how reality TV shows in India, including live-broadcasted weddings, commercialize marriage and disregard traditional values, ultimately

<https://www.legit.ng/people/1541140-drama-wedding-bride-invites-boyfriend-photographer-pepper-him/>.

⁹ Yayuk Harini, "Tegar Banget, 10 Selebriti Ini Hadir di Acara Pernikahan Sang Mantan lho!," *DIADONA*, 17 November 2021, <https://www.diadona.id/photo/tegar-banget-10-selebriti-ini-hadir-di-acara-pernikahan-sang-mantan-lho-2111179.html>.

¹⁰ Muhammad Fahrur Safi'i, "Hadir di Pernikahan Mantan, Pria Ini Datang Pakai Kostum Kura-Kura Ninja," *Liputan6*, 10 Maret 2023, <https://www.liputan6.com/hot/read/5229463/hadir-di-pernikahan-mantan-pria-ini-datang-pakai-kostum-kura-kura-ninja>.

¹¹ Alfiansyah, "'Balo Lipa' dan Tragedi Mantan yang Datang ke Pernikahan," *mojok.co*, 13 Januari 2018, <https://mojok.co/esai/balo-lipa-dan-tragedi-mantan-yang-datang-ke-pernikahan/>.

prioritizing ratings and financial gains.¹² Aiman Siddiqui also explored the impact of viral videos on social media, emphasizing that while viral content can provide financial benefits, it also has the potential to damage the reputations of those involved.¹³ Similarly, Elena Pilipets examined how viral visual content can influence public perception through image manipulation and memes, often blurring the line between fact and fiction.¹⁴

Moreover, Irina Heimbach and Oliver Hinz found that emotions and sentiments within content significantly affect its virality, with positive and robust emotions being more likely to go viral.¹⁵ Meanwhile, Mohammad Iqbal Maulana and colleagues analyzed how the film “Get Married” portrays social harmony through symbols and codes, highlighting the importance of hospitality and politeness in maintaining social harmony.¹⁶ However, research specifically investigating the impact of ex-partners attending weddings and how such content affects the relationships of the newlyweds still needs to be completed.

Based on the above explanation, this study aims to fill the gap or complement existing research by exploring the reality, viral content, and its impact on the harmony of newlywed couples. Additionally, this study aims to analyze the findings on the reality, viral content, and its impact on the harmony of newlywed couples from the presence of ex-partners based on Erving Goffman's Dramaturgy Theory. In his book “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life,” which laid the groundwork for Erving Goffman's Dramaturgy Theory, Goffman explains that individuals present themselves on the “social stage” through structured actions and

¹² Usharani Narayana, “Hard realities of Indian reality TV,” *Media critique* 3, no. 4 (2010): 50–53.

¹³ Aiman Siddiqui, “Viral videos and their impact on society,” *Journal of Socio Economic Research Studies* 1, no. 2 (2021): 01–10, <https://doi.org/10.52337/jsers.v1i2.25>.

¹⁴ Elena Pilipets, “Between bullshit and fakety,” *Conjunctions* 6, no. 1 (2019): 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.7146/tjcp.v6i1.117319>.

¹⁵ Irina Heimbach dan Oliver Hinz, “The impact of content sentiment and emotionality on content virality,” *International Journal of Research in Marketing* 33, no. 3 (1 September 2016): 695–701, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2016.02.004>.

¹⁶ Mohammad Iqbal Maulana dkk., “Representation of Social Harmonization in The Film Get Married,” *Journal of Scientific Research, Education, and Technology (JSRET)* 2, no. 2 (2023): 902–8, <https://doi.org/10.58526/jsret.v2i2.180>.

behaviours to influence public perception.¹⁷ In the context of this study, the theory is used to understand how ex-partners attending weddings manipulate public perception and its impact on the harmony of the newlywed couples.

