

## Construction of Feminism and Gender Equality in Social Media

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### Abstract

*the criticism that produced BPFA in the Beijing Conference did not necessarily pave the way for gender equality. From the report "The Global Gap Index 2020," it is known that Indonesia got a score of 0.70 and was ranked 85th out of 153 countries, and it was also said that there had been no change in value since 2018. The feminism movement on Instagram with the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account is interesting to study because this account often provides education about feminism and gender equality. The role of the media in presenting women and men according to patriarchal standards, which was then slowly straightened out by the feminist movement with the use of new media, became an exciting thing to study. The purpose of this research is to see how the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account does in expressing gender justice through uploaded content and how they respond to the gender stigma that has existed so far. On this basis, researchers are interested in exploring feminist content campaigned on this account. The researcher uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a critical paradigm to explore in-depth and detailed social phenomena. Feminist communication theory and liberal feminist are used in this study. The data in this research is screenshots of feminism and gender equality content, captions on the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account, and supporting data relevant to the research. The data analysis technique uses Sara Mills critical discourse analysis to see how the position of the actors is represented in the text. The study results found that the two main issues raised, namely the issue of feminism and gender equality, were an effort carried out by @indonesiabutuhfeminis as the subject of this research to involve the community in the formation of a society that is aware of gender equality. Through the two main issues described the construction of feminism and gender equality, they then rearrange the concept of feminism and gender equality from the perspective of women and men.*

### Keywords

critical discourse analysis;  
feminism, gender equality;  
social media construction



## I. Introduction

In a scientific forum, the women's movement was first present in the Netherlands in 1785. Later in the 19th century, it developed and received much attention from European women. This women's movement gave birth to feminism, coined by Charles Fourier in 1837. The first wave of feminism occurred when John Stuart Mill published *The Subjection of Women* (1869) and became the forerunner of feminism in the next wave (Kristeva, 2015). The women's movement in America and Europe also impacts women's activities in Indonesia. Kartini, Cut Nyak Dien, Dewi Sartika are some of the many pioneers of the women's movement in Indonesia. At that time, they wanted to take part in the struggle to defend their homeland regardless of sex or gender (Suhada, 2021).

Differences in sex between men and women lead to the emergence of different roles between the two, which are constructed by society. Women outwardly have maternal reproductive organs such as childbirth, breastfeeding, pregnancy, giving rise to inherent roles such as nurturing and educating children. This becomes a problem when the unclear structure occurs due to gender differences and combined gender roles (Puspitawati, 2012). Men are seen as the opposite of women and are described as intense, cannot cry, and are leaders. This male gender stereotype makes him have to work harder because of society's expectations by men who are considered more substantial.

The marginalization of women in various parts of the world became the main topic reported at the Women's Conference in Beijing. At the meeting held in 1955, the produced "Beijing Platform for Action" (BPFA), a critique of discrimination against women in various countries such as women and access to education, women in poverty, women's health, violence experienced by women, situations conflicts involving women, women and the economy, women under decision-making power, women's participation, women's rights, women in the media, women and environmental conditions, and the fate of girls (Giri, 2017). From the report "The Global Gap Index 2020," it is known that Indonesia got a score of 0.70 and was ranked 85th out of 153 countries, and it was also said that there had been no change in value since 2018 (Wulandari, 2020).

Patriarchal culture makes women and men put their personalities according to the standards that exist in society (Arief Hidayat, 2020). The gender equality movement that has started long ago makes today's women feel that gender equality has been created. However, in reality, women are still under the shadow of men (Suwastini, 2013).

The presence of social media in the current era influences communication in the public sphere, especially in shaping the opinions of its users. An easy, cheap, and fast way of interacting makes many communities, agencies, institutions, and individuals use social media as a medium of expression and provide information (Setiadi, 2016). Social media, which is categorized as new media, certainly attracts the interest of many people and opens opportunities for those who want to start a social movement. According to Robert Misel, the social movement is a belief and action people take to express or resist societal changes (Mulyadi, 2015). Feminism aims to give birth to an alteration of injustice in the social system of society that women and men have equal rights regardless of their gender (Andesti, 2021). In selecting and sorting products and making purchasing decisions based on their search results through social media (Gunawan, 2020). Meanwhile, social media is a broader term. Social media is a web-based platform that allows workers to communicate messages to specific co-workers or broadcast messages to everyone in an organization, including sharing information files with each other (Leonardi in Marbun, 2020).

