

Post-Marital Relationships Between Widow and Her Ex- Affines Among The Sundanese in Rural West Java

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Abstract

This article explores different types of relationships between widows and their ex-affines and explains the different factors of these relationships among the Sundanese people in rural West Java. The study was conducted by six widows with different experiences of their relationships with their ex-affinal kin using qualitative research methods with a case study approach. For this purpose, in-depth interviews and observational studies were conducted. Based on the results, we conclude that in the context of involuntary endogamous marriages, the relationship between widows and their ex-affinal kin takes the form of (1) friendship, (2) fictive daughter, (3) just another neighbor, (4) hostile neighbor, and (5) total stranger. These results are supported by factors such as (1) past personal relationships between the two people, (2) dependency on old age and social values in elderly care, and (3) the place of origin and residence of ex-husband. The nature of the relationships with ex-affine is not consistent across all categories. Ultimately, the classification of these relationships depends on the widow's specific situation after divorce or the death of her husband.

Keywords

affinal-kin; bilateral; kinship; Sundanese; widow

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INTRODUCTION

Kinship is an important topic in anthropology (Cabral & Leutloff-Grandits, 2012; Stone, 2009). The focus of kinship studies itself is on the categories and classification criteria that underlie the relationship between people based on genealogical and marital status (Supangkat & Mulyanto, 2022). There are several studies on kinship in Indonesia, but most of them focus on unilineal societies, either patrilineal (Kipp, 1976; Loeb, 1933; Singarimbun, 1975) or the matrilineal (Indrizal et al., 2009; Kato, 1978; Refisrul & Ajisman, 2015). In order to comprehensively understand Indonesia's diverse culture and society in terms of kinship conceptions, it is important to recognize the value and importance of studying all forms of kinship systems, including bilateral systems (Forth, 2020; Holý, 1986; Kunto & Bras, 2019; Lowes, 2020; Smedal, 2011; Watson, 2020). Studies of bilateral kinship systems are limited in number, and most of them refer to Javanese kinship systems (Geertz & Geertz, 1975; Koentjaraningrat, 1967; Robson, 1987) and Madurese (Casey, 1993; Niehof, 1992). Research on kinship among the Sundanese has not been widely conducted, with only two studies on Sundanese society discussing their kinship (Berthe, 1965; Horikoshi, 1976). Both studies are ethnographic studies on Sundanese society and discuss various aspects related to kinship. However, in these studies, one of the less-explored aspects of kinship is affinal-kin.

Affinal-kin refers to relatives who are related to someone through his or her marriage. All in-law relatives are affines. When the marriage is dissolved, the relationship someone with her/his in-law is also dissolved or is no longer structurally relevant (Daly & Perry, 2021; Power & Ready, 2019; Suryanarayan & Khalil, 2021; Webster, 2023; Wuyingga, 2021). A changing status from affinal relative to non-kins is a consequence of the change in marital status, from wife to widow (*janda*). Widow refers to a woman without partners due to divorce or the death of their spouses for various reason (Prianto et al., 2013). In Sundanese Culture, the position of women and the traditional role of women

are closely related to domestic activities (Mubarok, 2017). The position of divorced women or widows becomes vulnerable socially and economically especially when they are experiencing obstacles and difficulties in meeting their life needs (Kimmel, 1998; Momanyi et al., 2021; Williams, 2023), furthermore, widows received more negative stereotypes than widowers (*duda*). The stereotypes that emerged were viewed differently by men and women. For men, widows were a sexual opportunity and a means for them to express their ideas (and fantasies). For other women, widows were a source of fear because of the temptation they gave to their husbands and a reminder of what might happen to them if they became widows in the future (Mahy et al., 2016; Setiawan et al., 2022). Widows is also emerge as a social category stemming from their lack of a marital partner, thus they no longer hold a position or role within the affinal family (Arsal, 2014; Batista et al., 2019; Jiao et al., 2021; Manor, 2023; Parker, 2016; Siagian, 2019).