Methodologically, the research employs a literature review and qualitative research approach, with data sources derived from books, journals, and websites relevant to the phenomenon of dramatizing the presence of ex-partners at weddings. This data is then processed descriptively and analytically using Erving Goffman's dramaturgy theory as an analytical tool. This method aims to reveal in greater depth how this phenomenon affects the social dynamics and lives of legitimate couples due to the presence of ex-partners at weddings.

Discussion

Wedding Ceremonies as Social Rituals Uniting Social, Religious, Psychological, Cultural, Economic, and Globalization Dimensions

A wedding celebration is not merely a festivity but also a significant ritual that symbolizes the transition of social status from single to married.¹⁸ In a sociological context, marriage is one of the most universal and essential social institutions regulating relationships between individuals and groups within society.¹⁹ Moreover, a wedding celebration is a moment where family, friends, and the community gather to celebrate and support the newlywed couple, offering blessings and strengthening social bonds among them.²⁰

¹⁷ Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York City: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 1959).

¹⁸ Margaret H. Beissinger, *Spiritual Kinship, Incest, and Traditional Weddings: Honor, Shame, and Cultural Boundaries in Romanian Marriage Songs* (Washington D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2016), http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hnc.essay:BeissingerM.Spiritual_Kinship_Incest_and_Traditional_Weddings.2016.

¹⁹ Walter Edwards, "The Commercialized Wedding as Ritual: A Window on Social Values," *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 13, no. 1 (1987): 51–78, <https://doi.org/10.2307/132586>.

²⁰ Kristina Myrvold, "Wedding Ceremonies in Punjab," *Journal of Punjab Studies* 11, no. 2 (2004): 155–70, <http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:lnu:diva-23556>.

In Islam, marriage is not just a social contract but also an encouraged act of worship.²¹ The wedding feast, known as *walimah*, is one of the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) aimed at announcing and celebrating the marriage.²² *Walimah* carries profound meaning and serves to strengthen social ties. Express gratitude to Allah Swt for the blessing of marriage.²³ Terminologically, *walimah* is a banquet or feast hosted by the bride and groom's family as a form of gratitude to Allah Swt for the successful conduct of the marriage.²⁴ The primary purpose of *walimah* is to publicly announce the marriage, ensuring that society recognizes the couple's legitimate union.²⁵ It is crucial in a social context to prevent slander and clarify the couple's relationship status in the eyes of the community.

In Islamic law, holding a *walimah* is a *sunnah mu'akkadah*, a highly recommended sunnah.²⁶ Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "Hold a *walimah* even if it is with just one sheep."²⁷ This indicates that *walimah* should ideally be conducted, but it should not be burdensome and should align with the family's financial capacity. This also

²¹ Arif Sugitanata dkk., "Konflik Peran Mahasiswa Semester Akhir: Antara Menyelesaikan Tugas Akhir dan Pernikahan," *JURNAL PIKIR: Jurnal Studi Pendidikan dan Hukum Islam* 10, no. 1 (2024): 96–107, <https://ejournal.staidapondokkrempyang.ac.id/index.php/pikir/article/view/543>.

²² Noer Azizah, Sudirman Sudirman, dan Burhanuddin Susanto, "Resiprositas tradisi membalas amplop pesta pernikahan 'tompangan' terhadap peningkatan kohesi sosial," *Jurnal al-ijtimaiyyah* 7, no. 1 (2021): 39–64, <https://doi.org/10.22373/al-ijtimaiyyah.v7i1.9517>.

²³ Lia Laquna Jamali, Lukman Zain, dan Ahmad Faqih Hasyim, "Hikmah Walimah Al-'Ursy (Pesta Pernikahan) Dengan Kehormatan Perempuan Perspektif Hadits," *Diya Al-Afkar: Jurnal Studi Al-Quran Dan Al-Hadis* 4, no. 2 (2016): 165–82, <https://doi.org/10.24235/diyyaafkar.v4i02.1161>.

²⁴ Hamzah Latief, "Interkoneksi Konsep Walimah Perkawinan dalam Hukum Islam dan Hukum Adat Bugis Bone," *Al-Bayyinah* 3, no. 1 (2019): 77–92, <https://doi.org/10.35673/al-bayyinah.v3i1.346>.

