Marriage is scary trend: Narratives of fear of marriage for women

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Abstract: The term "marriage is scary," prevalent on social media, conveys the notion that marriage is intimidating, often through narratives that portray it negatively. This study seeks to examine the "marriage is scary" trend, particularly focusing on the phenomenon of marriage-related fear among women, by analyzing content from the TikTok platform. The research identifies the factors influencing women's perceptions of the "marriage is scary" narrative and explores how this trend has become emblematic of popular culture on social media. The investigation employs a qualitative approach, utilizing content analysis and interviews. The research setting is the TikTok platform, with a focus on content and comment sections. Informants are active TikTok users selected through purposive sampling, and the data comprises narrative analysis results and interviews with netizens regarding "marriage is scary" content. The study reveals that content analysis of the "marriage is scary" narrative highlights issues such as familial problems, fear in partner selection, marital advice, and life demands within marriage. Women's perceptions of the narrative are influenced by challenges of long-term commitment and are considered a natural phenomenon. These perceptions are shaped by factors such as social pressure, relatable content, social and cultural changes, the influence of social media, and personal experiences and trauma. The study identifies two positive aspects of the viral "marriage is scary" trend: the notion of sharing as caring and the importance of selectivity in decision-making. Conversely, the trend also has negative impacts, including the creation of a negative stigma around marriage and a decline in marriage rates.

Keywords: Narration, TikTok, Marriage is scary.

1. INTRODUCTION

Marriage constitutes a fundamental aspect of human social needs, facilitating the formation of small societal groups. Beyond fulfilling social needs, marriage holds spiritual significance in certain belief systems, serving as a means to protect individuals from sin associated with extramarital sexual urges (Hull 2016). As a longstanding social institution, marriage has undergone shifts in meaning and perception in the contemporary era. In "The Interpretation of Cultures," it is evident that culture significantly influences individual interpretations of marriage. Geertz posits that humans are inherently reliant on the webs of meaning they construct, with culture providing a profound symbolic framework for comprehending social phenomena such as marriage. This perspective underscores how cultural norms, symbols, and social practices shape perceptions of marriage, while also acknowledging the transformations induced by modernity, economic factors, and gender dynamics(Geertz 2017). Despite marriage's role in ensuring social and spiritual stability, it is increasingly perceived as an ideal life goal for establishing new societal communities. However, it is also associated with stress, fear, anxiety, and even rejection, particularly among women. Women's increased participation in the public sphere has prompted a reevaluation of their perspectives, impacting perceptions of marriage's significance.

Marriage is increasingly perceived as an institution that may infringe upon individual freedom, particularly for women. Traditionally, marriage has been regarded as a social contract necessitating mutual consent between the parties involved, without external interference. The evolving perceptions of marriage among women have contributed to the postponement of marriage. A significant factor influencing this trend is the expanded access to formal education in Indonesia. This phenomenon aligns with the theory that modernization and economic development lead to a prolonged transition to adulthood for young individuals(Furstenberg 2010). However, beyond age-related indicators, there are numerous aspects to

consider in examining the shift in marriage patterns in Indonesia(Karel K. Himawan 2020). Previously, household conflicts and personal issues related to commitment were considered private matters, but they have now become topics shared publicly on social media. This trend is reflected in data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), which reports a decline in marriage rates and a high incidence of divorce in Indonesia. According to the latest BPS data, by 2024, Indonesia is experiencing a significant decline in marriage interest, with a reduction of 2 million marriages, indicating a persistent downward trend over the past decade(Rainer 2024). Although this phenomenon is observed in Indonesia, it is part of a broader global issue. The data suggest that changes in perceptions of marriage are closely linked to the consumption of information from various internet sources. The apprehension towards marriage among current social media users is exemplified by the "marriage is scary" trend.

The phrase "marriage is scary" has gained traction on social media, portraying marriage as a daunting and restrictive institution. This narrative often presents marriage in a negative light, drawing from viral cases, personal experiences, and the challenges faced by individuals in marital relationships. The prevalence of this narrative reflects a broader societal shift, where marriage, traditionally viewed as a stabilizing institution fulfilling both social and spiritual needs, is being re-evaluated in the context of socio-cultural changes and technological advancements. Media plays a significant role in this phenomenon by often presenting a skewed reality that emphasizes the negative aspects of marriage. Consequently, the narrative of marriage as a source of fear highlights the tension between individual freedom and societal expectations, particularly for women, and is further reinforced by media portrayals of marriage-related issues. This narrative also stands in contrast to religious values, especially within the context of Islam in Indonesia, where marriage is considered an act of worship. In this religious framework, avoiding marriage is akin to eschewing religious duties, as marriage is seen as a safeguard against sin arising from sexual desires outside of wedlock (Hull 2016). This paper aims to explore two key issues: the factors influencing women's perceptions of the "marriage is scary" narrative and how this trend reflects popular culture on social media. These issues will be addressed through detailed methodological approaches.

2. METHODS

Based on this phenomenon, this paper is carried out on the TikTok platform by relying on the netnography approach method which largely observes netizens (internet citizens) in cyber or online space to identify the phenomenon of online interaction as a cultural reflection that forms a new understanding of deep humanity. Based on Robert V Konzintes' book entitled Netnography; Doing Ethnographic Research Online, netnography is a study that focuses on understanding Cyber space in which there are people who interact with each other and are able to produce their own culture and community system. So from the netnography approach used, this research uses descriptive qualitative research in describing the phenomenon to be studied. The data sources obtained in this study are the results of content analysis of the marriage is scary narrative and interviews with netizens who use the TikTok platform.

informants

Informants who participated in the study were determined by the criteria of being adult women who actively use the TikTok platform. The informants who participated will be described in the following table;