In the field of kinship studies, discussions on widows often focus on their connections with their blood relatives after divorce or the passing of their spouses, and the adjustments in their living arrangements if they had previously lived with their husband's family but now return to their blood relatives. A particular study examining the interaction between widows and their ex-affinal proposes that the death of a husband doesn't necessarily sever ties between the widow and her ex-parents-in-laws, primarily due to the involvement of their children (Dube, 1997; Holý, 1986; Lopata, 1978; Strathern, 1972). On the other hand, Sweetser (1963) and Segev et al. (2021) stated that relationships with ex-affine, especially with ex-mothers-in-law, are often seen as sources of conflict. Hence, it's not uncommon to find widows ending their relationships with their ex-in-laws. However, this aspect has not been explored further.

A study conducted in Papua New Guinea by Strathern (1972) found that following the death of their husbands, widows chose to stay within their husband's clan. When they want to remarry, widows often choose spouses from the same clan as their ex-husband

or even close relatives of their ex-husband. Alternatively, there were instances where widows returned to their clan or birthplace, accompanied by their children. Similarly, the Toka people in Africa have a virilocal marriage system, which requires married couples to reside with or near the husband's family. Therefore, the widows in the Guta and Cifokoboyo regions of Africa typically return to their villages after their husbands pass away, along with their children, both sons and daughters (Holý, 1986).

According to a study by Dube (1997), widows in Hinduism in India have entitlements to support their late husband's household, such as caring for their children and overseeing their deceased spouses' land. However, the entirety of the deceased husband's wealth does not automatically belong to the widow, especially if she decides to remarry. The deceased husband's siblings may claim his assets if the widow has no children or only daughters. In contrast, in the Muslim community, which adheres to a patrilineal system in South Asia, widows do not receive any support from their husbands after the marriage contract is terminated (through *talak*). Therefore, many widows refrain from remarrying due to the difficulties it presents for them.

Insufficient research has been conducted on the interactions between widows and their former affinal relatives (ex-affines). The studies cited reveal various gaps or aspects that have not been thoroughly explored regarding the dynamics of the relationship between widows and their ex-affines, as well as the underlying reasons or triggers for these relationships to form. To fill the gap, this article aims to explore the different types of relationships between widows and their ex-affine. This article will also examine the various factors in those relationships, with a case study in Cikembang Village, Bandung Regency, West Java.

METHOD

This study was located in Cikembang Village, Kertasari District, Bandung Regency, West Java. The choice of this location is

deemed representative of West Java, as it is home to mountain communities whose primary means of subsistence is agriculture. These communities consist of relocated cultivators—families that were once engaged in farming but fled to the forest, originating from various regions (Mulyanto, 2022). Cikembang Village has a typology of farming with five villages, namely Cikembang Village, Hamerang Village, Bukatanah Village, Plered Village, and Ciwarayan Village. These five villages are further divided into four sub-villages. In this study, the village under investigation is Sub-village (*Dusun*) 1 of Cikembang Village, which includes Cikembang Village (RW 2, 3, and 4) and Hamerang Village (RW 1 and 13). Based on the data obtained from the Cikembang Village Office, the population in *Dusun* 1 is 1,711 people and the majority of the community earns a living from the agricultural sector, which is filled with various vegetables such as cabbage, carrots, spring onions, lettuce, potatoes, and tomatoes.

Table 1. Population in Dusun 1

RW	Population
1	279
2	214
3	413
4	456
13	349

Source: Research data, 2024

This study used qualitative research methods with a case study approach. The case study approach helps researchers obtain in-depth and detailed data regarding the relationship between widows and their ex-affine, as well as the factors influencing them in Cikembang Village around March & May 2024. This research was conducted by selecting 6 informants out of a total of 71 widows in *Dusun* 1 of Cikembang Village. Previous widow data is also obtained from the Cikembang Village Office and afterward, data related to age, widowed age, widows' sources of livelihood, and the origin of the ex-husband were obtained through a questionnaire. The data collection technique in-

volved conducting in-depth interviews after obtaining permission from the informants regarding their willingness to be interviewed.