²⁵ Aisyah Arsyad, "Menuju Fikih Gender: Analisis Hadis Tentang Perintah Mengumumkan Pernikahan," *Tahdis: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Al-Hadis* 8, no. 2 (2017): 133–53, <https://doi.org/10.24252/tahdis.v8i2.7223>.

²⁶ M Dzikrullah Faza, "Tinjauan Fiqih Empat Mazhab Terhadap Acara Walimah," *Al Fuadiy: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 4, no. 2 (2022): 17–25, <https://ejournalqarnain.stisnq.ac.id/index.php/AF/article/view/51>.

²⁷ HR. *Al-Bukhari* (no. 5167) kitab an-Nikah, *Muslim* (no. 1427) kitab an-Nikah, *at-Tirmidzi* (no. 1094) kitab an-Nikah, *an-Nasa-i* (no. 3351) kitab an-Nikah, *Abu Dawud* (no. 2109) kitab an-Nikah, *Ibnu Majah* (no. 1907) kitab an-Nikah, *Ahmad* (no. 12274), *Malik* (no. 1157) kitab an-Nikah, *ad-Darimi* (no. 2204), kitab an-Nikah.

underscores the importance of simplicity and avoiding extravagance in celebrations to prevent unnecessary financial strain or debt.

Walimah also holds significant social importance.²⁸ In Islamic societies, *walimah* is an opportunity to strengthen familial bonds, enhance social solidarity, and demonstrate a sense of community. It is a moment where extended families and communities come together, support one another, and share in the happiness. Additionally, *walimah* serves as a means to introduce the newlywed couple to the community, allowing them to begin their new life with the full support of those around them.²⁹

Religiously, *walimah* is an expression of gratitude to Allah Swt for the blessing of marriage. It is a form of worship expected to bring blessings to the newlywed couple. By holding a *walimah*, the couple also follows the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who guides them on the importance of announcing the marriage and celebrating it in a simple and meaningful way.³⁰

On the other hand, psychologically, a wedding celebration has a significant impact on the newlyweds. The presence of family and friends at the wedding provides emotional support and strengthens the couple's confidence and happiness. This moment is often considered one of the most critical days in a person's life, where they receive recognition and support from their closest ones.³¹ This social support plays a crucial role in building a solid emotional foundation for starting a family life.³²

From a cultural perspective, a wedding celebration is a means of expressing traditions and values passed down from generation to generation. Each culture has its unique way of celebrating marriage, from traditional rituals, attire, and food to dances. Through wedding celebrations, cultural identity and ancestral heritage are preserved and

²⁸ Abdul Rahman Ghazaly, *Fikih Munakahat* (Bogor: Prenada Media Group, 2003).

²⁹ Ayu Putri, Ida Friatna, dan Muhammad Husnul, "Pandangan Ulama Kabupaten Langkat tentang Hukum Memberikan Karangan Bunga saat Walimatul 'Urs," *El-Ailah: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Hukum Keluarga* 1, no. 1 (2024): 36-52, <https://jim.ar-raniry.ac.id/index.php/AJIMHK/article/view/482>.

³⁰ Jamali, Zain, dan Hasyim, "Hikmah Walimah Al-'Ursy (Pesta Pernikahan) Dengan Kehormatan Perempuan Perspektif Hadits."

³¹ Elizabeth Freeman, *The wedding complex: Forms of belonging in modern American culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).

