

# Civil Liability of Wedding Organizers toward Vendors and Customers for Acts of the Organizing Committee

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## Article History

Received on 3 November 2026

1<sup>st</sup> Revision on 18 November 2026

2<sup>nd</sup> Revision on 2 December 2026

3<sup>rd</sup> Revision on 16 December 2026

Accepted on 4 January 2026

## Abstract

**Purpose:** This study aims to examine the forms and scope of the civil liability of wedding organizers toward third-party vendors and customers resulting from the actions of the organizing committee, and to develop a civil liability framework that provides legal certainty while ensuring balanced legal protection for all parties involved.

**Research Methodology:** This study adopts a qualitative approach using a normative juridical research method. The analysis is based on an extensive literature review of statutory regulations and national and international scholarly publications published within the last five years, supplemented by illustrative scenarios drawn from publicly reported patterns of wedding organizer disputes, used solely to contextualize the legal analysis rather than as a formal empirical dataset.

**Results:** The findings indicate that the civil liability of wedding organizers is primarily based on breach of contract, tort, and the principle of vicarious liability. Negligent acts committed by the organizing committee remain the responsibility of the wedding organizer insofar as they occur within the scope of their assigned duties. Financial transparency and effective internal governance constitute the primary preventive measures for minimizing the risk of legal disputes.

**Conclusions:** Wedding organizers bear the primary contractual responsibility toward both customers and vendors. An ideal liability model should incorporate comprehensive contractual provisions, effective supervision, and an accountable financial management system.

**Limitations:** This study is limited by its reliance on a normative legal approach and secondary data sources, without incorporating primary data obtained through direct interviews with the parties involved.

**Contributions:** This study contributes theoretically to the development of the doctrine of vicarious liability in project-based service industries and provides practical contributions to the establishment of contractual standards for the wedding organizer industry.

**Keywords:** *Civil Liability, Contract Law, Vendor Protection, Vicarious Liability, Wedding Organizer*

**How to Cite:** Putri, K., Subekti, S., & Aribawa, M. (2026). Civil Liability of Wedding Organizers toward Vendors and Customers for Acts of the Organizing Committee. *Jurnal Ilmiah Hukum dan Hak Asasi Manusia*, 5(2), 127-142.

## 1. Introduction

Indonesia's Wedding Organizer (WO) industry has experienced significant growth over the past five years, driven by the increasing public demand for professional wedding planning and event management services. Social transformation, the expansion of the middle class, and the rapid development of the creative industry and digital marketing have contributed to the emergence of numerous wedding organizer businesses, ranging from micro-enterprises to legally incorporated companies. Weddings are no longer perceived solely as religious or customary ceremonies but have evolved into complex social events that require meticulous planning, logistical management, and the coordination of multiple vendors within a limited timeframe. In this context, wedding organizers play a central role as the primary coordinators, connecting customers with vendors while establishing and supervising the organizing committee to ensure that the event is executed in accordance with the agreed plans and contractual arrangements.

The complexity of the legal relationships established in the organization of wedding events creates a considerable potential for disputes. Wedding organizers occupy a strategic position as the parties responsible for receiving payments from customers, allocating funds to vendors, and supervising the execution of the event through the organizing committee or on-site staff. This legal structure gives rise to a triangular legal relationship involving the wedding organizer, the vendors, and the customers. When an event fails to proceed as planned, technical negligence occurs, or financial mismanagement arises, a fundamental legal question emerges regarding which party bears civil liability for the losses suffered by the other parties.

Studies published over the past five years indicate that disputes involving event management services, including wedding organizers, have increased in parallel with the industry's rapid expansion. [Abidin and Kahpi \(2021\)](#), argue that inadequately drafted contracts constitute one of the primary causes of breach of contract in professional service agreements. Contractual provisions governing liability for the negligence of event staff, unilateral cancellation, and force majeure are frequently formulated in broad or ambiguous terms, thereby creating room for divergent interpretations among the contracting parties. [Arifin \(2020\)](#) emphasizes that the principle of good faith embodied in Article 1338 of the Indonesian Civil Code should be applied not only during the performance of the contract but also from the earliest stages of contractual negotiation.

In practice, several illustrative scenarios can be used to frame the legal issues commonly associated with wedding organizer services, although these scenarios are hypothetical constructs intended solely to illustrate recurring legal patterns rather than verified factual findings. One such scenario would involve a wedding organizer that received substantial payments from prospective couples but failed to disburse the corresponding funds to decoration and catering vendors, potentially resulting in vendors withholding their services on the scheduled date and exposing the organizer to police complaints alleging fraud under Article 378 of the Indonesian Criminal Code and embezzlement under Article 372 of the Indonesian Criminal Code. From a civil law perspective, such conduct may also be classified as a breach of contract pursuant to Article 1243 of the Indonesian Civil Code.

A second recurring pattern involves an organizing committee unilaterally reducing the agreed specifications of wedding decorations without the customer's consent, citing cost-efficiency considerations. Should such conduct occur, it could be pursued by customers on the basis of both breach of contract and tort under Article 1365 of the Indonesian Civil Code, reflecting not only a contractual breach but also a potential violation of the principle of good faith. [Puryanto, Ardana, and Sudibya \(2021\)](#) argue that within project-based employment relationships, wedding organizers remain legally responsible for the acts of the organizing committee insofar as those acts are performed within the scope of the duties assigned to them. This view is consistent with Article 1367 of the Indonesian Civil Code, which embodies the doctrine of vicarious liability by imposing liability for the acts of another person. Accordingly, even when organizing committee members are engaged on a freelance or temporary basis, wedding organizers may still incur civil liability for their negligence or wrongful acts committed in the course of performing their assigned responsibilities.