Table 2. Population of Widow in Dusun 1

RW	Population of Widow
1	13
2	10
3	17
4	19
13	12

Source: Research data, 2024

This study was also carried out through non-participant observation. Some of the observed aspects including activities inside and outside the house, interactions between neighbors, and interactions with their ex-affine. Those observations were made to study each designated informant to see how widows' relationships with their ex-in-laws were and what factors made them still maintain a relationship with their ex-affine.

During the observation and interviews, data analysis was carried out using triangulation techniques, which involved cross-verifying information from various informants and transforming them into descriptive narratives. These narratives were subsequently interpreted, linked together, and their relevance to previous research was examined.

In anthropological kinship studies, kin categories are typically represented using letter codes to condense kinship terminologies. These codes serve as a system to denote relationships, such as M = Mother, F = Father, B = Brother, Z = Sister, S = Son, D = Daughter, P = Parents, C = Children, H = Husband, W = Wife (Supangkat & Mulyanto, 2022). In this study, the final category of relatives that will be discussed refers to the widow's ex-husband (H = Husband), ex-husbands-in-law (HM = Husband's Mother, HF = Husband's Father), and ex-husband's siblings (HZ = Husband's Brother, HB = Husband's Brother / Hsib = Husband's Siblings).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Socio-cultural context

Located in West Java, residents of Cikembang Village use the Sundanese language in their daily lives, specifically the Priangan dialect. This results in a hierarchical structure within the Sundanese language that corresponds to social categories. Beyond just language, interactions within appropriate social categories are also determined due to three distinct social relationship structures in Cikembang Village: neighborliness, friendship, and kinship. Neighbors (*tatangga*) are defined emically as individuals residing near the ego's residence, thus the boundaries of neighborliness differ from one another and are not confined by formal administrative units such as neighborhood associations (*RT* = Rukun Tetangga). In contrast, friendships are characterized by local terms like '*réréncangan*' (formal) and '*babaturan*', '*balad*', and '*sobat*' (informal), which ego uses to refer to others considered as friends. Someone can be considered a 'friend' by ego due to the subjective closeness (Mulyanto, 2022)

As part of the Sundanese community, residents of Cikembang Village adhere to a bilateral kinship system, which determines descent groups through both maternal and paternal lines. They also follow a cognatic kinship system and employ a terminological structure similar to the lineal-Eskimo type (Stone, 2009; Mulyanto, 2019)). This setup allows for the formation of personal kindred groups outside the nuclear family, known locally as *golongan* or *bani*. Such kinship groups form by identifying individuals considered relatives through a common ancestor. Consequently, these kinship groups often adopt a collective name or identity derived from a respected ancestor's name, as seen in Cikembang Village with groups like '*golongan Mama Haji Entoh*' and '*bani Kholil*', associated with founders of religious schools (*pesantren*). Subjective criteria include shared activities among members, regular gatherings and events (Mulyanto, 2022).

The terms used to determine interactions arise from social relationship structu-

res such as *'baraya'* or *'dulur'*, which indicate the nature of kinship relations between individuals. *'Dulur'* can be understood as people connected to ego through descent or marriage, whereas *'baraya'* refers to those linked to ego solely through descent. On the other hand, *'batur'* denotes strangers or others with no familial connection, while *'deungeun'* refers to non-relatives such as colleagues, neighbors, and friends of ego (Mulyanto, 2022).

Marriage customs in Cikembang Village are shaped by various factors including common religious beliefs, shared origins, ethnic background, economic status, and social position, all of which wield considerable influence over the selection of marital partners. Traditionally, the orchestration of wedding ceremonies and festivities is predominantly overseen by the bride's parents, who bear responsibility for both the logistical planning and financial aspects. While the groom's parents may provide financial support, their role tends to be more peripheral. Furthermore, adhering to matrilineal traditions, many newlywed couples initially reside with or near the bride's family for a period, often extending beyond a week, before eventually establishing their own household, whether within the village or beyond its borders (Mulyanto, 2022). However, marriages in Cikembang Village do not restrict individuals from marrying partners from either within or outside the village where they reside. Thus, it can be said that the community of Cikembang Village practices a system of involuntary endogamy in marriage. The subsequent section will present quantitative data and descriptions related to this matter.