Table 1. Participants

Name	Age	Username on TikTok	Job
lavender	23	@watashiwanita	Private sector employee
Firana Astrina	23	@firanaastrina	Private sector employee
Safira	20	@Pirrrpira	Student
Maysa	22	@Euphlee	Student
Lily	21	@riinstii	Student
Caca	21	@Eunolaaa._	Student
Nurul Fadhiah	21	@Fadhione	Student

Qotrunnada Naqiyah	23	@noru_cg45	Intern
Tessa	20	@Silent4u	Student
Rika	20	@rikaaaa22_	Student
Fera	23	@bella_a0220	salesperson

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Content analysis of the "fear of marriage" narrative

In the narrative or discourse of fear of marriage in the marriage is scary trend, it is representative of women's views on marriage. In social media, content analysis is very useful for tracking trends, understanding public opinion, and measuring netizen responses to various topics of marriage problems from the narratives presented in the content. Based on the results of searching the content of the marriage is scary trend that presents the "fear of marriage" narrative on TikTok created by the content creator, the conclusion from the results of content analysis with media observation of each narrative theme discussed in the content is grouped into three discussion themes; experience, problems in the family, wrong partner, life demands, and advice on marriage. The theme of the discussion of the narrative presented in the marriage is scary content will be described in the following graph;
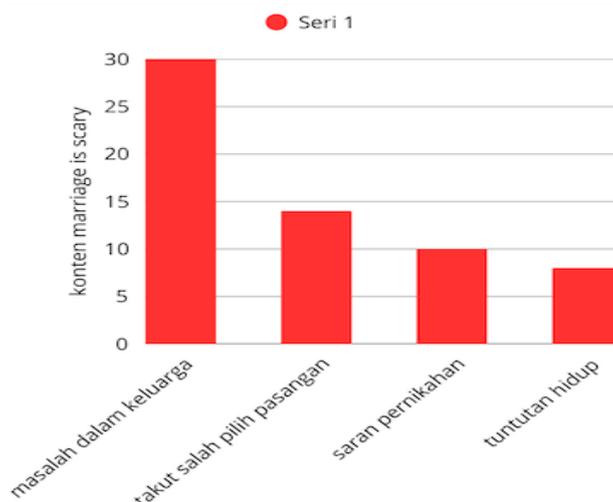
Family issues
Narration: *Marriage is scary, bayangin lo dapet suami yang persis kaya bapak lo* (@beakillua)

The content received 350 thousand likes, 11.3 thousand comments, and 15.6 thousand shares. In the comments column of the content, most netizens reveal that there are similar problems, "*ngebayanginnya aja gamau ah*", "*marriage is scary, I mean look at my father*" of the comment also received attention from other netizens regarding the comments submitted

Narration : *Marriage is scary gak usah jauh-jauh deh, liat keluarga sendiri aja bikin gua gak tertarik sama yang namanya nikah (@justme.png06)*

The content received 42.7 thousand likes, 189 comments and 2.61 thousand shares. The content invites many similar comments, "*kalau jodoh cerminan ayah, gua jadi takut nikah*", and *"takut banget gak di nafkahin*"The comment also attracted a lot of attention from other netizens in the form of likes and reply comments.

From several narratives on TikTok content, it can be seen that the background of family relationships influences netizens and content creators in writing marriage is scary narratives regarding the meaning of marriage today. The family is basically a person's first place of education, which will directly affect the way a person views various events in the surrounding environment, besides that in decision making and personality and much more is influenced by the education obtained by a person in a family environment. In this case, based on the results of the content analysis of the "fear of marriage" narrative on the marriage is scary trend, it is identified that the narrative presented raises the issue of family problems in the picture, with the narrative "marriage is scary". Based on the analysis of these narratives, women's perceptions of marriage can result from problems in the family. In psychological studies on child trauma due to problems witnessed in the household, it has great potential in undermining a person to do positive things (Mardiyati 2015). In addition, this occurs due to life experiences due to domestic conflicts that threaten one's security so that they avoid all activities that have the possibility of causing these events to occur in the future, so they feel afraid of marriage because of past images that threaten one's emotional and physical (Latifah dkk. 2025)

Fear of making the wrong choice

Narration: *marriage is scary, bayangin kalo punya suami yang kalo ngomong kasar, suka marah-marah, gamau ngalah dan kdrt begitu terus berulang ulang sepanjang hidup lo* (@haloakualya).

The content received 4.61 thousand likes, 32 comments, and 401 shares. Then the comments addressed to the content *"yang aku alami wkwk"* which was then replied to by the content creator (@haloakualya) *"kaa semangat yaaa"*, and comments *"yaAllah amit-amit gak mau nikah"* and many other comments agreeing with the narrative presented in the content.

Narration: *pov: lu nikah dengan orang yang salah*(@lawyer_ave).

The content received 581 likes, 20 comments, 70 shares. The content conveys the marriage is scary message by creating a short scene that tells about a woman who experiences domestic violence due to the wrong choice of partner. In the comments column on the content, it gives appreciation to the content creator who has provided a picture of marriage is scary through the marriage is scary scene.

From the marriage is scary narrative, it can be seen that the problems experienced by someone in marriage occur when choosing an unsuitable partner, this is because marriage involves two parties in a bond, so that the narrative illustrates that choosing the wrong partner will have bad consequences in marriage. Then the fear or worry in choosing a partner is the result of influence from the social environment and consumption of information from social media due to content that presents problems in marriage caused by the incompatibility of the two parties in marriage.

Advice on marriage

Narration: *marriage is scary, maka menikahlah disaat kamu siap & bertemu dengan orang yang tepat bukan hanya sekedar ingin cepat* (@gdfbellaa).

The content received 2.88 thousand likes, 16 comments and 237 shares, then added with the caption "don't get married but rich not married". From this content, all comments agree with the narrative conveyed.