## **II. Research Methods**

In this study, the researcher uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a critical paradigm that aims to critically explore in-depth and detailed information related to social phenomena that occur to reveal the actual structure. The qualitative approach is used in this study because it has advantages in terms of convenience and can be studied directly with a scale that can be interpreted (Machmud, 2018). The aim is to gain meaning, concepts, and the possibility of developing new theories. Qualitative descriptive is used in this study to describe and explain existing facts, both natural and artificial, which increasingly views the nature, value, and interrelationships between activities. The critical paradigm is used in this study to criticize transformation, social structure, social empowerment, and emancipation. The critical paradigm tries to constantly question the conditions or situations in society (Ishaya, 2016).

Following the problem, the qualitative approach and critical paradigm align with social criticism regarding feminism and gender equality expressed in the @indonesiabutihfeminis content. The researcher intends to reveal the construction of feminism and gender equality for both women and men from the @indonesiabutihfeminis account in terms of captions and image content uploaded.

### III. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Results

The data found by researchers during July – September 2021 were then selected and analyzed according to the issues raised, namely feminism and gender equality, on the Instagram account @indonesiabutihfeminis. The findings are then analyzed using three levels of analysis by Sara Mills, starting from word-level analysis, sentence-level analysis, and discourse-level analysis. The results of the study are described as follows.

#### a. Word Level Analysis and Sentence Level Analysis

##### Issue 1: Feminism

To describe what research objects fall into this category, they are described in the table following.

**Table 1.** Feminism Content Category

No	Date of Content Uploaded	Selected Words	Location of Findings
	July 2, 2021	Patriarchy <b>oppresses</b> us all. Not just a few, but we all	said selected uttered by the narrator in the video uploaded and is supported by a caption in the upload
	July 4, 2021	" <i><b>Don't go to high school, sis, poor boys feel low.</b></i> "	said elected contained in the content uploaded
	July 21, 2021	" <i>the wife has the right to say no, because the body is <b>hers</b> do not belong to the husband.</i> "	the word was elected contained in the content uploaded
	July 28, 2021	Women have the right to be angry at <b>the injustice</b> of it	the word chosen contained in the column posts (caption) uploaded
	August 30, 2021	No, they want to be treated <b>equally.</b>	The narrator speaks the chosen word in the uploaded video
	August 31, 2021	Women's <b>fitriah</b> is to educate, teach, and spread God's verses.	The chosen word is contained in the uploaded content and then responds from the @indonesiabutihfeminis

			account
.	August 31, 2021	Feminism wants everyone to be able (able and entitled) to <b>decide</b> what to do carried out on their lives and bodies	The narrator speaks selected words in the uploaded video.

From the content that has been grouped in the table, it can be seen that the selected uploads are uploads that focus on the issue of feminism that is happening all around us. Feminism is a movement that was initially intended to fight for women from oppression and for women to get justice. Nevertheless, over time, the feminist movement experienced an expansion the movement so that feminism became a movement to fight for justice for all human beings regardless of their gender. Feminism strives for the equality of women and men. However, feminism creates a social structure free from class and caste divisions, oppression, and gender bias.

In the upload on July 2, 2021, the word "oppresses" is interpreted according to the KBBI as the meaning of arbitrary treatment from one party to another, which has a detrimental effect on mistreated people. In the sentence that is highlighted, it shows that women and men alike can become victims of patriarchal oppression. Women have been seen as second-class creatures, so they have to submit to men and often collide with norms set by society, such as women must be able to cook, speak soft words, not wear tattoos, have piercings, and so on. This condition aligns with what was voiced by liberal feminists, where individual rights should be a priority. Every human being should have the freedom to determine what he wants as long as it does not harm others. Liberal feminists also emphasize that every human being should implement personal autonomy in his life (Arivia, 1998). Liberal feminists based on The Declaration of Independence also state that women and men are born equal. This declaration became the basis for a feminist figure named Elizabeth Cady to write a Declaration of Sentiments and Resolution, which resulted in a women's rights convention. The convention demanded that liberal principles be applied to women and men (Arivia, 2003).