Quantitative Description of Widow

Overall, there are 324 widows residing in Cikembang Village. However, according to data provided by the Cikembang Village office, the number of widows in *dusun 1* are currently 71 (March 2024). These widows range in age from 20 to 87 years old and have been widowed for durations spanning 1 to 35 years. Some widows choose not to remarry due to various reasons, particularly if they

have children who are capable of self-sufficiency and also support their mother, those children often discourage their mothers from remarrying. Additionally, some widows also express a lack of desire to remarry due to feeling content with their current income and obligations. Among widows who have been without their spouse for an extended period, there's a prevalent self-conception of loyalty, defined as refraining from forming new romantic partnerships after their husbands' passing. Consequently, many of these widows prefer not to pursue remarriage.

Table 3. Years of being widowed

Years	Frequency
1-2 years	14
3-5 years	16
6-10 years	14
11-15 years	4
16-20 years	5
20-25 years	4
26-30 years	2
31+ years	12

Source: Research data, 2024

Just like inhabitants of highland regions, widows that are categorized as 'productive' from other widows primarily work in agriculture as farm workers. Aside from agriculture, widows in Cikembang Village have their own businesses such as running small convenience stores, food stalls, or selling their food by traveling around with carts or trays. Other jobs widows engage in to meet their livelihood needs include teaching Quranic studies, school teaching, bridal makeup artists, and babysitting. Some widows are also housewives, others are unemployed.

Table 4. Widows' sources of livelihood

Sources of Livelihood	Frequency
Farm Worker	27
Housewife	30
Entrepreneur	9
Others	4
Unemployed	1

Source: Research data, 2024

According to the information gathered from surveys, the widows and their ex-husbands are mostly from Cikembang Village. Typically, marriages that limit individuals from marrying outside their social circle, religious affiliation, caste, ethnicity, or even within the same area are referred to as endogamous (Anderson & Bidner, 2021). Nevertheless, the cultural custom of marriage among widows in Cikembang Village occurs unintentionally; there are no restrictions on women in the village to marry men from the same locality, hence this marital practice is referred to as involuntary endogamy. This may influence various types of connections between widows and their ex-in-law relatives, as well as situations where some widows had husbands from outside Cikembang Village who may have had different types of relationships.

Table 5. Ex-husbands origin

Ex-husbands Origin	Frequency
Cikembang Village	48
Tarumajaya Village	5
Cibeureum Village	2
Bandung City	3
Garut Regency	6
Tasikmalaya	1
Majalengka	1
Pengalengan	1
Majalaya	1
Ciparay	1
Bekasi Regency	1
East Java	1

Source: Research data, 2024

Relationships Between Widows and Their Ex-Affines

In this section, the author will examine the different types of relationships between widows and their ex-affines and discuss the various factors in those relationships.

Ex-affine as a friend

Interactions with ex-affines, such as

ex-husbands or ex-in-laws in this research exhibit considerable variability. According to Spicer & Hampe (1975), these interactions typically came from affection, shared interests, concern for children, or incidental meetings. In Cikembang, widows often maintain various types of relationships, including what is termed “friendship”. Within this cultural context, “friendship” could be interpreted as maintaining a positive and sometimes intimate social bond with the widow, grounded entirely in personal sentiments. The measure of closeness is assessed based on the frequency of their interactions (Hoyt & Babchuk, 1983). Some widows in Cikembang, whether older or younger due to the death of their spouses, do not view affinal relatives as adversaries due to limited conflicts and their physical proximity to them. This research indicates that instances of “friendship” were primarily observed between widows and their ex-sister-in-laws (Merz et al., 2016); no such relationships were found between widows and their ex-husbands or ex-parents-in-law. This aligns with Sweetser (1963) and Segev et al. (2021) study, which highlights the tendency for relationships with ex-affine, particularly ex-parents-in-law, to be fraught with tension.

