

Designing Character Illustrations For The Motion Graphic Why Is Marriage Scary

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ABSTRAK

Fenomena *marriage is scary* yang berkembang di media sosial, seperti Tiktok dan Instagram, mempengaruhi pandangan generasi muda Indonesia terhadap pernikahan. Tren ini menyoroti berbagai aspek negatif pernikahan. Maka dari itu, perlu media edukasi mengenai pernikahan dalam pandangan lain berserta panduan praktis untuk mengatasi ketakutan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk merancang desain karakter *motion graphic* “Kenapa Menikah Menyeramkan?” sebagai media edukatif alternatif. Proses perancangan yang dilakukan melalui tahapan *brainstorming*, pengumpulan referensi visual, pengembangan konsep hingga finalisasi menggunakan Adobe Illustrator. Hasil akhir berupa desain karakter yang siap dianimasikan menggunakan teknik *cut-out* dan *rigging* untuk keperluan *motion graphic*.

Kata Kunci: *Marriage is Scary*, desain karakter, *motion graphic*, generasi muda.

ABSTRACT

The Marriage is Scary phenomenon, which has emerged on social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram, has influenced young Indonesians' perceptions of marriage. This trend highlights various negative aspects of married life. Therefore, there is a need for educational media that presents alternative perspectives on marriage along with practical guidance to overcome fear and anxiety. This study aims to design character illustrations for the motion graphic “Why is Marriage Scary?” as an alternative educational medium. The design process includes stages such as brainstorming, collecting visual references, developing concepts, and finalizing the character designs using Adobe Illustrator. The final result is a set of character designs prepared for animation using cut-out and rigging techniques for motion graphic production.

Keywords: *Marriage is Scary*, character design, *motion graphic*, youth

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is one of the most important phases in human life. It is commonly associated with a legal, social, and religious bond between two individuals that is formally recognized by society and the state (Ningtias, 2022). Over the past few decades, marriage has undergone significant changes, particularly among today's younger generation. One emerging phenomenon is the “Marriage is Scary” trend, which frames marriage as something frightening. This trend does not arise without cause; various factors are discussed within this discourse. Among them are the negative realities of marital life, such as domestic violence, infidelity, divorce, and frequent conflicts between partners. This phenomenon has become a global debate, including in Indonesia, and has gained widespread popularity across social media platforms, especially TikTok. As is widely known, TikTok has become a highly popular platform among young people, and consequently, the “Marriage is Scary” trend has significantly influenced young people's perceptions of marriage.

In Indonesia, this trend appears to have had a substantial impact on the declining marriage rate. According to Statistics Indonesia (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2023), over the past

ten years, marriage trends among young people have shown a contrasting pattern. The percentage of married youth has continuously decreased, while the percentage of unmarried youth has continued to increase. This decline is associated with several contributing factors. Repi and Maliombo (2022) categorize these factors into two groups: internal and external factors. Internal factors originate from individual decision-making processes, such as the desire to pursue higher education, personal freedom, and career success. Meanwhile, external factors stem from the surrounding environment, including social pressure, experiences of failure, personal trauma, and exposure to unsuccessful marriages among close relatives or acquaintances.

Several efforts have been undertaken to educate social media users so that they are not easily influenced by the “Marriage is Scary” trend. One such initiative is the premarital campaign program organized by the Better Youth Foundation. Better Youth Foundation (Yayasan Pemuda Baik) is a foundation that focuses on youth development and empowerment and frequently provides education related to social phenomena that affect young people in Indonesia. The premarital campaign conducted by Better Youth Foundation aims to educate individuals about marital issues by emphasizing preparedness for couples who plan to marry, particularly in facing post-marital life challenges. Programs within the Pranikah Academy campaign include Jomblo Camp, discussion forums, and card-based games containing narratives related to marriage preparation. However, this campaign has limited visibility across several social media platforms, resulting in insufficient dissemination of information and education within broader online networks. This is evidenced by the continued influence of the “Marriage is Scary” trend among young people.

Digital media, particularly visual video content, is highly suitable as an educational and communication medium in today’s digital era. One such medium is motion graphics, which form part of visual communication design. Visual communication design, as a branch of applied social science that emphasizes visual elements, plays an important role in addressing communication issues in society (Arifianto, 2022). Products of visual communication design are known to function as tools for information delivery, identification, and influence (Arifianto, 2019). In terms of information dissemination, motion graphics offer a more intuitive experience for audiences, attract visual attention, create dimensionality, and strengthen visual communication (Song, 2021). These characteristics make motion graphics suitable as an educational medium for visualizing statistical data and infographics. Furthermore, the use of visual elements that portray positive common realities with an educational purpose can encourage audiences to engage in open discussions, thereby strengthening audience identification with the “Marriage is Scary” issue. Previous research by Hanif (2020) indicates that motion graphics offer various benefits, including the ability to emotionally engage audiences and to present complex information through simple visuals in a persuasive manner. These advantages support the effectiveness of motion graphics as a communication medium in the digital era. Therefore, this study aims to design a motion graphic video addressing the “Marriage is Scary” phenomenon and to provide practical guidance using the Pranikah Academy method.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, in which the researcher conducts an in-depth investigation of phenomena, activities, events, or groups of individuals. Data are collected comprehensively through the following data collection procedures:

A. Interviews

The interviews were conducted with informants from the field of psychology as well as groups of young adult participants aged 19–30 years. These interviews were

focused on obtaining relevant data regarding the relationship between the “Marriage is Scary” trend and the decline in marriage rates in Indonesia.