Narration: *Berbicara tentang seberapa pentingnya Selflove salah satunya yaitu trend tentang "Marriage is scary" Ini benar adanya jikalau kita ngga tau bagaimana mencintai diri kita, salah memilih pasangan akan membawa hidup kita tidak bahagia, itu karena kurangnya pemahaman tentang selflove itu sendiri sehingga tidak memikirkan bahwa cinta yang setara litu sangat penting dan mindset dimana kau harus memposisikan dirimu diatas segalanya jika kau menemukan ketidak cocokkan sejak awal dengan pasanganmu mending jangan lanjutkan* (@kayami97).

The content received 236 likes, 3 comments, and 7 shares. In the narrative, netizens who comment in the comments column have the same view as the content creator.

From the narrative presented by the content creator and the response from netizens on social media such as TikTok, it is part of the media for human interaction because there are information providers and recipients of information, in this case the content creator who created the marriage is scary trend content with the narrative "afraid of marriage" is also used as a medium to provide information about advice to minimize the bad views or negative perceptions of women towards marriage.

Life demands in marriage
Narration: *Marriage is scary gimana nanti kita dapat pasangan yang pola pikirnya gak setara sama kita (@kesayangankamu)*

The content received 7.48 thousand likes, 27 comments, and 309 shares. From the content seen in the comments there are some netizens who do not really agree with the narrative "*setiap keluarga pasti punya permasalahannya masing masing, jadi buat apa takut ! soo jalani aja pak, bu, mas, mba*" but most agreed with the narrative " *n boys will always brings u to their level*"

Narration: *Sebelum menikah fikirkan ini dulu "hanya kehidupan Wanita yang berubah setelah married, hanya tubuh Wanita yang hancur, hanya karier Wanita yang terhenti, dan masih banyak tuntutan lainnya (@clarissa.wijayaaa)*

The content received 50.4 thousand likes, 969 comments, 2.70 thousand. From this content the comments given by netizens also vary "*noted buat kalian jangan langsung punya anak setelah nikah, adaptasi dan nikmati peran baru dulu sebagai pasturi*" and "*pastikan bersama pria yang pantas*".

The demands of life in human life are inseparable from social interactions in the society where one lives and adapts. The demands that exist in society are the result of norms, values and rules that apply in a community or social group that regulate behavior so that it conforms to and does not deviate from existing rules. In social life, demands can be in the form of obligations

2. **Women's perceptions of the "fear of marriage" narrative in the marriage is scary trend**

Perception is part of a person's cognitive process in interpreting and giving meaning to stimuli or stimuli received through the senses from the surrounding environment. Perception is not just physical vision or observation, but also involves interpretation and understanding which is influenced by experience, knowledge, and individual psychological conditions. Perception is part of a person's cognitive process in interpreting and giving meaning to stimuli or stimuli received through the senses from the surrounding environment. Perception is not just physical vision or observation, but also involves interpretation and understanding influenced by experience, knowledge, and individual psychological conditions.

Long-term commitment challenges

The commitment involved in a marriage is not just a decision at the beginning, but a choice that must be maintained as a foundation that keeps both parties in marriage to face the various dynamics that occur. Stanley and Markman (1992) assert that commitment is part of a person's desire and intention to maintain a relationship in the long term which affects a person's behavior and decision making, then added by Surra and Gray (2000) that commitment contains aspects of attractiveness, moral norms and social or emotional pressures that bind both parties (Pardede 2023). In this condition, women in facing and viewing this trend are part of a collection of narratives that present women's fears and concerns about marriage. This was expressed by netizens who participated in this study, as follows;

> *Menurut ku tren itu mencerminkan ketakutan apalagi pada perempuan, kita juga bisa lihat bagaimana pengguna TikTok sering berbagi kekhawatiran tentang komitmen jangka panjang, potensi kekerasan dalam rumah tangga, dan ketidaksetaraan dalam peran domestik. Tren ini juga menunjukkan meningkatnya kesadaran akan kesehatan mental dan hak-hak individu, di mana banyak perempuan merasa perlu mengekspresikan ketakutan mereka di platform sosial. Meskipun ada pandangan positif tentang pernikahan, tapii tren ini menyoroti realitas dan tantangan yang dihadapi oleh generasi kita "muda" saat ini. (@noru_cg45)*

Based on @noru_cg45's expression, the concerns that arise due to the fear of marriage narrative presented in the content on TikTok are based on the reality that occurs, this is also in line with what was expressed by one of the netizens in this study;

> *Menurut saya, tren ini memberikan peluang yang sangat baik bagi perempuan maupun laki-laki untuk mendalami dan mendiskusikan berbagai aspek tentang pernikahan secara lebih terbuka. Topik ini tidak hanya membantu individu memahami tantangan dan tanggung jawab dalam pernikahan, tetapi juga mendorong mereka untuk mempertimbangkan berbagai perspektif, termasuk kesiapan emosional, finansial, dan komitmen jangka panjang. Dengan adanya diskusi yang lebih luas di platform seperti TikTok, masyarakat dapat lebih sadar akan realitas pernikahan, sehingga dapat membuat keputusan yang lebih bijaksana dan berdasarkan pemahaman yang mendalam. (@Silent4u)*

Common phenomenon

The phenomenon of the "fear of marriage" narrative in the marriage is scary trend is a common image today, in line with the complexity of modern life. Fear arising from exposure to negative information about the various problems that may occur in marriage is a natural response experienced by everyone.