³² Susan Bolyard Millar, *Bugis weddings: rituals of social location in modern Indonesia* (California: Center for South and Southeast Asia Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 1989).

maintained. For instance, in Javanese culture, wedding rituals such as siraman and panggih carry deep symbolic meanings about purity and unity.³³

In addition to sociological, psychological, and cultural aspects, there is also a moral and ethical urgency in attending a wedding. Presence at a wedding ceremony demonstrates respect and support for the married couple and their families. It also reflects values of togetherness and social solidarity, where individuals show commitment to supporting each other during significant life moments.³⁴

A wedding celebration also plays an equally important economic role. Weddings often involve various industries, including catering, decoration, attire, photography, and entertainment services. These activities create job opportunities and contribute significantly to the economy, both locally and nationally. The wedding industry is one of the continually growing economic sectors, driven by the increasing demand for more personalized and luxurious services.³⁵ Thus, weddings not only provide social and emotional benefits but also have a positive economic impact on the broader community.

Specifically, spending on weddings can be a catalyst for local economic growth. Small and medium-sized enterprises, such as florists, bridal designers, and catering service providers, often benefit from wedding events.³⁶ However, behind the grandeur and joy, weddings can also create social and financial pressure for both the couple and their families. High expectations for hosting large and lavish weddings can lead

³³ Waryunah Irmawati, "Makna simbolik upacara siraman pengantin adat JAWA," *Walisongo: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 21, no. 2 (2013): 309–30, <https://doi.org/10.21580/ws.21.2.247>; Septiyani Dwi Kurniasih, "Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Islam dalam Upacara Panggih Penganten Banyumasan," *Jurnal Penelitian Agama* 19, no. 1 (2018): 117–50, <https://ejournal.uinsaizu.ac.id/index.php/jpa/article/view/2324>.

³⁴ Hanif Sri Yulianto, "Mitos Malas Menghadiri Undangan Perkawinan," *bola.com*, Mei 2024, <https://www.bola.com/ragam/read/5587556/mitos-malas-menghadiri-undangan-perkawinan>.

³⁵ Peg LeVine, *Love and Dread in Cambodia: Weddings, births and ritual harm under the Khmer Rouge* (Singapore: NUS Press Pte Ltd, 2010).

³⁶ Mediana, "Bisnis Pesta Pernikahan yang Menggiurkan," *Kompas.id*, 27 November 2023, Gaya Hidup edisi, <https://www.kompas.id/baca/ekonomi/2023/11/26/bisnis-pesta-pernikahan-yang-menggiurkan>.

to significant financial burdens.³⁷ Therefore, it is essential to manage expectations and budgets wisely so that weddings remain a celebration of happiness without compromising the financial stability of the family.

The urgency of attending a wedding also encompasses personal and relational dimensions. Attending a wedding is a tangible form of participation in social life, demonstrating presence and support during significant moments in others' lives. It strengthens social and relational bonds, deepens friendships, and builds a robust social network. Being present at a wedding also reflects a commitment to celebrate and support the achievements and happiness of others, thereby creating a more cohesive and harmonious social environment.³⁸

In the context of globalization, weddings also serve as an essential means to bridge cultural differences and introduce the diversity of traditions. Couples from different cultural backgrounds often incorporate elements from both cultures into their wedding celebrations, creating unique and inclusive festivities. It not only enriches the personal experience of the couple but also introduces guests to different traditions and values, fostering intercultural understanding and tolerance.³⁹

Ultimately, a wedding celebration is a complex event that encompasses social, religious, psychological, cultural, economic, personal-relational, and globalization dimensions. Attending a wedding has profound urgency, reflecting a commitment to supporting and celebrating significant moments in others' lives. Through wedding celebrations, social and cultural bonds are strengthened, economic growth is supported, and a more inclusive and harmonious community is fostered.

³⁷ Ani Nursalikah, "Pernikahan Jadi Beban Finansial Bagi Sejumlah Pria Muslim," *republika.co*, Desember 2019, khazanah edisi, <https://khazanah.republika.co.id/berita/q20q7r366/pernikahan-jadi-beban-finansial-bagi-sejumlah-pria-muslim>.

³⁸ Wike Fiorentina dan Ikhwan Ikhwan, "Perubahan dalam Penyelenggaraan Pesta Pernikahan," *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai* 5, no. 2 (2021): 4547–53, <https://doi.org/10.31004/jptam.v5i2.1599>.