1. Interview with a Psychologist

The interviews were conducted with psychologists who have expertise in relationship and marital dynamics, namely Ismi Zulaehah, M.Psi., and Furqon Nugraha Rahman, M.Psi. The interviews aimed to gain an understanding of the psychological and social impacts of negative perceptions toward marriage.

2. Focus Group Interviews with Young Adults

The young adult group was selected within the age range of 19–30 years with the aim of identifying the factors that influence their views on marriage and examining how the “Marriage is Scary” trend affects their decision to marry.

B. Observation

The observation method was conducted through content analysis on social media platforms, particularly TikTok and Instagram, which serve as the primary spaces for the emergence of the “Marriage is Scary” trend. This observation aimed to gain insights into the perspectives, discussions, and content related to fear of marriage that are widely shared by social media users, as well as to examine how these perceptions influence public opinion regarding the institution of marriage in Indonesia.

C. Secondary Data

Secondary data were collected by gathering relevant information from various sources, including previous research reports, statistical data from Statistics Indonesia (Badan Pusat Statistik/BPS), scholarly journal articles, and media reports concerning marriage trends and social changes in Indonesia. These secondary data were used to deepen the contextual understanding of the decline in marriage rates and its relationship with the development of the “Marriage is Scary” trend. By utilizing secondary data, the researcher was able to obtain an overall picture of social trends and marriage statistics in Indonesia, as well as a broader perspective on how this phenomenon affects society as a whole.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Character Design Software

The software used in the character design process included Procreate and Adobe Illustrator. Procreate is a bitmap-based graphic design application utilized for creating initial sketches before the character designs are converted into vector format. Adobe Illustrator is a vector-based graphic design application used to produce the final character designs prior to animation. Vector graphics offer superior scalability, as they maintain image quality and resolution when enlarged multiple times.

In the character design process, Adobe Illustrator employs a tracing technique based on the initial character sketches, followed by detailed refinement through color application. Additionally, the layer feature is used to separate each body part of the character design, thereby facilitating the animation process.

B. Collaboration with Stakeholders and Literature Review

At this stage, collaboration with stakeholders was carried out to identify their needs through observation and literature review regarding the alignment of the motion graphic topic with the stakeholders’ background and the “Marriage is Scary” phenomenon, which serves as the subject of the motion graphic video entitled “*Why Is Marriage Scary?*”

C. Brainstorming and Idea Development

In the character design process, the initial stage began with brainstorming to develop ideas as visual references. This process was conducted to obtain a personal character analysis based on the brief and script, followed by the collection of references or the creation of a mood board.

1. Character Personality Analysis

The analysis was conducted through observation of the target audience and the script. The activity revealed that the main character, Sofia, possesses the characteristics of being FOMO, concerned with mental health, a digital native, and concerned with social issues. The husband and wife characters are depicted as influencers who frequently create content about marital harmony. The educator character is depicted as intelligent and religious, akin to stakeholders.

2. Moodboard

Reference materials were collected in the form of a mood board to facilitate the determination of character appearance, color schemes, illustration style, and color palette. The reference-gathering process was conducted through design platforms such as Pinterest.

D. Concept

Concept determination was carried out after all data and references had been collected. At this stage, the illustration style to be used was defined. The character design was decided to adopt a humanoid form and was adjusted to align with the stakeholders' preferences.

E. Design and Revision

1. Sketch

During the sketch design process, discussions and revisions were conducted collaboratively with the stakeholders and carried out iteratively until the desired outcomes were achieved. The following are several examples of character sketch designs for the motion graphic "*Why Is Marriage Scary?*"

From several sketch alternatives, the selected sketches were determined based on the stakeholders' preferences. The following are the final sketches of the four characters in the motion graphic "*Why Is Marriage Scary?*".



Figure 1 Character Sketches

b. Color and Detailing

At this stage, character coloring and detailing were carried out using the color combinations that had been agreed upon with the stakeholders. The coloring process began with the application of colors to the characters' clothing and bodies, followed by detailing through ornaments and facial expressions. The following presents the final character sketches after the coloring and detailing processes.



Figure 2. Alternative Character Design 1



Figure 3. Alternative Character Design 2



Figure 4. Alternative Character Design 3



Figure 5. Alternative Character Design 4

3. Tracing Character

Tracing is the process of redrawing the character design. This process was carried out using Adobe Illustrator to produce vector-based digital character designs. Tracing was applied only to the selected design, namely Alternative Design 4, with minor modifications based on stakeholder feedback. The final character designs for the motion graphic “Why Is Marriage Scary?” were produced in vector format, with each body part separated into different layers to facilitate the animation process.