> *Yang kulihat dari trend ini sebenarnya menjadi takut akan pernikahan itu hal yang cukup wajar, tapi jangan sampai kita terpengaruh dengan trend marriage is scary yang kita lihat di sosial media yang hanya memperlihatkan sisi buruknya dari pernikahan. Karena memang sebelum menikah harus memiliki persiapan misalnya dari mental dan semuanya dulu jangan terburu-buru. kalau benar2 punya ketakutan mendalam dan trauma sampai tidak ingin menikah seumur hidup bagusnya konsul ke psikolog saja menurutku.(@riinstii)*
>
> *Trend ini jadi hal itu sering terjadi di dunia nyata dan wajar mungkin karena banyaknya informasi di media. Saya tidak pernah mengalaminya, tetapi sering terjadi di sekitar, seperti kdrt, perselingkuhan, dll. Sehingga hal tersebut menjadi faktor mendasar kenapa wanita takut akan menikah. Karena mereka sedang mencegah akan terjadinya hal-hal buruk bagi perempuan di masa depan ketika mereka menikah atau mempunyai pasangan. (@noru_cg45)*

According to Spielberger, this is because humans will consciously or unconsciously try to fortify themselves with a sense of security from something that can threaten. Because the "fear of marriage" narrative focuses too much on the problems of marriage that are not necessarily happening for some people, the concern and fear of negative information circulating on social media is a natural thing for some people.

Factors driving perception

Perception is closely related to the interpretation of each individual of the phenomena that occur and is supported by various accompanying factors. Women's perceptions of the "marriage is scary" trend reflect complex social and cultural dynamics in the context of marriage in the modern era. If we look based on Cultivation Theory, social media or the virtual world has sufficient potential to influence a person's perception of a phenomenon (Shrum 2017). Along with the development of technology and information, most women are trying to redefine marriage as an institution that supports the stability of basic human needs based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory at the third level, namely social needs, which involve a sense of love and bonds of affection between each other(Aulia 2019). This is in line with the expression of the netizen who participated in this article, as follows;

Menurut saya Tren ini pastinya bisa memberikan pengaruh pandangan Sebagian besar orang diluar sana tentang pernikahan. Yang awalnya Pernikahan yang ditujukan untuk mencari kebahagiaan bersama pasangan berubah menjadi ketakutan yang tidak diinginkan dan tidak sesuai dengan ekspektasi kita karena pada nyatanya marak banget di medsos yang mempublikaskan content seperti kekerasan dalam rumah tangga atau perselingkuhan. tapi saya tidak terdampak dengan narasi itu, tapi mungkin beberapa orang terdampak dari' marriage is scary"(@ riinstii)

tentu saja ada perubahan pandangan dengan pernikahan karena, sejujurnya saya sebelum ada trend marriage is scary ini ingin saya ada rencana untuk menikah mudaa, tapi setelah ada trend ini viral saya berfikir berkali kali untuk ke jenjang pernikahan. Tren ini banyak perempuan yang merasa relate karena jika sudah menikah perempuan lebih banyak yang merasa di rugikan hal ini bisa dilihat dari Karena banyak bukti di media sosial tentang kdrt atau perselingkuhan dalam pernikahan, saya merasa terdampak karena dengan ada nya trend marry is scary jadi membuat saya berfikir lebih matang lagi untuk menikah nanti (@Euphlee)

Changes in perceptions that occur between women today in viewing marriage have changes both directly and indirectly. Based on the results of data collection through interviews and observations through the TikTok platform, various factors were found to support the transition of women's perspectives, namely social pressure, relateable content, social and cultural changes. The influence of social media, as well as personal experience and trauma, which will be discussed as follows;

Social pressure

Social pressure in this case concerns the expectations imposed by the surrounding environment on women. Social pressure is often the subject of dilemmas for people in making decisions in their lives. After reaching adulthood, humans will be faced with several social pressures in the form of fulfilling expectations that become standards that still exist in society.

*Tren "marriage is scary" viral karena banyak perempuan merasa terhubung dengan pengalaman ketidakpastian atas masa depan, adanya **tekanan sosial** yang dihadapi oleh generasi muda saat ini , dan ketakutan serta kekhawatiran akan kehilangan kebebasan dan potensi diri dalam pernikahan yang akan mengekang hak perempuan. (@Fadhione 21)*

Menurut saya, tren "marriage is scary" menjadi viral karena mencerminkan kekhawatiran dan pengalaman nyata yang dirasakan oleh banyak orang, terutama perempuan, dalam konteks pernikahan modern. Salah satu faktor utama yang mendasari adalah meningkatnya kesadaran akan banyaknya pernikahan yang gagal, baik akibat perceraian, konflik yang tidak terselesaikan, atau kurangnya keseimbangan dalam peran dan tanggung jawab. Selain itu, perempuan kini lebih terbuka membicarakan pengalaman mereka, termasuk ketakutan akan kehilangan kemandirian, tekanan sosial, atau ekspektasi yang terlalu tinggi dalam pernikahan. (@Silent4u)

The social pressures experienced by most women today illustrate many factors in explaining situations where people want, but cannot, marry, including shifting expectations about marriage and gender roles in the household and the transition of cultural values due to modernization (Karel Karsten Himawan, Bambling, dan Edirippulige 2019)

Relateable content

In the TikTok platform there are several factors that make a content spread quickly in seconds regardless of the speed of technology, this is supported by certain emotional attachment factors aimed at netizens that match the reality that occurs. As in social media generally rely on algorithms to present narrative content that matches the interests of the social media audience.

*karena yg udah mengalami apa yg namanya 'marriage is scary' ini pasti memicu bgt kenangan buruk/trauma, apalagi dengan adanya tren ini berakhir lah mereka untuk memberanikan diri untuk speak up kisah mereka di media sosial, dan ya ga hanya satu atau dua orang yang mengalami, ternyata banyak yang merasa **relate** dengan munculnya tren ini di media sosial terutama TikTok. (bella_a0220 23 tahun)*

*dari viralnya content tentang marriage is scary ada banyak sih kemungkinan ini viral di TikTok, ya karena banyak orang yang **relate** dan terdapat ikatan emosional. Serta bisa jadi ada beberapa orang tumbuh dan hidup dalam lingkungan keluarga broken home sehingga menjadi penyebab bahawa dia punya pengalaman langsung, alhasil dia memiliki pandangan bahwa pernikahan itu*

Glocal Society

suatu hal yang menakutkan dan menjadi ancaman. atau pernah dalam hubungan adanya toxic treat saat pacaran terus trauma dan takut untuk menikah. (@riinstii 21 tahun)