The transition of the widow’s relationship with her ex-affine into a friendship within Cikembang Village illustrates an aspect of the involuntary endogamous marriage system. Primarily, proximity and the pre-existing closeness between the widow and her ex-sister-in-law are crucial factors in nurturing this bond. However, other contributing factors include familiarity and close proximity prior to widowhood. For instance, S (20), who became a widow following a divorce, initially resided with her husband’s family including her sister-in-law. Upon divorcing, S returned to live with her biological parents. Despite this change, her relationship with her ex-affinal relative, specifically her ex-sister-in-law, continued as a close friendship. This enduring bond stems from their longstanding friendship since childhood, which S maintains through frequent communication via phone calls, WhatsApp, and other social media plat-

forms. Conversely, S's relationship with her ex-mother-in-law was strained due to economic tensions during her marriage, which consequently led to a cessation of personal contact between S and her ex-husband. The instances discovered in these case examples align with Komarovskiy (1950) findings in his study, which similarly highlighted conflicts arising from spousal dependence on their parents-in-law. While such conflicts are rarely occurring, they can escalate to become more intense and conspicuous.

Becoming a fictive-daughter

Another form of relationship that emerges is that of when a widow becomes a fictive daughter of her mother-in-law. This relationship can be defined as the continued connection between widows and their ex-mother-in-laws, particularly where their ex-in-laws continue to regard their ex-daughters-in-law as their own daughters and the widows reciprocate by viewing their ex-mother-in-laws as mothers, and the widow is forming instrumental and emotional bonds and commitments similar to their biological kin relationships (Hochman et al., 2022; Rae, 1992). This pattern is commonly observed among divorced widows by death who have experienced minimal personal conflict with their ex-in-laws. Such relationships often manifest with the widows performing traditional roles expected of daughters-in-law, such as addressing their ex-in-laws as "mothers," residing with them, working together in household matters, and preparing meals for them. Sweetser (1963) noted in his study that some parents-in-law continue to refer to their sons and daughters (daughters-in-law) as "children," blurring distinctions between their biological children and their children-in-law. Various factors influence this type of relationship, including the absence of alternative familial support, the elderly age of in-laws who may prefer living with their ex-daughters-in-law, economic circumstances or poverty that necessitate mutual dependence, and the flexible kinship structure in Sundanese culture, which allows individuals freedom in deciding living arrangements apart from

their biological parents. Similar findings were also observed in research by Strathern (1972) in Papua New Guinea, which documented how widows chose to remain within their deceased husbands' clans following their husbands' deaths.

This research identified cases where widows continue to live with their ex-in-laws. For instance, Mrs. E (39) resides with her widowed ex-mother-in-law, Mrs. A (71), following the death of Mrs. E's husband two years ago. Currently, Mrs. E cares for her one-year-old grandson, while her daughter has moved to the city for work. Mrs. E works as a farm laborer and her ex-mother-in-law helps care for the grandson during the day. This arrangement means that Mrs. A is involved in the upbringing of her great-grandchild. In an interview, Mrs. E explained that economic hardship influenced her decision to remain with her ex-in-laws. She mentioned that her late husband had not left behind any inheritance apart from their shared house, which they had previously lived in with Mrs. A. Therefore, both out of necessity and moral obligation, Mrs. E felt unable to leave Mrs. A alone or to evict her, especially since Mrs. A is also the grandmother of her grandchildren. This situation indirectly supports the finding that a husband's death does not necessarily sever the ties between a widow and her ex-in-law, particularly when children are involved (Strathern, 1972).

Just Another Neighbour

This form of relationship is often found in Cikembang Village. With the formation of the involuntary endogamy marriage system, several widows were found to have a relationship that was referred to as just neighbors (*tatanggi*). This relationship can be defined as the relationship between the widow and ex-affine who live in nearby residences, in this case, the term neighbor is limited by the formal administrative unit of RT and RW with the possibility of frequently meeting, so that ex-affine who live in the same area as the widow can be considered neighbors. This type of relationship can arise whether the divorce was initiated while both parties were alive or if one has

since passed away, influenced by the housing affordability shared between the widow and her ex-affine. Despite having opportunities for conversation, these discussions may not delve deeply. Both parties may maintain a reserved approach, refraining from becoming overly familiar and instead engaging in more formal interactions. The lack of a strong inclination to connect closely with ex-affine shapes the dynamics of this relationship (Peng et al., 2022; Spicer & Hampe, 1975).