July 4, 2021, highlighted the word "don't go" which is prohibited from doing or doing something. In the chosen sentence, women are prohibited from having higher education because men may be afraid to approach women who have higher education. One of the portraits of patriarchy is that men must be "more" than women. When women have a degree or higher education, women will be criticized because they do not comply with the rules of patriarchy. In this post, @indonesiabutuhfeminis views the uploaded content as something that should not be women's fault if they have a higher education than men. Women who choose to continue their education to a higher level have no responsibility for men who feel inferior. Feminist experts assume that the existing depiction of women is based on a dominant gender ideology (Rofiq, 2018).

On August 31, 2021 the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account uploaded content containing patriarchy and then responded through the caption. In the upload, the word "fitrah," is interpreted according to the view that Islam means something created from birth. When associated with human relations, namely women and men, fitrah refers to men and women distinguished from birth according to their gender. The social order passed down from generation to generation justifies this and is mixed with religious views. Women are considered creatures who must follow men, especially if they are married. Someone who still thinks that being a woman is natural. Their job is to educate children will forever be

subservient to men. They will not have the freedom to express their opinions. In the uploaded content of @indonesiabutihfeminis, they criticize the opinion that the nature of being a woman is to do things that are limited to nurturing and giving lessons to children. In the caption, @indonesiabutihfeminis stated that women are also people who can do everything consciously and know the benefits of the activities they do. Women are not objects that can only be ordered, but women can also think and play a role in what they think is appropriate and can be accounted for.

Still, on the same date, August 31, 2021, @indonesiabutihfeminis uploaded a video about feminism. The chosen word spoken by the narrator in the video is "decide," which means that all humans have the right to determine what is done in their lives. Every woman and man from whom they are born has the same rights, but the social structure of society changes it so that there is a division based on gender. The feminist movement that developed from time to time later became a movement to liberate women and men so that both of them got equality. Feminism seeks to free men and women to determine their way of life regardless of their gender identity. In the sentence spoken by the narrator, namely about feminism which wants everyone to be able to decide what they want to do with their bodies and lives, it shows that in living the life, everyone does not need to worry anymore about the labeling of the inherent gender but instead looks at the gender. Each person's gender identity.

#### Issue 2: Gender Equality

To describe what research objects fall into this category, it is described in the following table.

**Table 2.** Content Category Gender Equality

No	Date of Content Uploaded	Selected Words	Location of Findings
	July 3, 2021	How is it <b>equal</b> if one party has to obey the other?	The selected word is found in the uploaded content
	July 3, 2021	<i>"The best achievement and woman's <b>kodrat</b> is to stay at home."</i>	The selected word is found in the uploaded content
	July 5, 2021	<i>"yuk society <b>fair</b> and friendly with women."</i>	Selected words are contained in the post-column (caption) uploaded
	July 18, 2021	<i>"Women's <b>kodrat</b> is to give birth, breastfeed and menstruate."</i>	Selected words are contained in content that is a question and is responded by @indonesiabutihfeminis.

Selected and grouped the table contains uploaded content that raises the issue of gender equality and satirical sentences aimed at criticizing gender understanding which is still misinterpreted. Public understanding of the concept of gender that is still wrong makes the road to gender equality still a long way to go. Society often interprets gender as the inherent sex of a person since they were born. People only know men of the male gender and women

of the female gender. However, gender and gender are two different things. Gender is something that comes from God since humans are born. At the same time, gender is the nature of a human being formed from the daily roles in society and the identity attached to it. It is undeniable that until now, gender and gender often overlap. Men who behave feminine often get ridiculed because they do not represent manhood. At the same time, women who look tomboyish also get a terrible view because women in the social structure of society are likened to human beings who are full of gentleness. Not everyone can accept the concept of gender. Until now, many people still understand gender as human sex (Artaria, 2016).