Social and cultural change

The influx of new values brought about by globalization means that women have open access to contribute to the economic fulfillment of both individuals and families. In societies undergoing this kind of cultural transformation, values that once supported collective responsibility for social and environmental issues can be eroded by different priorities. Changes in women's perceptions of marriage due to the "fear of marriage" narrative in the marriage is scary trend caused by social and cultural changes are represented in the statements by netizens, as follows;

Sebenarnya tren ini menciptakan kekhawatiran yang mendalam bagi seseorang yang nantinya akan ke jenjang pernikahan dimana mereka takut akan perceraian dan juga takut jika dampak kerusakan keluarganya nanti menurun pada anak"nya. Kemudian hal yang lain juga yang mengangkat tren ini karena pengaruh di medsos, dimana narasi yang beredar di TikTok itu seakan memperkuat ketakutan akan hal ini. Menurutku tren ini sdh mencerminkan perubahan sosial, karena yg mungkin dulunya pernikahan ini di anggap sakral dan suci sekarang sepertinya pernikahan itu kalau di TikTok seperti sebuah kesengsaraan seperti saya katakan. (@noru_cg45)

Furthermore, changing perceptions due to cultural changes are part of the prioritization of personal and career development for women that has expanded and supported women's empowerment in the public sphere.

menurutku tren bisa jadi sih bentuk perubahan sosial budaya sekarang ini, sebenarnya itu ketakutan yang wajar sebagai individu. dalam budaya yang masih dipegang masyarakat kita pernikahan dianggap sebagai tujuan mencari kebahaagiaan tapi sekarang ada pergeseran nilai terutama bagi perempuan yg independent atau carier woman kalau pernikahan ga penting amat, pernikahan bukan tujuan untuk cari kebahagiaan malah bisa jadi menghambat mereka dalam berkembang. (@riinstii)

The changing priorities of mature women in making choices in their lives are supported by advances in knowledge and society's openness about women's rights to pursue their goals freely. According to the Cofertility survey (2024), women's priorities continue to evolve as they age, with agency, freedom and self-exploration being key drivers of their decisions. As a result, the restrictive view of women's involvement is eroding, making marriage not a requirement to be fulfilled but a well-considered choice.

Changes in the meaning of marriage in terms of religion

From this trend, of course, it can be seen that there is opposition that marriage is scary because marriage in a religious context is part of sacred worship. In this study, it was expressed by two netizens with two points of view of Islam and Christianity. In the religious point of view, @pirrrpra expressed

Iya, karena setauku menikah dalam agama islam ada yang bilang menikah jadi bagian dari ibadah, tapi kadang juga di masyarakat saat ini kalo ada perempuan yang belum nikahtapi umurnya sudah lebih dari 25 tahun dan terbilang sudah memasuki usia dewasa biasanya akan jadi omongannya para tetangga (@pirrrpra).

The same thing was also explained by@silent4u;

Kalau menurutku ini trennya mungkin bertentangan karena kita bisa lihat didalam pernikahan itu khusunya di "kristen" kita pasti menyebutkan sumpah untuk berkomitmen sehidup semati dengan pasangan, maka dari itu karena di pernikahan itu menyoroti komitmen jangka panjang maka menurut saya tren ini dapat bertentangan. Akan tetapi setiap orang mungkin bisa mengevaluasi apa sih arti pernikahan menurut mereka masing"(@silent4u)

Based on these two statements, it can be seen that marriage from the point of view of Islam and Christianity is something that is recommended, considering that most Indonesian people prioritize religious rules and values in making decisions in their daily lives. The religious values internalized by each individual bring positive values to remain in the stance that marriage is a recommendation to avoid deviant acts (zina) outside of marriage (Karel K. Himawan 2020). In addition, the recommendation of marriage has been mentioned in the Bible (Ecclesiastes 4: 9): "*Two are better than one*". Then quoting one of the Quranic

verses about marriage in surah Ar-Rum (21) which means "*And among the signs of His power is that He created for you wives of your own kind, so that you tend to them and feel at ease, and He made between you love and affection. Indeed, in such things there are signs for the thinking people.*"

Personal Experience and Trauma

Experience and trauma are closest to humans, one of which is the family environment. The number of divorce cases and domestic violence witnessed and experienced directly by internal family members will of course have a huge influence. Although the Marriage is scary trend is a trend with a narrative presentation in a virtual space, the connection of emotions and traumas will be very significant. Although the Marriage is scary trend is a trend with a narrative presentation in a virtual space, the same emotional connection and feelings underlie a person to feel affected and relate. This is in line with what is presented by some Marriage is scary content that raises internal family issues.

> *ada, karena kebetulan dikeluarga saya ada beberapa yang ngalamin "marriage is scary" jadi itu semakin buat yakin dan jadi bukti nyata kalo untuk menikah itu bener bener butuh kesiapan mental dan banyak hal lain. ada, bapak saya sendiri pernah selingkuh dari ibu, dan saya sendiri ngalamin itu pas pacaran, jadi kadang saya mikir ini emang karma bapak saya ya? atau emang kebetulan aja. Tapi cukup dijadikan reminder aja kalo sebelum nikah ada banyak hal yang harus diperhatiin, kita harus tau pasangan kita ini orangnya kaya apa, apa dia bisa diajak susah senang bareng, dan lebih penting tau kewajiban dan tugas masing masing dalam rumah tangga. (@watashiwanita)*

In addition, one netizen also felt affected due to his own experience and the surrounding environment which caused him to relate to the "fear of marriage" narrative in this Marriage is scary trend. As expressed by one netizen who said that