³⁹ Maharani Dewi dan Edi Dwi Riyanto, "Asimilasi dan Akulturasi Budaya Punjungan Pada Prosesi Pernikahan Masyarakat Transmigran di Bumi Minangkabau," *Sang Pencerah: Jurnal Ilmiah Universitas Muhammadiyah Buton* 8, no. 2 (2022): 444–57, <https://doi.org/10.35326/pencerah.v8i2.1928>.

The Dramatization of an Ex-Partner's Presence at a Wedding: Reality, Viral Content, and Its Impact on Marital Harmony

The phenomenon of dramatizing the presence of former partners at weddings has become an increasingly prevalent trend on social media. Former partners who attend their ex's weddings often seize this moment to create viral content, narrating the experience as if they are deeply hurt. For instance, in one case, a man attended his ex-girlfriend's wedding, and his presence immediately drew significant attention. After a seven-year relationship, the man never anticipated that he would ultimately end up merely preserving someone else's match. The woman who had been his long-time girlfriend was now marrying another man. The man's generosity in attending his ex's wedding went viral on social media.⁴⁰ In this context, the presence of a former partner at a wedding can be interpreted as a form of "drama" created to attract public attention and garner sympathy. This action is often driven by a desire to gain validation from an online audience, as well as to increase followers and engagement on social media.

The reality of this phenomenon shows a tendency to exploit emotional moments for personal gain. The presence of a former partner at a wedding can trigger various emotional reactions, both from the newlyweds and from the attending guests.⁴¹ For the couple getting married, this moment can create discomfort and tension, especially if the narrative constructed by the former partner is uploaded to social media and goes viral. This presence not only affects the wedding atmosphere but can also have significant psychological impacts on the newlyweds.⁴²

Viral content created from this dramatization is often designed to highlight a narrative of suffering or sadness, with the aim of attracting attention and empathy from netizens. This phenomenon leverages the power of social media to shape public opinion and create "drama" that can spread rapidly. For instance, *Tribun Sumsel*, on its YouTube channel, reported a man who couldn't hold back his tears upon seeing his ex-

⁴⁰ Banjarmasin Post News Video, "Tutupi Kesedihan, Pria Ini Datang ke Nikahan Mantan Dengan Nyamar jadi Badut," *Youtube.com*, Desember 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yOWH1UCRpNI>.

⁴¹ Wulan, "Viral Mantan Datang di Acara Pernikahan, Sambutan Keluarga Mempelai Membuat Netizen Terkejut."

⁴² Suherni Sulaeman, "Kata Psikolog Soal Undang Mantan ke Acara Pernikahan," *detik*, 18 Juli 2017, Health edisi, <https://health.detik.com/berita-detikhealth/d-3563782/kata-psikolog-soal-undang-mantan-ke-acara-pernikahan>.

fiancée marry someone else.⁴³ Moreover, such content often contains elements of emotional manipulation, which can influence public perception of the couple getting married and their former partner. In many cases, the narrative built within this viral content can trigger debates and negative comments from the online audience, which in turn can worsen the situation for all parties involved, as evidenced by the example of netizen comments on YouTube channels that showcase the presence of former partners at wedding events.

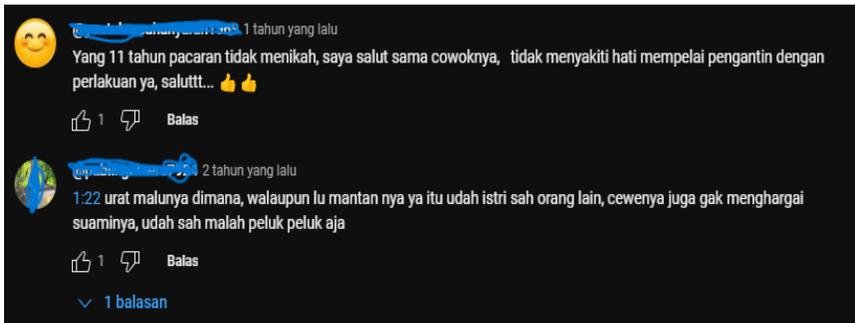


Figure 1. Netizen Comments on a YouTube Channel Featuring the Presence of Former Partners at a Wedding Event