The legal position of vendors as third parties also warrants careful consideration. [Rahman, Hakim, and Wisudawan \(2022\)](#), argue that vendors often occupy a vulnerable position because they maintain a contractual relationship solely with the wedding organizer, while the funds used for payment originate from the customer. Disputes of this nature are not uncommon in the Indonesian wedding organizer industry, where vendors may file legal complaints against wedding organizers for failing to make payment despite having completed the contracted services. From a civil law perspective, such conduct constitutes a breach of contract toward the vendors. However, where there is evidence of an intentional and unlawful appropriation of funds, the conduct may also satisfy the elements of the criminal offense of embezzlement. Financial transparency has emerged as a critical issue in disputes involving wedding organizers. [Hossain, Hasan, and Hasan \(2024\)](#), emphasize the importance of implementing a progress payment mechanism to minimize the risk of fund misappropriation. [Mubinda, Sutrisno, and Mulada \(2023\)](#) find that inadequate administrative documentation and the absence of effective internal auditing are among the principal factors contributing to the escalation of civil disputes into criminal proceedings. In this context, non-transparent financial management may be regarded as a violation of the principles of prudence and accountability governing service-based business activities.

From the perspective of consumer protection, the principles articulated by [Fista, Machmud, and Suartini \(2023\)](#) regarding business actors' obligations under Law No. 8 of 1999 on Consumer Protection can be analogously applied to wedding organizers as providers of commercial services. [Ilyasa and Wahyuni \(2025\)](#) similarly confirm that wedding organizers fall within the definition of business actors under the Consumer Protection Law and are therefore bound by statutory obligations of transparency, accurate information disclosure, and fair treatment toward consumers. [Sujayadi, Wijayanta, and Herliana \(2023\)](#) extend this analysis by demonstrating that consumers who experience service failures in wedding organizer agreements are entitled to seek compensation under both the Consumer Protection Law and the Indonesian Civil Code simultaneously, and that the dual availability of these remedies reflects the legislature's intention to provide comprehensive protection against professional service failures.

[Fista et al. \(2023\)](#) similarly find that consumers who suffer harm from event organizer services are entitled to seek legal redress under the Consumer Protection Law, which places the burden of proof on the service provider to demonstrate due performance. Service providers are legally obligated to furnish consumers with accurate, clear, and truthful information regarding the services offered. Accordingly, contractual clauses that unreasonably limit or exclude the liability of wedding organizers to the detriment of consumers may be declared null and void. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of [Jibril and Ekadhani \(2022\)](#), who argue that exculpatory clauses in service contracts should be evaluated based on the principles of fairness and contractual balance.

The losses arising from the failure of a wedding event are not confined to pecuniary damages but may also encompass non-pecuniary harm. [Silitonga \(2022\)](#) observes that Indonesian courts have increasingly recognized claims for non-pecuniary damages in disputes involving professional services, particularly where the event in question is unique and incapable of being repeated. In the context of wedding ceremonies, the failure to conduct the event as agreed may result in significant psychological distress and reputational harm to the couple and their families. From an international perspective, Mohd [Mohd and Mohd \(2023\)](#) establish that service providers remain legally responsible for the negligence or wrongful acts of their personnel when such conduct occurs within the scope of their assigned duties, regardless of whether those personnel hold formal employment status or are engaged on a project basis. This approach is intended to ensure legal certainty for both clients and third parties.

The foregoing studies and practical cases reveal a significant gap between the existing legal framework and its implementation in practice. Although the Indonesian Civil Code provides legal principles governing breach of contract, tort liability, and liability for the acts of others, their application within the project-based wedding organizer industry, which involves multiple contractual relationships and stakeholders, requires more comprehensive legal analysis. Moreover, the increasing

number of criminal complaints filed against wedding organizers highlights the need to establish a clearer distinction between contractual disputes and criminal offenses. Accordingly, this study addresses the following research questions: what are the forms and limits of the civil liability of wedding organizers toward customers arising from the acts of the organizing committee?, To what extent are wedding organizers civilly liable to vendors as third parties?, How is the doctrine of vicarious liability applied within project-based working relationships? and How should breaches of contract be distinguished from criminal conduct in cases reported to law enforcement authorities?

This study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the civil liability of wedding organizers toward third-party vendors and customers arising from the acts of the organizing committee by examining the relevant provisions of the Indonesian Civil Code, the Consumer Protection Law, and dispute resolution practices over the past five years. Furthermore, the study seeks to develop a civil liability framework that promotes legal certainty while ensuring balanced legal protection for all parties involved.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Contractual Foundation between Wedding Organizers, Vendors, and Customers

A contract constitutes the legal foundation of the relationship between a Wedding Organizer (WO) and its customers as well as vendors. Under Indonesian civil law, a legally valid agreement is binding upon the parties as law pursuant to Article 1338 of the Indonesian Civil Code. Nevertheless, in practice, wedding organizer service contracts frequently fail to include detailed provisions governing the allocation of operational and financial responsibilities among the parties.

According to [Abidin and Kahpi \(2021\)](#), ambiguous contractual clauses in professional service agreements significantly increase the likelihood of conflicting interpretations when a breach of contract occurs. [Arifin \(2020\)](#) further argues that the principle of good faith should govern the entire contractual relationship, beginning from the pre-contractual negotiation stage through the performance of the agreement, in order to prevent legal disputes. In this regard, [Paendong and Taunamang \(2022\)](#) further observe that the legal consequences of wanprestasi under Indonesian civil law arise as soon as the obligated party fails to perform in accordance with the agreed terms, making precise contractual drafting the first line of defense against disputes. In the context of event management services, [Dharmayuda et al. \(2022\)](#) found that most conflicts in wedding organizer services arise from the absence of specific contractual provisions addressing technical risks, event cancellations such as those caused by force majeure, and the allocation of liability among the contracting parties.