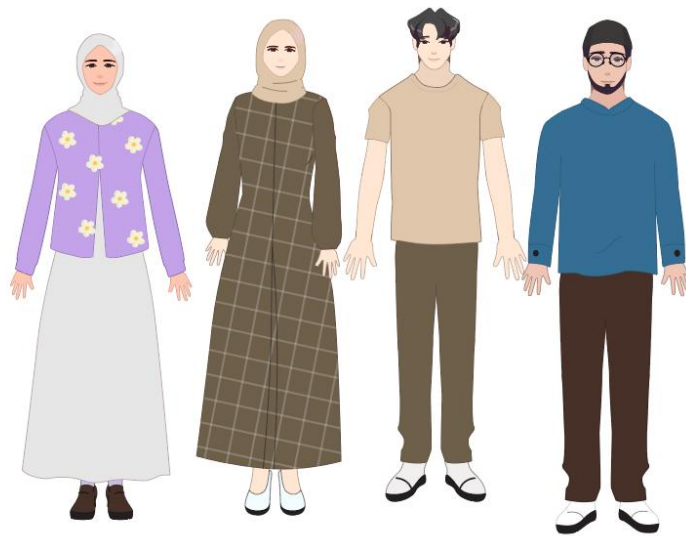


Figure 6. Final Character Design

F. Cut Out Character

After the digital tracing stage, each character’s body parts were separated into different layers to enable the implementation of rigging techniques during animation. The shapes of the joint endpoints were designed with rounded forms to allow smoother animation and to prevent the appearance of stiffness or visual distortion.

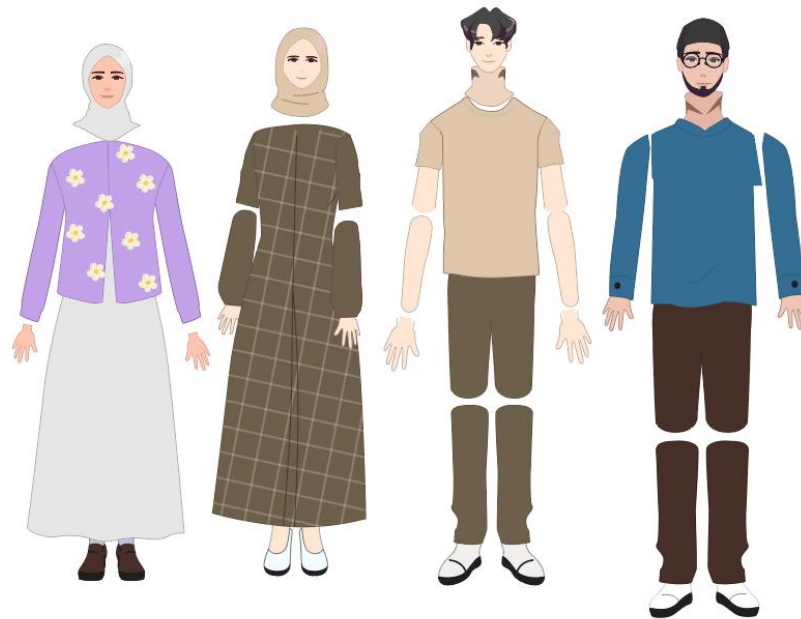


Figure 7. Character Cut-Out Design

G. The Application of Vector-Based Cut-Out Character Designs in the Rigging Process.

At this stage, each character's body part intended for movement was separated to enable the use of the Puppet Pin Tool in Adobe After Effects. Additionally, modification effects from Duik Angela were applied to enhance the rigging process, allowing the character animations to appear more natural and human-like.

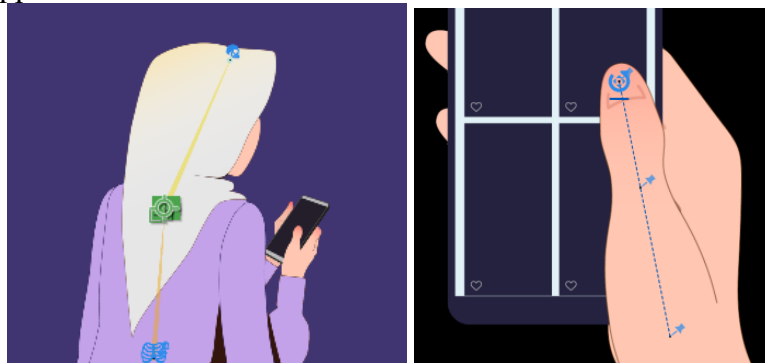


Figure 8. Application of Duik Angela Rigging and the Puppet Pin Tool

CONCLUSION

The character design process was intended as a medium for conveying issues related to the “Marriage is Scary” phenomenon, particularly through engaging visual representations. Using interviews, observation, and literature review as research methods, the stages of idea brainstorming, concept development, reference collection, execution, revision, and final output were systematically determined. In this character design process, digital illustration techniques were employed to facilitate and optimize the animation production process.

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