> *Sebenarnya tidak ada pengalaman langsung tetapi ada kasus di kerabat saya sendiri. Mereka menikah karna memang saling mencintai awalnya tetapi ketika mereka memiliki anak dan sama" bekerja atau dual income family. Disitu pernikahan mereka renggang karena suaminya merasa bahwa ternyata istrinya bisa membiayai hidup anaknya tanpa harus mengeluarkan uang hasil kerja suaminya untuk anaknya, maka dari situlah suaminya ini tidak pernah memberi nafkah dan hanya hidup berfoya"- (@silent4u)*

Change in partner's behavior

> *bunda saya, karena saya mendengar cerita bunda saya sebelum dan sesudah nikah berubah 180 derajat, ayah saya termasuk yang patriarki dan egonya tinggi, sifat pas pacaran dan pas nikah berubah drastis (@pirrrpira)*

From many cases from social media regarding the narrative of fear of marriage in the marriage is scary trend, it is made by providing a narrative about a person's fear if there is a change in the partner's attitude during the relationship before marriage and after marriage. In this case, it is in line with what is revealed by Ervfing Goffman's theory, which views social life as a stage play where humans act like actors on stage, with the division of space into front stage and back stage. The front stage represents a place where individuals present their ideal image to the public, behaving according to social expectations in order to build the desired impression, while the backstage is a private space where individuals show their true side without the need to pretend. In this context, the phenomenon of changes in the couple's attitude before marriage and after marriage, the couple may present a harmonious and loving front stage, trying to maintain a positive image in front of family, friends, and society.

Domestic violence

> *pengalaman dari lingkungan sekitar, baik dari tetangga maupun keluarga. Saya sering menyaksikan konflik rumah tangga yang terjadi di sekitar saya, di mana perempuan sering kali menjadi pihak yang paling dirugikan, baik secara emosional maupun fisik. Beberapa tetangga, misalnya, menghadapi perceraian atau tekanan dalam pernikahan akibat kurangnya komunikasi atau ketidakadilan dalam pembagian peran. Tren "marriage is scary" berkembang pesat karena berbagai faktor yang sangat relevan dengan kehidupan banyak orang. Salah satunya adalah pengalaman nyata yang sering ditemui, baik melalui cerita orang-orang terdekat maupun pengamatan langsung terhadap pernikahan yang gagal atau penuh konflik. Pengalaman-*

pengalaman ini meninggalkan kesan mendalam yang memengaruhi cara pandang seseorang terhadap pernikahan. . Di sisi lain, meningkatnya kesadaran akan pentingnya kesehatan mental dan emosional membuat banyak orang lebih kritis dalam memandang pernikahan, melihatnya tidak hanya sebagai tujuan hidup, tetapi sebagai komitmen besar yang membutuhkan kesiapan matang. Hal-hal inilah yang membuat tren ini begitu relevan dan berdampak pada banyak orang, termasuk diri saya, yang terdorong oleh pengalaman nyata yang dilihat dan didengar secara langsung. (@rikaaaa22_)

Based on the circulation of viral cases of domestic violence, infidelity, and many other negative cases about marriage, women are the victims, although it does not rule out the possibility in some cases that men are also victims. However, the facts from the data presented by SIMFONI-PPA that victims in various forms of violence in Indonesia are mostly experienced by women.

The influence of social media

Social media plays an important role in the transition of perceptions towards marriage and makes this trend easily accepted and indoctrinates people that marriage is no longer important and tends to cause fear. If the Marriage is scary trend grows and becomes more massive, it is likely that more women will be affected by the negative narratives presented by this trend. Although this trend is based on relevant facts and issues that really occur in society, it is still too generalized.

Menurut saya fenomena tren ini cukup membuat atau mencerminkan ketakutan" yang berkembang di kalangan wanita terhadap pernikahan apalagi biasanya disebabkan oleh pengalaman" negatif yg bisa kita lihat di media sosial seperti kekerasan dalam rumah tangga maupun perselingkuhan. Dari content" tersebut yang beredar di TikTok memperkuat pandangan bahwa pernikahan itu membawa resiko yg menyebabkan kesedihan baik mental maupun fisik. (@silent4u)

From the netizen's statement, it can be seen that social media has an influence in contributing to the impact on women in Indonesia having the perception that marriage is scary. So that the spread of narratives from this trend can reach more TikTok users. As expressed by the following netizen;

"ya, setiap saat melihat content negatif seperti kasus perceraian dan kekerasan rumah tangga pasti memengaruhi perempuan dalam menikah". (@riinstii)

fenomena tren marriage is scary merupakan salah satu buah dari kemajuan teknologi informasi, khususnya melalui media sosial. Platform seperti TikTok, Instagram, dan Twitter memungkinkan individu untuk berbagi pengalaman, pandangan, dan emosi mereka secara luas dan cepat. Teknologi ini memberikan akses kepada siapa saja untuk menyuarakan pendapat mereka, termasuk tentang isu-isu yang sebelumnya jarang dibahas secara terbuka, seperti ketakutan atau realitas dalam pernikahan. media sosial seperti TikTok memberikan ruang bagi individu untuk berbagi ketakutan dan cerita mereka, menciptakan rasa kebersamaan yang membuat banyak orang merasa tidak sendirian. Perubahan budaya juga turut berperan, di mana perempuan dan laki-laki semakin berani membicarakan tekanan sosial, masalah finansial, dan ketidaksetaraan dalam hubungan. (@rikaaaa22_)

Consumption of information presented on social media can distort women's perceptions, as a result of the Marriage is scary narrative presented. However, if the narrative presented is an exaggerated narrative just for the needs of viewers, in this case the number if a content creator creates content with a viral trend, then the algorithm on social media will also follow. Adjusting this can be a jackpot for Marriage is scary content creators.