From a comparative perspective, [Jibril and Ekadhani \(2022\)](#) demonstrate that the principle of good faith does not possess a single definitive meaning in either Indonesia or Australia, yet in the Indonesian context its existence and application in contract law are comparatively clearer, making it a primary criterion employed by courts when determining whether parties have fulfilled their contractual obligations in a fair and honest manner. [Similarly, Atmoko and Noviriska \(2024\)](#) conclude that limitation of liability clauses are legally enforceable provided that they do not conflict with the principles of consumer protection or unfairly prejudice consumers. [Atmoko and Noviriska \(2024\)](#) further argue that limitation of liability clauses in professional service contracts must be assessed against consumer protection principles, and that any clause unreasonably excluding the service provider's liability for operational failures may be declared void under Indonesian consumer protection law. [Furthermore, Mubinda, Sutrisno and Mulada \(2023\)](#) demonstrate through a direct case study of an Indonesian wedding organizer that poorly defined cooperation agreements between event organizers and vendors are a primary source of disputes, reinforcing the importance of comprehensive and specific contractual provisions in the creative service sector.

[Badri, Handayani and Rizki \(2024\)](#) observe that in Indonesian professional service agreements, the failure to apply the principle of good faith at the pre-contractual stage, including during negotiation and drafting, constitutes an independent ground for civil liability where the resulting contractual ambiguity directly causes harm to one of the parties. This body of literature demonstrates that

contractual clarity and the consistent application of the principle of good faith are fundamental elements in ensuring legal certainty and reducing disputes within the wedding organizer industry. Well-drafted contracts that clearly define the rights, obligations, allocation of risks, and liability of each party not only strengthen contractual enforcement but also provide greater legal protection for customers, vendors, and wedding organizers alike.

### ***2.2 Level of Supervision over the Organizing Committee (Vicarious Liability)***

In conducting their business activities, wedding organizers rely on organizing committees or event crews who perform their duties under specific instructions, coordination, and supervision. Consequently, the doctrine of vicarious liability, which imposes liability on one party for the wrongful acts of another, is highly relevant in determining the civil liability of wedding organizers for the conduct of their personnel.

[Puryanto et al. \(2021\)](#) explain that an employer's liability arises where there exists a relationship of subordination and effective supervision between the employer and the individuals performing the assigned work. This principle is further supported by the analysis of Mohd [Safri et al. \(2023\)](#), who establish that the key determinant of vicarious liability is not formal employment status but rather the degree of control, instruction, and integration exercised by the principal organization over the individuals performing the assigned work. [Puryanto et al. \(2021\)](#) maintain that project-based working relationships may still give rise to legal liability where the employer retains a sufficient degree of control over the execution of the work. Sani [Pratiwi, Pujiastuti and Arifin \(2024\)](#) reinforce this position by demonstrating that in project-based service industries, the absence of a formal employment contract does not eliminate civil liability provided that the principal organization exercises effective direction over the performance of the assigned tasks.

[Arifin, Arifin and Thuong \(2023\)](#) similarly confirm that employers in project-based work arrangements remain legally responsible for the acts of workers performed within the scope of their assigned duties under Indonesian civil law, irrespective of whether the engagement is classified as employment or outsourcing. In the Indonesian judicial context, the approach is consistent with the analysis conducted by [Puryanto et al. \(2021\)](#), who demonstrate that Indonesian courts assess the degree of supervision and authority exercised by an employer as primary indicators in attributing responsibility for the wrongful acts of personnel, irrespective of the formal nature of the employment arrangement. Furthermore, employer liability serves the broader objective of protecting third parties from risks arising from a company's internal organizational structure, a principle that is well-established in Indonesian civil law through the doctrine embedded in Article 1367 of the Indonesian Civil Code ([Mihardja, Kurniawan, & Anthony, 2020](#)).

Taken together, these studies indicate that the existence of supervisory authority, organizational control, and the allocation of operational responsibilities are central elements in the application of the doctrine of vicarious liability. Accordingly, even where organizing committee members are engaged on a temporary, freelance, or project-based basis, wedding organizers may remain civilly liable for negligent or wrongful acts committed within the scope of the duties assigned to them, provided that the organizer exercises sufficient control over their work. This approach promotes legal certainty while ensuring adequate protection for customers, vendors, and other affected third parties.

### ***2.3 Financial Management Transparency***

The triangular legal relationship among wedding organizers (WOs), vendors, and customers creates significant financial risks, particularly with respect to the management and distribution of funds. A substantial number of disputes arise from delayed payments, non-payment, or the improper allocation of funds owed to vendors, resulting in contractual conflicts and, in some instances, legal proceedings. According to [Hossain et al. \(2024\)](#), financial transparency is one of the most important factors in preventing disputes between event organizers and vendors. Transparent financial management enables all parties to monitor payment obligations and reduces the likelihood of misunderstandings regarding the allocation of customer funds. [Similarly, Alwi, Tjoanda and Radjawane \(2023\)](#) recommend the implementation of an escrow payment system, whereby customer payments are held by an

independent third party and released only after contractual obligations have been fulfilled. From an international perspective, [Runtunuwu, Pangkerego and Karamoy \(2022\)](#) establish that financial transparency mechanisms in event planning contracts, including progress payment clauses and third-party escrow arrangements, constitute essential legal safeguards that protect both vendors and clients from the risk of fund misappropriation. Such a mechanism enhances financial security while minimizing the risk of fund misappropriation. [Mubinda, Sutrisno and Mulada \(2023\)](#) further find that inadequate administrative documentation and poor financial record-keeping significantly increase the likelihood of allegations of embezzlement and other forms of financial misconduct. The absence of proper accounting procedures not only weakens internal governance but also complicates the resolution of disputes by making it difficult to verify the flow and use of funds.

[Hossain et al. \(2024\)](#) demonstrate that the implementation of a progress payment system, under which payments are made in stages according to the completion of agreed milestones, effectively reduces disputes between wedding organizers, customers, and vendors. This approach improves financial control, distributes risk more equitably among the parties, and promotes greater accountability throughout the execution of the event. [Hossain et al. \(2024\)](#), in their study of corporate governance and financial transparency, identify financial accountability as a fundamental standard of modern service businesses, emphasizing that transparent governance practices enhance organizational credibility, stakeholder confidence, and long-term trust relationships between service providers and their clients. [Mubinda et al. \(2023\)](#) similarly observe that the absence of transparent fund management in professional service disputes is a recurring factor that complicates dispute resolution and damages stakeholder trust. Collectively, these studies suggest that transparent financial management constitutes a fundamental component of effective corporate governance in the wedding organizer industry. The adoption of accountable financial practices, including comprehensive financial documentation, staged payment mechanisms, regular internal audits, and secure payment systems such as escrow arrangements, not only reduces the risk of contractual disputes but also strengthens legal certainty and reinforces the trust of customers, vendors, and other stakeholders.