This relationship unfolded with Mrs. E (72), a divorcee who resides near her ex-affine in her neighborhood. Despite acknowledging the absence of conflicts in their interactions, Mrs. E expressed her belief that there is no longer a necessity for regular contact with her ex-affine. She indicated that she meets them only on formal occasions, such as weddings or in times of crises like illness or death among her ex-affine. In her view, maintaining a very close relationship with these relatives is not crucial; staying informed about their well-being suffices.

A Hostiles Neighbour

This form of hostile neighbor relationship is rarely found in this research. Hostile neighbors are characterized as the relationship between a widow and her ex-affine who still reside nearby but do not have a good relationship. Consequently, when they encounter each other, neither party typically initiates greetings or conversation. However, due to their proximity, chance encounters are inevitable. This type of relationship generally manifests among divorced widows whose marriages ended due to personal conflicts such as infidelity, lack of spousal support, sudden abandonment by husbands, economic hardships, and even instances of domestic violence. These issues often precipitate divorce and strain the widow's relationship with her ex-affine, particularly with her ex-husband. Sweetser (1963) noted that it was not unusual to encounter widows who had severed ties with their ex-in-laws. However, his research findings indicated that relationships that ended in hostility typically arose from greater conflicts with

the husband's parents rather than with the wife's parents.

In Cikembang Village, the widow's hostile neighbor relationship with her ex-final relatives is generally caused by divorce due to economic conditions. One such case involved Mrs. Y (58), who experienced a hostile neighborly dynamic with ex-sister-in-laws, despite all residing in the same village but in different neighborhood units (RW). The divorce occurred because Y felt that her ex-husband was inadequate in supporting the family, especially as Y was not employed during their marriage. The escalating conflicts led to their mutual decision to separate, even though Y her ex-husband let her and her children live on his land while the house was being separated into two, her ex-husband had died at the time of the study. However, because of those situations, Y mentioned that his relationship with his ex-brother-in-law was strained. Although the housing distance was affordable for both parties, the conflict of these factors did not encourage a closer relationship or encourage further interaction between them.

Total Stranger

Total stranger relationships basically occur in widows who have ex-husband who live outside the widow's residence. Both divorces that occur due to death and divorce can experience this form of relationship. For divorced widows, conflicts often arise leading them to decide not to communicate with their ex-affine. Among most widows who are elderly in Cikembang Village, the loss of contact with ex-affine due to age is a significant factor contributing to the development of complete estrangement. However, it is also possible for widows who are elderly and have lost many contacts with their ex-affine to still have conflicts with their in-laws or sisters-in-law, thus shaping these relationships. The findings of Spicer & Hampe (1975) support the concept of complete estrangement between widows and their ex-affine, which is influenced by reasons such as the lack of reasons to ex-affine, inconvenient timing, and distance. Moreover, if divorced widows declare these reasons to

cease communication with their ex-affine, it is culturally acceptable to limit their interactions with them. Indirectly, interactions with affinal relatives before divorce were based on obligations stemming from the marital bond, and if that bond is severed, those obligations cease to exist.

This relationship is primarily observed among widows whose ex-husbands reside in different villages. Mrs. I (27) is a widow with one child, having been widowed for two years after her husband left suddenly and subsequently divorced her online. Since then, she has had no contact with her ex-husband, ex-parents-in-law, or sisters and brother-in-law due to the distance between their residences and the lack of initiative from her ex-husband to support or provide for their child. In contrast, Mrs. N (69), a widow through the death of her husband, stated that she never had parents-in-law from the time of her marriage. Additionally, her ex-sisters and brother-in-law in a different

village are elderly, leading N to feel no need to communicate or maintain contact with them. For N, every struggle within the marriage was considered a family matter, and therefore, she endeavors not to seek assistance from her ex-husband's family whenever possible. Moreover, in the absence of the intermediary (her ex-husband), there is no obligation for the relationship with affinal relatives to continue. This case aligns with Anspach (1976) result on his study that the kinship relationships of a widows towards their ex-affines do not represent a new or different kinship system; rather, they arise due to the husband's absence, who traditionally acts as the conduit linking his relatives. Consequently, the familial connections of divorced individuals are asymmetrical because the absent husband cannot fulfill the crucial role of mediator or supporter.