Even though the concept of gender equality is a wrong understanding, the understanding of gender equality is still often misinterpreted, so that gender equality is considered an act to put women first or an action aimed at defeating men. Indeed, gender equality, according to R. Valentina (2013), has a goal to produce gender justice while still respecting human rights; carry out specific activities to accelerate the achievement of true equality in all areas; carry out efforts in realizing women's rights to the care of reproductive organs; abolish all forms of discrimination against women; eradicate prejudice; customs and other practices based on the superiority and inferiority of both men and women or the gender roles of women and men (Resti Fauziah, 2015).

The issue of gender equality is found in @indonesiabutihfeminis uploads in the form of text narratives on photos, video content narrations, and explanations in captions. In the upload on July 3, 2021, the chosen word was found, namely "equal" which has a meaning according to the KBBI that no one is higher or lower than the other.

Still, the @indonesiabutihfeminis account uploaded the content of words in photos filled with satirical expressions on the same date. The word "kodrat" became the chosen word which if interpreted according to the KBBI dictionary, means that humans from birth already have a division of roles according to their gender. Women born with reproductive organs and who can give birth are considered weak creatures, so they are placed in homes and do household chores. The account @indonesiabutihfeminis criticizes the notion that women's nature is to stay at home and that this is the best achievement for women. In an equal relationship between husband and wife, there is equal opportunity in carrying out activities outside the home. When women get the doctrine that a good woman is a woman who just stays at home, then there is an unequal relationship. Women should be allowed to carry out activities outside the home, such as doing public work, so that women feel justice. However, specific cultures and religions still maintain a gender bias structure. Women do not get equal relations with men.

On July 5, 2019, there was an upload with "fair" as the chosen word, meaning there is no partiality. In a relationship or relationship, there is no partiality. The word fair is implied in the caption uploaded by @indonesiabutihfeminis with video content discussing the behavior of women who are considered good. Women are constantly arranged to be good individuals according to the standards that apply in society. It is as if a good woman already has criteria such as being calm, diligent in worshipping, covering her genitals, acting soft, clean, fragrant, and a pile of other good behaviors according to what has been formed by the community. However, when women start to speak up, they are called not good women and get label's as rebel women. Therefore, @indonesiabutihfeminis speak up that women have the right to be treated fairly without labeling women's good and bad characteristics. Good women do not always have to be calm or silent. Women also need justice in act and determining what is best for themselves.

On July 18, 2021, the account @indonesiabutihfeminis uploaded satirical content with the chosen word "kodrat." The @indonesiabutihfeminis account has again uploaded a satirical sentence containing satire on patriarchal culture. The patriarchal culture places women as human beings who will complement men. With the ability to conceive, women are

placed in positions that will be dominated. The marginalization of women because of their gender is an act of gender injustice, but it still lasts until now. Through the sentence in the photo, which was then uploaded to the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account, they tried to voice that the role of women is not only to conceive but also to give birth and menstruate. Women born with the nature of the female sex have the right to develop, learn, and participate in all activities regardless of their gender. The labeling of women still revolves around their reproductive activities even though women also have the right not to have children. However, there are still people who judge women who decide things that are outside the habit of the social structure of society. The @indonesiabutuhfeminis account uploaded this satirical content to show that women's choices also need to be respected and not judged.

## b. Discourse Level Analysis

### 1. Role/Character

How words are formed and arranged so that readers can translate and understand messages in the media is reviewed in the role element. The characteristics that appear in the text participate in the description of the roles of men and women in the eyes of society. Stereotypes of men and women arise from comparisons from social groups to men and women who are right and wrong according to them. The division based on generalization to one gender creates a stigma. There is a division of roles between men and women. The enduring stereotypes in the social structure of society then have an influence, one of which is gender inequality due to the inherent gender view of women and men.

One of the characterizations of gender views in @indonesiabutuhfeminis Instagram uploads appears in the selected content and can be seen in the image below.