#### ***2.4 Types and Extent of Damages (Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Losses)***

Losses arising from disputes involving wedding organizer services are not limited to pecuniary (financial) damages but may also include non-pecuniary losses, such as psychological distress, emotional suffering, and reputational harm. Given the unique and irreplaceable nature of wedding ceremonies, service failures often result in consequences that extend beyond measurable economic losses, affecting the personal and social interests of customers and their families.

[Silitonga \(2022\)](#) demonstrates that claims for immaterial losses in breach of contract lawsuits in Indonesia are increasingly recognized by courts, reflecting a broader judicial understanding that certain contractual breaches inflict intangible harm, including psychological distress, reputational damage, and emotional suffering, that deserves legal protection. [Silitonga \(2022\)](#) confirms that Indonesian courts have increasingly acknowledged the legitimacy of such claims, provided the claimant can establish a clear causal link between the wrongful conduct and the resulting harm. [Manjayani and Manulang \(2022\)](#) further confirm that non-pecuniary harm, including emotional suffering and reputational damage, is compensable under both tort and contract law in Indonesia where the causal nexus is clearly established, reinforcing the judicial trend toward comprehensive damage assessment in professional service disputes. [Djatmiko et al. \(2022\)](#) further explain that events of a unique and non-repeatable nature, such as weddings, possess significant emotional and personal value that courts should take into account when determining appropriate compensation.

Taken together, these studies indicate that the assessment of damages in disputes involving wedding organizer services should encompass both pecuniary and non-pecuniary losses. While financial compensation remains essential for recovering measurable economic losses, the recognition of psychological distress, emotional suffering, and reputational damage reflects the evolving approach of modern civil liability toward providing comprehensive legal protection. Accordingly, courts should evaluate not only the economic consequences of contractual breaches but also the unique emotional and social significance of wedding events when determining appropriate remedies and compensation.

## **2.5 Internal Risk Management**

Internal legal risk management constitutes a critical component in preventing the escalation of civil disputes into criminal proceedings. Effective governance mechanisms, including comprehensive contractual documentation, internal audits, and well-defined Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), serve as essential indicators of sound corporate governance and legal compliance within the wedding organizer industry. The implementation of these measures not only reduces operational risks but also enhances accountability and legal certainty for all parties involved. [Mubinda, Sutrisno and Mulada \(2023\)](#) argue that inadequate internal control systems significantly increase the likelihood of contractual disputes and legal claims. Weak oversight of financial transactions, insufficient documentation, and the absence of standardized operational procedures create opportunities for misunderstandings, negligence, and allegations of misconduct. [Mubinda et al. \(2023\)](#) emphasize the importance of establishing an effective compliance system within service-based enterprises to ensure adherence to contractual obligations, legal regulations, and professional standards. A well-designed compliance framework enables organizations to identify legal risks at an early stage and implement preventive measures before disputes arise.

[Dharmayuda et al. \(2022\)](#) demonstrate that clearly formulated contractual clauses and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) substantially reduce the risk of negligence by organizing committee members in wedding organizer services and provide a clearer basis for dispute resolution when force majeure or operational failures occur. [Fauzi et al. \(2025\)](#) extend this finding by demonstrating that the absence of a properly drafted force majeure clause in event organizer contracts was the primary legal vulnerability exposed in the Hammersonic Festival 2020 postponement dispute, underscoring the need for standardized force majeure and risk allocation provisions in all professional event management agreements. Dharmayuda, Dewi and Pritayanti Dinar (2022) further confirm that the absence of detailed SOPs and force majeure clauses in event organizer contracts was a primary factor in the legal disputes that arose following the Hammersonic Festival 2020 postponement, underscoring the evidentiary importance of complete administrative documentation. [Hossain et al. \(2024\)](#) additionally emphasize that robust corporate governance, encompassing comprehensive documentation, internal audits, and transparent reporting, constitutes the principal evidentiary basis for distinguishing between a contractual breach arising from operational error and conduct that may satisfy the elements of a criminal offense. [Furthermore, Hafiz and Sukirno \(2024\)](#) conclude that sound internal governance and complete documentation are essential legal safeguards that enable courts to assess the proportionality and appropriateness of compensation claims in service contract disputes.

Collectively, these studies demonstrate that effective internal risk management extends beyond operational efficiency and plays a fundamental role in mitigating legal liability. The adoption of comprehensive contractual documentation, strong compliance systems, systematic internal audits, and standardized operating procedures strengthens corporate governance, facilitates dispute resolution, and provides a clearer legal basis for distinguishing contractual breaches from criminal misconduct. Accordingly, sound internal risk management represents an essential preventive strategy for safeguarding the interests of wedding organizers, customers, vendors, and other stakeholders while promoting legal certainty within the event management industry.

## **3. Research Methodology**

This study employs a qualitative approach using a normative legal research method. A qualitative approach was selected because the study seeks to obtain an in-depth understanding and analysis of the civil liability of wedding organizers toward vendors and customers arising from the actions of the organizing committee, rather than to examine relationships between variables through quantitative methods. The normative legal analysis focuses on primary legal materials, including the Indonesian Civil Code (Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Perdata/KUHPerdata), the Indonesian Criminal Code (Kitab Undang-Undang Hukum Pidana/KUHP), and Law No. 8 of 1999 on Consumer Protection. In addition, the study examines secondary legal materials, including national and international scholarly journal articles published within the last five years, civil law textbooks, and court decisions relevant to

disputes involving wedding organizer services. This approach enables the researcher to examine the applicable legal norms while identifying the gap between the existing legal framework and its implementation in practice.