3. Representation of popular culture and the marriage is scary trend

The marriage is scary trend is part of the digital pop culture phenomenon, in this case digital pop culture is a popular culture phenomenon that was born and developed through interactions in digital space, especially social media. In this case, digital pop culture is part of the manifestation of popular culture that develops and spreads through digital platforms. In the context of the marriage is scary trend, this culture is strongly influenced by the massive use of social media such as Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter, which are not only a means of communication, but also a space for identity formation, self-expression, and the formation of collective narratives of urban communities, especially the younger generation (Indainanto dan

Nasution 2020). If previously marriage was considered a necessity, an achievement and a symbol of maturity, now this narrative distorts the value of marriage. Repeated exposure to trends with negative narratives will change a person's perception and self-identity that will be applied in life, due to the consumption of information from TikTok content. so that from this phenomenon the term TikTok standard was born, which describes the expectations and norms that develop among TikTok users which have the impact of a self-identity crisis on users due to exposure to information on social media.

The TikTok standard Marriage is scary trend

The TikTok standard is a standard formed from viral trends on TikTok which are usually presented in content with unrealistic narratives that are accepted by TikTok users. TikTok standards indirectly become the basis for shaping self-identity this concerns the preference for marriage standards formed on social media. The TikTok standard refers to the expectations and values formed on the TikTok platform that are influenced by content from influencers and content creators. This standard displays a standardization of a perfect life that tends not to be ideal for some people, keeping in mind that social media often displays a polished picture of life that has attracted a lot of attention, as narrated in one of the contents, as follows;

Narration : *"marriage is scary gimana kalo nanti aku gadibolehin pergi keluar buat me time, beli outfit bagus terus foto foto di cafe lucu, nongkrong sama temen temen, nonton konser kpop sama sahabatku karena dia gasuka gaya hidupku yg kaya begitu"*

Regarding the phenomenon of the marriage is scary trend, it provides space for TikTok standards to provide preferences for perfect and happy marriages and relationships that are not ideal and realistic for some people. Then from these standards, it puts pressure on most people to follow trends that are viral and get as much attention as possible from netizens. The unstoppable pressure for someone to follow the trend creates a FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out) attitude.

Analysis of the impact of the marriage is scary trend

The Marriage is scary trend is one of the products of the massive spread of information through social media. A change that occurs is certainly not far from the impact caused. Change does cause acceptance and rejection, a new value that enters either through globalization or urbanization, culture will be more easily accepted if the culture has values and norms that do not contradict each other (Lauren 2023). In discussing the impact of the trend, of course, it will be divided into 2 sub-discussions, the first will discuss the positive side of this trend and the second will discuss the negative side of this trend, which will be described as follows;

Positive impact of the Marriage is scary trend

In this research, two points were found about the positive side of the viral Marriage is scary trend, namely sharing is caring and being selective in making decisions.

Sharing is caring

Sharing is caring is a term that means sharing is a form of caring. In this case, sharing is caring is a positive impact of the marriage is scary trend, as in the following statement;

Dan untuk positifnya, trend ini tuh kayak jadi pelampiasan beban pikiran, kita bisa tau dan paham kalau bukan cuman kita doang, tapi banyaknya orang diluar sana yang benar-benar paham atau ngerasain hal yang sama, trus hal positif lainnya tuh kita bisa intropeksi diri, kalau lawan jenis ngebuat trend ini, kita bisa ngelihat dan saling memahami, walaupun bakal susah. trend ini bahkan ngajarin buat hati-hati banget, bahkan di trend ini kita bisa saling menginformasikan satu sama lain secara langsung ataupun enggak. (@Eunolaaa.)

This statement is also in line with the opinions of several netizens in this study.

Dampak positif dari tren ini adalah menciptakan ruang bagi individu untuk berbagi pengalaman dan mendiskusikan kekhawatiran mereka tentang pernikahan. (@Fadhione)

Selective and critical in making decisions

At this stage women in facing choices that will benefit them, must go through various considerations to be more selective in choosing a partner who will be a safe place that supports their emotional,

reproductive and spiritual stability in society. Marriage requires mature decisions both in terms of financial, physical and mental for both parties. Based on the results of data collection with several netizens, as follows;

> *kalo positifnya adalah pengingat kalo kita harus selektif untuk mencari pasangan dan harus benar-benar ngenalin pasangan sendiri yang nantinya bakal jadi partner hidup (@watashiwanita)*

This is also similar to what was expressed by @bella_a0220 and @rikaaaa22_, as follows;

> *menurutku itu wah banget sih apalagi dengan adanya TikTok ini pasti cepet bgt fyp entah berita apapun itu. tp buat yg satu ini, ada positif dan negatif nya. so, kita ambil sisi positifnya aja ya, sisi positifnya bisa buat bikin kita para perempuan di Indonesia itu MELEK biar ga hanya mengedepankan perasaan tapi juga logika harus banget dipake. jujur kalo perasaan dan logika kita ga seimbang itu bakal menyiksa diri kita sendiri untuk kedepannya, dunia ini kejam, gada yg sempurna.. apalagi ini menyangkut soal pasangan untuk seumur hidup. harus pandai-pandai lah menyeleksi calon pasangan hidup kita, jangan hanya mengandalkan 'aku CINTA dia' ahh sudahlah fiks bakal game over kita. di dunia ini hidup itu ga melulu soal cinta. banyak aspek" lain yg harus kita pikirkan juga. (@bella_a0220)*

> *Dampak positif dari tren marriage is scary di media sosial dapat dilihat dalam berbagai aspek yang mendorong perubahan positif dalam pandangan masyarakat terhadap pernikahan. Tren ini membuka ruang untuk membicarakan kesehatan mental dan emosional dalam hubungan, sehingga banyak orang menjadi lebih sadar akan pentingnya kesiapan emosional sebelum memutuskan untuk menikah. Selain itu, tren ini juga memberi kesempatan untuk mendiskusikan ketidaksetaraan gender dalam pernikahan, seperti peran yang sering kali tidak seimbang antara pasangan, yang pada gilirannya dapat mendorong kesetaraan dalam hubungan. Dampak lainnya adalah mengurangi stigma terhadap perceraian, dengan lebih banyak orang yang menyadari bahwa perceraian adalah pilihan yang sah dan terkadang diperlukan untuk kesejahteraan emosional. Tren ini juga memperkuat dukungan komunitas, di mana individu bisa saling berbagi pengalaman, memberikan perspektif baru, dan menawarkan bantuan kepada mereka yang merasa terisolasi. Terakhir, tren ini mendorong dialog yang lebih kritis dan realistis tentang pernikahan, membantu masyarakat untuk lebih memahami tantangan yang ada dan membuat keputusan yang lebih matang dan sadar sebelum memasuki pernikahan. Dengan demikian, tren ini berkontribusi pada perubahan budaya yang lebih terbuka dan sehat mengenai pernikahan. (@rikaaaa22_)*