The impact of this phenomenon on the harmony of married couples can be highly detrimental. Newlyweds may feel pressured by unwanted public attention and the negative narratives circulating on social media. In some cases, this has even led to the cancellation of weddings, as reported by *Tribunnew Sultra Official*, which featured a groom embracing another woman suspected to be his ex-girlfriend.⁴⁴ This situation can disrupt the adaptation and adjustment process necessary for building a new marital life. Additionally, the social pressure and stigma resulting from viral content can affect the dynamics of the relationship, leading to distrust, jealousy, and ongoing tension. Therefore, couples must establish strong communication and mutual support in facing such situations, as

⁴³ Euis, "Momen Seorang Pria Menangis Hadiri Pernikahan Mantan Tunangan, Tiba-tiba Diputuskan & Diundang Nikah," *Tribun Sumsel*, 14 Januari 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZeYDDGKvy1E>.

⁴⁴ "Fakta Sebenarnya Video Viral Pengantin Pria Batal Nikah Akibat Mantan Pacar Nangis Dalam Pelukannya," *Tribunnews Sultra Official*, 3 November 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCxlL4L9oe0>.

well as protect their privacy and the integrity of their relationship from the negative influences of social media.

The presence of former partners at weddings and the creation of content exploiting such moments also reflect a broader phenomenon in today's digital culture, namely the pursuit of popularity and validation through social media. Many individuals feel compelled to share every aspect of their lives online, including moments that should remain private.⁴⁵ In this context, the dramatization of an ex-partner's presence at a wedding can be seen as an attempt to stand out and attract attention from a wider audience. It not only indicates a shift in how people interact with social media but also illustrates how digital platforms are influencing social norms and individual behaviour.⁴⁶

In addition to the direct impact on the newlyweds, this phenomenon can also have broader long-term effects on social relationships and public perception. For instance, when narratives about former partners attending weddings go viral, it can create social pressure for others experiencing similar situations. As Michael Humphrey reveals in his dissertation, the narrative structure and style of life stories on social media shape individual perceptions and behaviours.⁴⁷ Many people may feel compelled to mimic this behaviour to gain popularity, even if such actions could be detrimental to themselves and others. Furthermore, public perceptions of marital relationships and former partners can be distorted by narratives constructed through social media, creating unrealistic stereotypes and expectations.

From a psychological perspective, the presence of an ex-partner at a wedding with the intention of creating viral content can be considered a form of narcissistic behaviour or an excessive search for external validation, as explained by Umul Sakinah et al.⁴⁸ in their writings.

⁴⁵ Silvia Fardila Soliha, "Tingkat ketergantungan pengguna media sosial dan kecemasan sosial," *Interaksi: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi* 4, no. 1 (2015): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.14710/interaksi.4.1.1-10>.

⁴⁶ Ambia B Boestam dan Azizah Des Derivanti, "Komunikasi digital dan perubahan sosial," *Jisip (Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Pendidikan)* 6, no. 4 (2022): 2829–34, <https://doi.org/10.58258/jisip.v6i4.4032>.

⁴⁷ Michael Humphrey, "The working narrative: analysis of linguistic structures and styles in life storytelling on social media" (Dissertation, Colorado State University, 2017), https://mountainscholar.org/bitstream/10217/185630/1/Humphrey_colostat_e_0053A_14439.pdf.

⁴⁸ Umul Sakinah, M Fahli Zatrachadi, dan Darmawati Darmawati, "Fenomena narsistik di media sosial sebagai bentuk pengakuan diri," *Al-Ittizaan: Jurnal*

Individuals who engage in this behavior have a strong need for attention and recognition from others, which is often facilitated by the current social media culture. However, this behavior may also reflect underlying emotional issues or an inability to let go of the past, which requires further understanding and intervention.