Given the limited availability of published court decisions specifically addressing wedding organizer disputes, this study relies primarily on doctrinal legal analysis, supplemented by illustrative scenarios constructed from recurring patterns commonly discussed in industry commentary and general civil litigation involving comparable service-based disputes. These illustrative scenarios are not derived from a formally sampled case dataset and are presented solely as analytical devices to demonstrate how the applicable legal provisions would operate in practice, rather than as empirical findings. The research data were collected through library research and document analysis, including illustrative wedding organizer contract clauses and judicial decisions concerning disputes involving event organizer services. Data collection involved reviewing, classifying, and systematically organizing the legal materials according to the research objectives. To complement the normative analysis, the study also draws on illustrative scenarios to examine how civil liability principles would apply in practice. The collected data were analyzed qualitatively using methods of legal interpretation, namely grammatical, systematic, and teleological interpretation, to determine the meaning of the applicable legal norms and assess their relevance to the legal issues under investigation.

The data analysis was conducted through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and inductive conclusion drawing. The researcher identified patterns of civil liability emerging from various dispute cases and compared them with the applicable legal provisions in order to determine the forms and limits of the civil liability of wedding organizers. The credibility of the findings was ensured through source triangulation, which involved comparing statutory regulations, legal doctrine, and existing scholarly findings. Through this methodological approach, the study is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the civil liability of wedding organizers toward vendors and customers arising from the actions of the organizing committee and to develop a civil liability framework that promotes legal certainty and fair legal protection for all parties involved.

## **4. Results and Discussions**

### ***4.1 Overview of the Research Findings***

Based on the doctrinal analysis conducted in this study, supplemented by illustrative scenarios reflecting recurring patterns in the wedding organizer industry, this study identifies recurring legal issues concerning the civil liability of wedding organizers (WOs) toward customers and vendors arising from the actions of the organizing committee. These scenarios are presented as illustrative analytical constructs rather than as empirical findings derived from a verified case dataset. Most disputes originated from the improper performance of contractual obligations, which subsequently developed into claims for breach of contract and, in several cases, escalated into criminal complaints involving allegations of fraud or embezzlement of funds. The study identified five principal factors influencing the emergence of the civil liability of wedding organizers are the clarity and completeness of contractual provisions, the employment relationship and the degree of supervision exercised over the organizing committee, transparency in financial management, the nature and extent of the losses suffered by the affected parties, and the effectiveness of the organization's internal risk management system. These five factors are closely interrelated and collectively determine the form and scope of civil liability arising from disputes involving wedding organizer services.

These findings are consistent with the studies of [Abidin and Kahpi \(2021\)](#) and [Paendong and Taunaumang \(2022\)](#), who conclude that disputes involving professional services in Indonesia are predominantly attributable to breach of contract resulting from the improper performance of contractual obligations and the absence of detailed contractual provisions governing the rights and responsibilities of service personnel. [Mubinda, Sutrisno, and Mulada \(2023\)](#) observe that many wedding organizers rely on cooperation agreements that lack detailed provisions governing the supervision and accountability of on-site committees, making it difficult to allocate responsibility when operational failures occur. From an international perspective, [Dharmayuda, Dewi, and Pritayanti \(2022\)](#) observe that contractual risks within the event organizer industry increased significantly

following the Hammersonic Festival 2020 postponement, where the absence of well-formulated force majeure and payment clauses became the primary source of legal disputes. Furthermore, Mohd [Mohd and Mohd \(2023\)](#) argue that project-based service providers are exposed to a higher level of liability risk than businesses operating under permanent employment structures because of their flexible organizational arrangements, making the degree of supervisory control the decisive factor in attributing legal responsibility. These findings reinforce the conclusion that the civil liability of wedding organizers extends beyond contractual performance and is significantly influenced by organizational governance, supervisory mechanisms, and financial accountability.

#### ***4.2 Relationship between Wedding Organizer and Client***

An analysis of recurring dispute patterns commonly associated with wedding organizer services indicates that the most common legal issues involved breach of contract resulting from the failure to perform contractual obligations as agreed. The most common forms of breach included unauthorized changes to decoration specifications without the customer's written consent, delays in vendor services due to outstanding payments from the wedding organizer, and unilateral reductions in service quality implemented by the organizing committee. These findings indicate that contractual non-performance remains the predominant legal issue in disputes involving wedding organizer services.

The results are consistent with the findings of [Abidin and Kahpi \(2021\)](#), who emphasize that clearly drafted and detailed contractual provisions are essential for minimizing disputes in professional service agreements. Contracts that fail to specify responsibilities, performance standards, and procedures for handling operational changes create uncertainty regarding the parties' rights and obligations, thereby increasing the likelihood of contractual disputes. [Iwanti and Taun \(2022\)](#) observe that many wedding organizers continue to rely on broadly drafted agreements that lack detailed provisions governing the supervision and accountability of on-site organizing committees. As a result, when operational failures occur during an event, it becomes difficult to determine whether responsibility lies with the organizing committee, the wedding organizer, or another party involved in the service delivery.

This issue is also evident in the Indonesian event industry context. [Dharmayuda, Dewi, and Pritayanti \(2022\)](#) demonstrate that event organizer contracts that fail to clearly define the allocation of responsibilities among event staff and operational teams, particularly with respect to force majeure and payment distribution, are a major source of contractual disputes. These findings reinforce the importance of drafting comprehensive service agreements that clearly regulate the duties, authority, and accountability of all personnel involved in the execution of an event. Overall, the findings suggest that breach of contract remains the dominant legal basis for civil claims against wedding organizers. They also highlight that contractual clarity is not merely a formal legal requirement but a practical mechanism for preventing disputes, allocating responsibility fairly, and providing greater legal certainty for customers, vendors, and wedding organizers alike.