In summary, relationship between widows and her ex-affine are illustrated in the Table 6.

Table 6. Summary of relationship between widow and her ex-affine

Relationship Between Widow and their ex-affine	Summary
Ex-affines as a friend	Interpreted as maintaining a positive and sometimes intimate social bond with the widow, grounded entirely in personal sentiments and primarily observed between widows and their ex-sister-in-laws.
Becoming a fictive-daughter	The continued connection between widows and their ex-mother-in-laws, particularly where their ex-in-laws continue to regard their ex-daughters-in-law as their own daughters and the widows reciprocate by viewing their ex-mother-in-laws as mothers.
Just Another Neighbour	The relationship between the widow and ex-affine who live in nearby residences, in this case, the term neighbour is limited by the formal administrative unit of RT and RW with the possibility of frequently meeting.
A Hostiles Neighbour	The relationship between a widow and her ex-affine who still reside nearby but do not have a good relationship.
Total Stranger	Refers to an ex-affine who is no longer recognized by the widow at all due to personal problems. This relationships basically occur in widows who have ex-husband who live outside the widow's residence, therefore, they have not encountered one another for an extended period.

Interaction Between Widows and Their Ex-Affines

Based on the results that have been found, overall there are factors that influence the interactions between widows and their former affinal relatives (ex-affines). Some of them are 1) Past personal relationship between a person and their affines: strong which can be seen from the ego's treatment of affines in the same way that ego treats affines in the same way as biological kin and has frequent conversations with their affines (Ambert, 1988; Burton-Chellew & Dunbar, 2011; Fingerman et al., 2012; Spicer & Hampe, 1975), and weak as a result of lack of communication due to problems during marriage and ego's treatment of affines that are different from their biological kin due to various reasons, those may continue even after marriage and lead to loss of contact (Ambert, 1988; Anspach, 1976; Fingerman et al., 2012; Spicer & Hampe, 1975), or distance due to lack of time and inaccessible distance to meet (Adams, 1968; Ambert, 1988); 2) Dependency in old age, the few kin who can interact and take care of affines as well as the social values possessed by widows of elderly care that would influence widows to live together and take care of her ex-affine (Hochman et al., 2022; Isherwood et al., 2017; Petrowsky, 1976; Rae, 1992); 3) Ex-husbands' origin and affines domicile or simply geographical proximity which ultimately affects communication frequency (Ambert, 1988; Bott, 1971; Klatzky, 1968; Spicer & Hampe, 1975; Strathern, 1972).

The quantitative data showed that 48 ex-husbands were from the same village as the widows. This finding may support the emergence of several forms of relationships between widows and their ex-affine, such as friendship, fictive daughters, just another neighbor, and hostile neighbors. In the form of friendship, in the case mentioned above, the ex-husband's family does not live in the same place as the widow, but this form of relationship does not exclude that it occurs frequently. The frequency of interaction can increase comfort and mutual trust, especially among same-sex siblings-in-law, and generate friendship relationships, especially if

the widow's ex-affines still live in the same area (Hoyt & Babchuk, 1983). The similarity of residence between the widow and the ex-affine also supports the formation of a fictive daughter relationship, especially if from the beginning the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law lived together before the ex-husband died and after the ex-husband died the ex-mother-in-law lived alone in the house, therefore this form of relationship usually occurs if someone becomes a widow because her husband died (Sweetser, 1963). As a result of living together for a long time, the fictive daughter can also be considered a confidant and source of support for the ex-mother-in-law because her position is equal to that of her biological child (Rae, 1992). The form of just another neighbor and hostile neighbor relationships are also the result of the ex-husband's origin being the same as the widows' residence in Cikembang Village. Those who live physically close together are very selective in choosing who they will make their main neighbors, some choose to make them friends, ordinary neighbors, or even enemies, therefore, just like the form of friendship relationships, these two relationships can be formed from the frequency of interaction (Bott, 1971; Hoyt & Babchuk, 1983; Klatzky, 1968). To sum up, geographical presence can explain the dynamics of widows with ex-affine as neighbors and how they choose each other.