Therefore, the phenomenon of dramatizing the presence of former partners at weddings and its impact on the newlyweds demonstrates how the interaction between personal life reality and the digital world can influence interpersonal relationships. In an era where social media plays a dominant role in daily life, it is crucial for individuals to develop a critical awareness of how they use these platforms and their effects on themselves and others. Education on digital ethics and the importance of maintaining privacy boundaries have become increasingly relevant to mitigate the potential negative impacts of such phenomena. Thus, society can more wisely utilize social media and maintain the harmony of interpersonal relationships in the face of the continuously evolving dynamics of the digital world.

The Implementation of Erving Goffman's Dramaturgy Theory on the Dynamics of Dramatizing the Presence of Former Partners at Weddings

From the perspective of Erving Goffman's Dramaturgy Theory, the phenomenon of an ex-partner attending a wedding and creating viral content can be seen as a "performance" on the social media stage. Goffman argues that social life is akin to theatre, where individuals are actors performing in front of an audience.⁴⁹ In this context, the ex-partner attending the wedding uses the wedding stage as a venue to present a "drama" designed to attract public attention and sympathy. This action involves not only their role but also the newlyweds and guests as part of a larger stage setting.

This dramatization is often carefully planned and executed, where the ex-partner tries to manipulate the narrative to highlight their sadness or suffering. It aligns with Goffman's concept of "impression management," where individuals strive to control how they are perceived

Bimbingan Konseling Islam 2, no. 1 (2019): 34–43, <http://download.garuda.kemdikbud.go.id/article.php?article=1775841&val=18936&title=Manajemen%20Waktu%20Dalam%20Pendididikan%20%2013%20Langkah%20Konseling%20Untuk%20Mencapai%20Keberhasilan>.

⁴⁹ Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*.

by others.⁵⁰ By portraying themselves as the wounded victim, the ex-partner hopes to garner empathy and support from the social media audience. This action also reflects an attempt to enhance social status and validation, often measured by the number of likes, comments, and shares received on digital platforms. However, this phenomenon affects not only the ex-partner but also the newlyweds.

From a dramaturgical perspective,⁵¹ the newlyweds become unwilling participants in the performance. They are forced to play roles in the drama created by the ex-partner, which can cause discomfort and emotional stress. It can disrupt what should be one of the most important days of their lives, creating tension in their newly formed relationship. Goffman would see this situation as an example of the collision between the front stage (public appearance) and the backstage (private life), creating tension between the need to maintain an excellent public appearance and the complex emotional reality behind the scenes.⁵²

Additionally, this phenomenon demonstrates how social media has transformed the way people interact and present themselves. In dramaturgy theory, Goffman discusses the importance of background or “setting” in a social performance. Social media provides the perfect setting for this dramatization, allowing individuals to manipulate public perception more effectively than in the real world.⁵³ Viral content created from the presence of an ex-partner at a wedding often uses vital dramatic elements to capture attention, such as sad facial expressions, melancholic music, and touching narratives. It undoubtedly creates an illusion of reality that can significantly influence public perception and reaction.

⁵⁰ Nushrat Tashmin, “Art of impression management on social media,” *World Scientific News*, no. 30 (2016): 89–102, <https://bibliotekanauki.pl/articles/1192707.pdf>.

⁵¹ Peter Kivisto dan Dan Pittman, “Goffman’s Dramaturgical Sociology,” *Illuminating social life: Classical and contemporary theory revisited*, 2007, 271–90.

⁵² Sandro Serpa dan Carlos Miguel Ferreira, “Goffman’s Backstage Revisited: Conceptual Relevance in Contemporary Social Interactions,” *International Journal of Social Science Studies* 6, no. 10 (2018): 74–80, <https://EconPapers.repec.org/RePEc:rfa:journl:v:6:y:2018:i:10:p:74-80>.