#### ***4.3 Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Losses***

Among the dispute patterns examined, a recurring feature is that customer complaints rarely stop at requesting a refund; aggrieved couples consistently frame their grievance as encompassing the psychological distress and reputational embarrassment caused by a disrupted wedding day, which constitutes a dimension of harm that the literature has only recently begun to formalize. In many cases, the failure of a wedding event has consequences that go beyond financial loss, affecting the emotional well-being of the parties involved as well as their social standing within the community.

[Silitonga \(2022\)](#) demonstrates that claims for immaterial losses in breach of contract lawsuits in Indonesia are increasingly recognized by courts, reflecting a judicial shift toward acknowledging non-pecuniary harm in service contracts. [Isman \(2021\)](#) further notes that in Indonesian civil proceedings, plaintiffs frequently combine claims for breach of contract and tort in a single lawsuit precisely because the resulting harm, both material and immaterial, often stems from the same underlying wrongful act. [Ariadin \(2023\)](#) explains that under Indonesian civil law, the doctrine of *onrechtmatige daad* (unlawful act) under Article 1365 of the Civil Code provides an independent cause of action

where the wrongful conduct causes harm that falls outside the scope of contractual obligations, thereby broadening the remedial options available to aggrieved parties. [Manjayani and Manulang \(2022\)](#), further confirm that non-pecuniary damages, including psychological distress and reputational harm, are legally compensable under the doctrine of unlawful acts in Indonesian civil law where a clear causal nexus between the wrongful conduct and the intangible harm can be established. This development is particularly relevant in the context of wedding organizer disputes, where the unique and non-repeatable nature of the contracted event means that service failures cannot be remedied simply through financial restitution.

[Alwi, Tjoanda and Radjawane \(2023\)](#) confirm that Indonesian courts have increasingly acknowledged the legitimacy of non-pecuniary damage claims in professional service disputes, provided the claimant can establish a clear causal link between the wrongful conduct and the resulting intangible harm. [Djtmiko et al. \(2022\)](#) further explain that wedding events possess significant personal and social value that courts should take into account when determining appropriate compensation. At the national level, [Djtmiko et al. \(2022\)](#) and [Alwi et al. \(2023\)](#) observe that although the formal recognition of non-pecuniary damages in Indonesia remains relatively limited, there is a growing judicial tendency to apply principles of fairness and proportionality when assessing damages in cases where contractual breaches produce significant emotional and social consequences. Taken together, these studies indicate that the assessment of damages in disputes involving wedding organizer services should encompass both pecuniary and non-pecuniary losses. Accordingly, courts should evaluate not only the economic consequences of contractual breaches but also the unique emotional and social significance of wedding events when determining appropriate remedies and compensation.

#### **4.4 Findings - Relationship between Wedding Organizers (WO) and Vendors**

##### *4.4.1 Delayed Payments as a Source of Disputes*

In a majority of vendor-related dispute patterns, the primary trigger involved delayed or failed payments by wedding organizers. In these cases, vendors had already fulfilled their contractual obligations, but the funds received from customers were not properly disbursed by the wedding organizer as agreed. These findings are consistent with [Rahman, Hakim and Wisudawan \(2022\)](#), who note that vendors in the event industry occupy a vulnerable legal position because they do not have a direct contractual relationship with the end client, making them dependent on the wedding organizer's financial integrity. [Similarly, Paendong and Taunaumang \(2022\)](#) find that weak financial transparency significantly increases the risk of financial disputes between event organizers and vendors. [Mubinda et al. \(2023\)](#), in their direct case study of an Indonesian wedding organizer, demonstrate that the absence of clear financial provisions in cooperation agreements between organizers and vendors is a primary source of payment disputes. [Hossain et al. \(2024\)](#) emphasize that financial transparency serves as a key indicator of accountability and reduces both civil disputes and their escalation into criminal proceedings.

##### *4.4.2 Escalation of Disputes into Criminal Proceedings*

In a number of the illustrative dispute patterns considered, both vendors and customers reported wedding organizers on allegations of fund misappropriation. However, further examination suggests that not all scenarios would satisfy the legal element of mens rea (criminal intent). This finding supports the argument of [Isman \(2021\)](#), who notes that many contractual disputes are escalated into criminal complaints due to a limited understanding of legal distinctions between civil and criminal liability among the public. [Yonatan et al. \(2024\)](#) similarly observe that the criminalization of contractual disputes in Indonesian service industries is a recurring phenomenon driven by public unfamiliarity with civil remedies and the perceived deterrent effect of police reports, yet courts have consistently emphasized that the failure to perform a contractual obligation does not automatically constitute a criminal offense absent evidence of fraudulent intent from the outset of the agreement. Overall, these findings indicate that financial mismanagement and weak payment structures are central drivers of disputes between wedding organizers and vendors, and that clearer financial governance mechanisms are essential to reduce both civil disputes and unnecessary criminalization of contractual conflicts.

#### **4.5 Liability for the Actions of the Organizing Committee**

The analysis suggests that, in all scenarios considered, liability was never imposed personally on individual members of the organizing committee. Instead, responsibility consistently rested with the wedding organizer as a business entity. This pattern reinforces the application of the doctrine of vicarious liability, under which an employer may be held legally responsible for the acts or omissions of individuals acting under its direction and within the scope of their assigned duties.

This finding is consistent with the analysis of Mohd [Safri et al. \(2023\)](#) and [Puryanto et al. \(2021\)](#), both of whom emphasize that liability in service industries remains structurally attached to the organizing entity whenever it exercises supervisory control over personnel performing assigned tasks, irrespective of the temporary, freelance, or project-based nature of their engagement. At the national level, [Mihardja et al. \(2020\)](#) confirm that vicarious liability under Indonesian civil law is determined by the existence of a principal-subordinate relationship rather than the formal classification of employment, while [Puryanto et al. \(2021\)](#) observe that Indonesian courts assess the degree of supervision and instruction as primary indicators in determining employer responsibility. Where the wedding organizer exercises control over the planning, coordination, and execution of the event, liability is generally attributed to the organizer rather than to individual staff members.