In rural communities that tend to live close to or even the same place as ex-affinal kin, there are differences in building relationships with ex-affines. In a case study in India, more precisely a study by Aruna et al. (2000) in Western Tamil Nadu mentions the existence of disputes between widows and ex-affines, especially with mother-in-law and brother-in-law over inheritance issues left by widows ex-husbands, especially if a widow does not have a son. Although widows have received inheritances left by their late husbands and parents-in-law do not receive financial support from the widow for the property of their late children, ex-brothers-in-law will insist on the inheritance because they think that they should get a share of the inheritance. In fact, ex-affine

Table 7. Possible Relationship Between Widow and their ex-affine

Factors Influence Interaction Between Widow and their ex-affine	Possible Relationship Between Widow and their ex-affine
Past personal relationship between a person and her affines	Ex-affine as a friend Becoming a fictive-daughter Just another neighbor A hostile neighbour Total stranger
Dependency in old age	Becoming a fictive-daughter
Ex-husbands' origin and affines domicile	Ex-affine as a friend Becoming a fictive-daughter Just another neighbor A hostile neighbour Total stranger

often accuses them of living off the resources of the deceased, therefore the status of a widow becomes a means of committing verbal violence and this gives rise to negative relationships with ex-affine, especially affecting the relationship between widows and ex-sisters-in-law. In the research that we have conducted, widows in rural areas tend to have negative relationships or even conflicts with ex-affine depending on their past personal relationships and do not always have conflicts over inheritance rights with ex-mother-in-law or ex-brother-in-law.

The findings on the form of relationship factored by dependency in old age and social values of elderly care in this study formed a relationship called fictive-daughter or fictive. The findings in this study only found a form of fictive-daughter relationship with the same gender (widow relationship with their ex-mother-in-law). Geographical distance may influence opportunities for social interaction, especially in the elderly, therefore ex-mother-in-law usually depends on ex-daughter-in-law especially if they no longer have a family (Isherwood et al., 2017). Similar findings have been previously documented in Fischer et al. (1990) regarding support systems for elderly individuals lacking familial support. The study indicated that dependence on friends and neighbors for physical care is relatively infrequent; instead, such individuals are more inclined to transition into nursing home facilities, while Rae's (1992) study in Canada found situations where individuals do not have certain family members, they tend to turn close friends and

even daughters-in-law into fictive-kin

To sum up, the factors of interaction between widows and ex-affines along with the possible relationships that occur as a result of these factors will be presented in the table below.

CONCLUSION

In order to comprehensively broaden our understanding of Indonesia's diverse culture and society in terms of kinship, precisely the bilateral kinship system in West Java, we have examined data related to the relationships between widows and their ex-affines and its various factors for those relationships to form. Consistent with previous studies, within the framework of involuntary endogamy marriages, our finding found that relationships can manifest with noticeable variations. It ranges from friendships maintained with ex-sisters-in-law, the "becoming a daughter" relationship with ex-mothers-in-law, treating them as just another neighbour, developing hostile neighbour relationships, especially with ex-parents-in-law, or being a total stranger to all ex-affines. Fundamentally, not all categories of relationships with ex-affinal relatives are alike; a widow might cultivate a friendship with her ex-husband, while she may only have a hostile relationship with her ex-sisters-in-law and not with her ex-husband and parents-in-law. Ultimately, the categorization of these relationships depends on

the widow's circumstances following divorce or the death of her husband. These conditions can involve conflicts that lead a widow to have a hostile neighbor or total stranger relationships with her ex-affines, or even no conflicts at all, resulting in friendships, "becoming a fictive-daughter" relationships or simply treating them as just another neighbor.

Three factors that influenced widows to build such relationships were found. One, past and personal relationship between a widow with her affines may affect their relationship continuity. Two, dependency on old age and social values of elderly care would also affect widows taking care of their ex-parent-in-law. Three, ex-husbands' origin and affines domicile that affect the frequency of meetings and communications factorized widows to build various relationships with their ex-affines.

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