⁵³ Randall Collins, “Erving Goffman and the Development of Modern Social Theory,” dalam *The View from Goffman*, ed. oleh Jason Ditton (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1980), 170–209, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-16268-0_7.

Cases in Suzhou, China,⁵⁴ and various regions in Indonesia show how these situations can trigger drama and go viral on social media.⁵⁵ This phenomenon not only creates uncomfortable moments for all parties involved but also highlights how social media can affect the dynamics and public perception of weddings and relationships between former partners.

In Suzhou, an ex-partner attending a wedding with the intention of expressing their feelings resulted in chaos after they lost emotional control, showing how the presence of an ex can ruin a sacred moment and cause stress for the newlyweds and guests.⁵⁶ Similarly, in Indonesia, the phenomenon of ex-partners' presence going viral often provokes various reactions, from admiration to condemnation, reflecting the complexity of emotions and social dynamics involved.⁵⁷

Ultimately, this dramatization phenomenon reflects significant changes in social norms and individual behaviour in the digital age. The presence of an ex-partner at a wedding and the creation of viral content from that moment is a tangible example of how digital platforms can be used to manipulate reality and construct narratives that benefit certain individuals. It also underscores the need for better education on digital ethics and the importance of maintaining privacy in an increasingly digitally connected world. Thus, individuals and society as a whole can be wiser in using social media, reducing the negative impacts of such phenomena, and preserving the harmony of interpersonal relationships in the continually evolving digital era.

Conclusion

This research has revealed that the dramatization of an ex-partner's presence at a wedding, which becomes viral content, can

⁵⁴ Samantha Rose, "Wedding crasher: Ex-girlfriend storms wedding ceremony in Suzhou."

⁵⁵ Yayuk Harini, "Tegar Banget, 10 Selebriti Ini Hadir di Acara Pernikahan Sang Mantan lho!"; Muhammad Fahrur Safi'i, "Hadir di Pernikahan Mantan, Pria Ini Datang Pakai Kostum Kura-Kura Ninja."

⁵⁶ Samantha Rose, "Wedding crasher: Ex-girlfriend storms wedding ceremony in Suzhou."

⁵⁷ "Fakta Sebenarnya Video Viral Pengantin Pria Batal Nikah Akibat Mantan Pacar Nangis Dalam Pelukannya"; Euis, "Momen Seorang Pria Menangis Hadiri Pernikahan Mantan Tunangan, Tiba-tiba Diputuskan & Diundang Nikah"; Banjarmasin Post News Video, "Tutupi Kesedihan, Pria Ini Datang ke Nikahan Mantan Dengan Nyamar jadi Badut."

significantly impact the harmony of newlywed couples. This phenomenon reflects the complex dynamics of interpersonal and social relationships played out in the public sphere, where ex-partners exploit emotional moments to attract attention and validation from the social media audience. These actions are often carefully planned and executed, creating a narrative of suffering that can garner public sympathy. Using Erving Goffman's Dramaturgy Theory, this study shows that the presence of an ex-partner at a wedding can be seen as a "performance" on the social media stage, where individuals strive to control how others perceive them through "impression management." The newlywed couple is forced to play a role in the drama created by the ex-partner, which can disrupt an essential moment in their lives and create tension in their newly formed relationship.

Beyond the direct impact on the newlywed couple, this phenomenon also reflects significant changes in social norms and individual behavior in the digital age. Social media provides the perfect setting for dramatizing the ex-partner's presence at a wedding event, allowing individuals to manipulate public perception more effectively than in the real world. Viral content often employs strong dramatic elements to capture attention, creating an illusion of reality that significantly influences public perception and reaction. Therefore, it is important for individuals and society to develop a critical awareness of how they use social media and its impact on themselves and others. Education on digital ethics and the importance of maintaining privacy boundaries is increasingly relevant to mitigate the potential negative effects of such phenomena. Thus, society can become wiser in utilizing social media and preserving the harmony of interpersonal relationships in the face of the ever-evolving dynamics of the digital world.

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