Overall, these findings demonstrate that responsibility for operational failures within wedding events is structurally attached to the wedding organizer as an entity, thereby ensuring legal certainty and protecting third parties from the fragmentation of liability among individual workers or committee members. Sani [Pratiwi, Pujiastuti and Arifin \(2024\)](#) further observe that this structural attribution of liability in project-based service industries is essential for guaranteeing that aggrieved parties have a legally accountable entity against which to direct their claims, rather than being left without effective recourse against dispersed and informally engaged personnel.

#### **4.6 Discussion**

##### **4.6.1 Breach of Contract from a Civil Law Perspective**

Based on the findings of this study, breach of contract (*wanprestasi*) constitutes the primary legal basis for holding wedding organizers liable toward both customers and vendors. Under Article 1243 of the Indonesian Civil Code, failure to perform contractual obligations as agreed gives rise to an obligation to compensate the injured party for the resulting losses. [Abidin and Kahpi \(2021\)](#) emphasize that clearly drafted and detailed contractual provisions are essential for minimizing disputes in professional service agreements, as contracts that fail to specify responsibilities, performance standards, and procedures for handling operational changes create uncertainty regarding the parties' rights and obligations. [Similarly, Iwanti and Taun \(2022\)](#) observe that many contractual disputes in Indonesia arise from the absence of detailed provisions governing the supervision and accountability of service personnel, making it difficult to determine responsibility when operational failures occur during performance.

From an international perspective, [Sugiyono \(2024\)](#) recommends the inclusion of risk allocation clauses in event management contracts to clearly define the distribution of responsibilities among parties. [Torsello and Winkler \(2020\)](#) similarly find that in common law jurisdictions, risk allocation clauses in event management contracts are increasingly treated as standard practice, serving to reduce ambiguity regarding liability for staff negligence, vendor non-performance, and force majeure events, and that their absence is treated by courts as indicative of inadequate contractual governance. Such clauses play an important role in minimizing uncertainty, preventing disputes, and ensuring that liability is assigned in a fair and predictable manner when contractual failures occur. Overall, these findings indicate that contractual clarity, proper risk allocation, and strict adherence to the principle of *pacta sunt servanda* are essential in reducing the incidence of breach of contract disputes in the wedding organizer industry.

Nevertheless, this study's findings diverge somewhat from the risk-allocation framework proposed by [Sugiyono \(2024\)](#) in the Indonesian contract law context: whereas Sugiyono found that risk-allocation clauses primarily reduce disputes between event staff and operational teams, the scenarios considered

here suggest that ambiguity most often arises between the wedding organizer and the customer directly, indicating that the Indonesian wedding organizer industry may require contractual standardization at the client-facing level before staff-level allocation becomes the binding constraint.

#### *4.6.2 Application of Vicarious Liability*

From the perspective of Article 1367 of the Indonesian Civil Code, wedding organizers are legally responsible for the acts of their organizing committee members as long as such acts occur within the scope of assigned work. This study supports the findings of Mohd [Safri et al. \(2023\)](#), who argue that vicarious liability extends beyond formally employed workers to include individuals integrated into the business operations of the principal, provided that the requisite degree of control and supervision can be established. [Mubinda et al. \(2023\)](#) similarly demonstrate in the Indonesian event organizer context that the organizing entity bears primary external liability for the conduct of its vendors and crew, with the formal nature of the contractual arrangement serving as a secondary consideration. Accordingly, the argument that organizing committee members are merely freelancers is insufficient to eliminate the civil liability of the wedding organizer as a legal entity, a position affirmed by [Mihardja et al. \(2020\)](#) in their analysis of vicarious liability doctrine in Indonesian civil law. [Atmoko and Noviriska \(2024\)](#) further reinforce this position by noting that contractual clauses purporting to exclude the organizing entity's liability for the acts of its personnel are generally unenforceable where such personnel operate under the practical direction and coordination of the organizer, as such exclusions would undermine the protective purpose of the vicarious liability doctrine under Article 1367 of the Indonesian Civil Code.

#### *4.6.3 Financial Transparency as a Preventive Factor in Dispute Resolution*

The analysis suggests that inadequate financial transparency is one of the primary triggers of conflict in the dispute patterns considered, consistent with the financial-governance mechanisms discussed in Section 2.3. The recurring absence of structured payment safeguards in these scenarios reinforces the relevance of escrow and progress-payment systems as preventive tools, rather than merely confirming their theoretical desirability. [Likewise, Hossain et al. \(2024\)](#) emphasize that strong corporate governance in service industries must prioritize financial accountability, transparent documentation, and regular internal audits as core operational principles, thereby reducing the risk of both civil disputes and criminal allegations.

In the Indonesian context, [Rahman, Hakim and Wisudawan \(2022\)](#) and [Isman \(2021\)](#) highlight that legal awareness and improved administrative transparency can help prevent the escalation of civil disputes into criminal proceedings. [Hapsari and Setiyawan \(2023\)](#) further demonstrate that vendors in event organizer agreements are particularly vulnerable to financial misconduct and that the implementation of clear payment schedules, written acknowledgements of fund receipt, and periodic financial reporting are effective mechanisms for protecting vendor rights and reducing payment-related disputes. This finding nonetheless raises a tension not fully resolved in the literature: while escrow and progress-payment mechanisms are widely recommended, the existing literature offers little evidence that wedding organizers have voluntarily adopted such mechanisms, suggesting that the gap lies less in the absence of known solutions than in the absence of regulatory or contractual incentives compelling their adoption.