The negative impact of the Marriage is scary trend

Based on the results of joint research with participating netizens, it was found that the negative impact of the Marriage is scary trend has caused a bad stigma towards marriage and a decrease in marriage rates.

Bad stigma towards marriage

The trend presents a Marriage is scary narrative that is too generalized, from this trend it has a great opportunity to create a stigma in society that marriage today has become a predator that preys on women's mental and physical freedom.

> *Dampak negatifnya bisa menciptakan stigma atau ketakutan berlebihan terhadap pernikahan yang bisa mengganggu pandangan positif terhadap hubungan pernikahan yang belum tentu berakhir buruk (@Fadhione)*

One sided trend

> *Dari tren ini terbilang Menyudutkan pihak laki-laki, dimana laki-laki yang selalu menjadi pelaku. Padahal bisa saja perempuan yang menjadi pelaku dalam 'Marriage is scary'"* (@Euphlee)

From the netizen's expression, the narrative of the marriage is scary trend presented on TikTok cornered the male side. Then from this trend most of them are carried out by women, even though in fact on the one hand it does not rule out the possibility that women are also the perpetrators who trigger Marriage is scary for men.

The decline in the number of marriages

The decline in the number of marriages in Indonesia has been recorded to be quite significant, reaching 2 million, Indonesia is witnessing the impact of the number of marriages that continue to decline from year to year (Rainer 2024). This is influenced by various social and economic factors, such as the instability and uncertainty of economic conditions and the changing roles and wider opportunities for women in developing careers, including the presence of social media which brings new values. The new value in question is the marriage is scary trend with the "fear of marriage" narrative on social media. In a study conducted by Psychology Lecturers Ahmad Dahlan and Dian Kinaung, in their findings that 84% of students with an age range of 17-25 years admitted to having a fear of marriage due to social media exposure to various negative cases related to marriage, such as domestic violence, neglected children, heavy economic burdens, especially on wives, as well as cases of infidelity that often go viral and become public consumption (Fundrika dan Yasir 2024).

The results of data collection with participating netizens are as follows;

Inimah pasti, tanpa trend ini aja udah ada data penurunan, apalagi kalau trend ini makin menjadi, makin banyak orang diluar sana mikir atau bahkan overthinking kalau memilih nikah itu bisa jadi salah jalan, atau gak, trend ini menjadi dukungan yang bulat buat orang diluar sana kalo gak mau nikah, yah kembali ke pilihan masing-masing, buatku it's okay choose any choices, gak ada yang salah, tapi bukan berarti jadiin trend ini sebagai mendamin trauma, people need to overcome theirs to became their better version, it's okay if they need a long time, or even late, maka setelah itu mereka bagusnya milih lagi, mau milih gimana, milih nikah atau tetep enggak, selama pilihan mereka itu gak nyakitin diri sendiri, gak ada yang salah. (@Eunolaaa.)

The influence of these trends may be contributing to the decline in marriage in Indonesia by increasing uncertainty and doubt among the younger generation (@Euphlee). This massively circulated social media narrative creates the perception that marriage is something full of risks and tough challenges, leading to fear and reluctance to get married

4. CONCLUSION

This research reveals the complexity arising from the marriage is scary trend that has mushroomed on the TikTok platform and has influenced the perception of women today in viewing marriage. This trend is presented in the form of a narrative to express all women's concerns in facing marriage, which has turned into a restrictive institution that contradicts the principle of personal freedom. This phenomenon begins with a series of divorce cases, infidelity and several problems in marriage which are then packaged in the form of a marriage is scary narrative. This study dissects the factors that influence women's perceptions of marriage is scary narrative content and analyzes the trend of marriage is scary narratives as a representation of popular culture on social media. The results of the narrative surgery found the following points; the existence of problems in the family, the fear of choosing a partner, advice in marriage and the demands of life in marriage. Then from the results of the content analysis, it is also described about women's perceptions of the "marriage is scary" narrative, namely; the challenges of long-term commitment and a natural phenomenonThen this phenomenon becomes natural because marriage is part of a dynamic cultural form and will become complex over time and then coupled with the emergence of new values and standards which then become new pressures and challenges for women in facing marriage. Women's perceptions of the marriage is scary narrative are driven by factors that support the transition of women's perspectives, namely social pressure, relateable content, social and cultural change, social media influence, and personal experience and trauma.

Trends have an important role in the spread of popular culture, because trends have a pattern and occur within a certain period of time and invite many masses, in this case, trends will not become trends if they do not affect many people in the process of spreading them on social media. Trends bring popular cultural values through social media, which in the term culture studies culture is able to produce various practices of diverse meaning production processes. In this study, it is known that trends bring new values which are the result of the marriage is scary trend, namely the existence of TikTok standards, TikTok standards indirectly become the basis for forming self-identity, this concerns the standardized preferences for marriage formed on social media. As for the impact caused by the marriage is scary trend phenomenon,

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it is divided into two, namely positive impact and negative impact.. In this study, two points were found about the positive side of the viral Marriage is scary trend, namely sharing is caring and being selective in making decisions, then the negative impact caused by this trend, namely; the Marriage is scary trend creates a bad stigma against marriage and a decrease in marriage rates.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declare no conflict of interest

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