#### *4.6.4 Distinguishing Breach of Contract from Criminal Offenses*

A key issue in this study is the distinction between civil breach of contract (*wanprestasi*) and criminal conduct. The analysis suggests that not all failures in payment distribution or contractual performance constitute criminal embezzlement. The element of *mens rea* (criminal intent) must be proven objectively and cannot be presumed solely from non-performance. Studies by [Isman \(2021\)](#) and [Hafiz and Sukirno \(2024\)](#) indicate that courts generally exercise caution in criminalizing contractual disputes, recognizing that the element of *mens rea* must be established through clear and objective evidence of intentional misappropriation rather than inferred solely from non-performance. As a result, civil dispute resolution mechanisms, particularly negotiation and mediation, are considered more appropriate in the majority of cases unless such evidence exists. [Paendong and Taunaumang \(2022\)](#) confirm that mediation in the context of civil business disputes in Indonesia offers a faster,

cost-efficient, and relationship-preserving alternative to litigation, making it the preferred first avenue for resolving contractual failures in the service sector. [Tamba and Mukharom \(2023\)](#) additionally find that the integration of mandatory pre-litigation mediation clauses in professional service contracts substantially reduces case loads in Indonesian commercial courts and shortens the overall timeline for dispute resolution, making such clauses particularly valuable in event management agreements where the parties have an ongoing business relationship. [Ariadin \(2023\)](#) similarly observes that the concurrent pursuit of civil and criminal remedies in Indonesian contract disputes is increasingly scrutinized by courts, which have shown a tendency to prioritize civil dispute resolution mechanisms where the evidence does not clearly establish fraudulent intent, thereby reinforcing the boundary between wanprestasi and perbuatan melawan hukum as distinct legal categories with separate evidentiary thresholds.

#### *4.6.5 An Ideal Liability Model for Wedding Organizers toward Vendors and Customers Based on the Actions of the Organizing Committee*

Building directly on the recurring legal patterns identified in Sections 4.2 through 4.5, an ideal liability model for the wedding organizer industry can be formulated around three pillars that correspond to the three principal sources of dispute found in this study. Because the majority of dispute patterns identified in this study originated from ambiguous or incomplete contractual provisions, the contractual pillar requires agreements that explicitly define the scope of work, technical specifications, payment schedules, amendment procedures, force majeure clauses, and the allocation of liability for the organizing committee's acts.

This directly addresses the contractual ambiguity identified as the dominant cause of dispute in this study's findings. Consistent with the finding that liability was never imposed on individual committee members but consistently attached to the wedding organizer as an entity, the vicarious liability pillar affirms that the organizer bears primary external liability for acts committed within the scope of assigned duties, while retaining an internal right of recourse against negligent personnel under internal agreements. This is operationalized through a documented organizational structure, written SOPs, and clear reporting lines.

Given that the predominant pattern in vendor-related disputes stemmed from payment mismanagement, this pillar requires segregation of client and operational funds, staged (progress) payment systems, and regular internal audits. Disputes arising despite these safeguards should be resolved through a tiered mechanism consisting of negotiation, mediation, arbitration (where contractually agreed), and litigation, with criminal reporting reserved for cases in which clear evidence of fraudulent intent (*mens rea*) exists, consistent with the distinction this study draws between civil breach and criminal conduct. Compensation under this model should remain proportional to fault and harm, recognizing non-pecuniary losses where reasonably substantiated.

## **5. Conclusions**

### **5.1 Conclusion**

This study set out to answer four research questions. First, regarding the civil liability of wedding organizers toward customers, the findings confirm that organizers remain liable under breach of contract (Article 1243 of the Indonesian Civil Code) for technical negligence committed by the organizing committee, regardless of the committee's freelance or project-based status. Second, regarding liability toward vendors as third parties, the analysis suggests that non-payment after a vendor's performance constitutes a contractual breach, though such failures should not be automatically criminalized absent proof of *mens rea*. Third, regarding the application of vicarious liability, this study confirms that liability under Article 1367 of the Indonesian Civil Code attaches to the wedding organizer as an entity whenever it exercises supervisory control over the committee, irrespective of formal employment status.

Fourth, regarding the distinction between breach of contract and criminal conduct, the analysis suggests that courts and complainants alike require clearer criteria, chiefly documented evidence of intentional misappropriation, to prevent the unwarranted criminalization of ordinary contractual

failures. The principal contribution of this study lies in synthesizing these four findings into a three-pillar liability model consisting of comprehensive contracting, accountable vicarious liability, and transparent financial governance, which has not previously been articulated specifically for the project-based wedding organizer industry, thereby extending the doctrine of vicarious liability beyond its conventional employer and employee application.

From a policy perspective, these findings suggest that the Indonesian government and relevant industry associations should consider developing a standardized contractual framework for wedding organizer services, incorporating minimum requirements for financial transparency, SOP documentation, and dispute resolution mechanisms. Such regulatory guidance would not only reduce the incidence of civil disputes but also provide clearer criteria for law enforcement in distinguishing contractual failures from criminal misconduct, thereby contributing to a more predictable and fair legal environment for all stakeholders in the event management industry.

### **5.2 Research Limitations**

This study has certain limitations, as it employs a qualitative approach based on normative legal analysis of statutory provisions and existing scholarly literature, without conducting direct interviews with business actors, vendors, or law enforcement officials. As a result, the practical dynamics occurring in the field may not be fully and comprehensively captured, particularly in a way that reflects the lived experiences of stakeholders or provides measurable quantitative insights.

### **5.3 Suggestions and Directions for Future Research**

Future research is recommended to adopt a more empirical approach, such as in-depth interviews or surveys involving wedding organizers, vendors, customers, and law enforcement officials. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how liability and responsibility are actually applied in practice. In addition, comparative studies with event industry regulations in other countries are encouraged in order to develop more effective standards for contracts and governance systems that are better aligned with international best practices.

### **Acknowledgement**

The author would like to express sincere appreciation and gratitude to all parties who have provided academic support, scholarly references, and constructive feedback during the preparation of this research, enabling its successful completion and contributing to the development of civil law studies, particularly in the field of wedding organizer professional services.

### **Author Contributions**

KP contributed to the conceptualization, literature review, legal material collection, data analysis, and manuscript drafting. S contributed to the development of the research methodology, interpretation of legal findings, critical review, and manuscript editing. MYA contributed to the supervision of the research process, validation of legal arguments, coordination of revisions, and final approval of the manuscript. All authors contributed to the development of the civil liability framework, reviewed the manuscript, and approved the final version for publication.

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