**Figure 1.** Gender Characterization

The image above is a video content reposted by the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account. There is a picture of 2 women wearing hijab, one wearing a modern hijab and the other wearing a syar'i hijab. These two women both cover their aurat but still have differences in the clothes or attributes they wear. From the infographic contained in the uploaded content, it can be analyzed that the stereotype of good women based on religion is presented in the uploaded content of the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account. Even though women are already wearing the hijab, they are still divided again based on the attributes they wear. Women who use syar'i attributes are seen as the best women.

In contrast, women who wear modern hijabs will be seen as not as good as women who wear syar'i attributes. Therefore, this stereotype can start from something organized with

specific interests. When it has spread in the structure of society, the notion of good and bad can be generalized by each individual.

## 2. Fragmentation

The uploaded video states that women are likened to fried bananas (*pisang goreng*) and *lapis legit*. Women are likened to objects that are men's choice of what to wear. Discrediting women as fried bananas is an act of sexual objectification in which women's bodies are treated as objects that can be enjoyed through sight and touch. Women who are likened to food are then followed by society so that more and more men equate women as objects. When women are angry with the objectified treatment, some people think that they have been internalized due to something that has been allowed to keep happening. From this, it can be said that people still judge women only from what they look like, not from what women have, for example, their personality and intelligence. It is as if women can already be considered good just because of what they wear. Their competence is marginalized, and they end up being objectified by women.

## 3. Focalization

Building the reader's sympathy is part of focalization. In research on video content uploaded to the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account, there are words such as "*pisang goreng*" and "*lapis legit*," which refer to women to make female readers into groups on the topics discussed. In the caption, the word "object" appears, which refers to women who are the issue in the discussion in the video. The woman who becomes the object is an analogy of owning a woman's body based on cheap food and expensive food.

The caption written by @indonesiabutuhfeminis is an effort to speak up the objectification of women so that women can get out of the dominant mindset and operations that befall women. It can be said that women are still trapped in the dichotomy of good women and bad women, which makes them fall into the one category of them.

## 4. Schemata

The involvement of several things to observe is the schemata in the final analysis that raises who is preparing the dialogue and solving problems and comments. The @indonesiabutuhfeminis account carries out the dialogue on the issue of feminism and gender equality. The solution to the problem presented by the @indonesiabutuhfeminis is that through education, women and men have the right to control their respective bodies. In the content uploaded by the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account, they reject the grouping of the roles of women and men and the grouping of women or men who are considered reasonable and harmful. Comments from netizens that appeared based on patriarchy were answered wisely according to the issue of feminism raised. Most of the comments that appear agree that every human being should have equality in life. Readers of the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account are readers who have their position and are interested in feminism and gender equality. Through schemata level analysis, the position of the writer-reader who agrees with the statement on the uploaded content can be seen. The subject in the uploaded content is @indonesiabutuhfeminis. At the same time, the object displayed is a figure who is described as a character that can be managed, judged, and is in the judgment of others.

## 3.2 Discussion

The research found two categories that will be discussed according to the substance of the research, namely the feminist movement, which voices about discrimination against women and men, and equal justice. The feminist movement that continues to run from time to

time increases with new media that help spread efforts to fight for gender equality despite the many obstacles faced, such as clashing with culture and religion. The research findings described several aspects of the women's movement in straightening the existing gender stigma.

### **a. Construction of Feminism**

The existing patriarchy and running side-by-side with society's social structure are considered a culture that binds gender roles. People who are used to the gender roles shown through their parents, family, and society then accept these gender roles, thus blurring the true definition of gender. Although many feminist movements and activists are currently actively voicing women's rights, patriarchal practices are still ongoing. They can be seen in economic, political, social, and cultural activities (Ade & Dessy, 2017). In the content uploaded to the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account, it can be seen that patriarchal practices that still exist in society, such as women, do not need higher education because it will make it difficult for men to approach. This kind of doctrine makes women marginalized even though access to education is now open. The account @indonesiabutuhfeminis, as an account full of feminism movements, tries to voice that women should not be intimidated by the thick doctrine of patriarchy. In line with liberal feminist thinking, which is aggressively raising the issue of access to education, they assume that every human being has the right to determine his or her own life. This feminist movement focuses on women's freedom and gives women the most comprehensive opportunities in community life (Pangestuti & Malau, 2021).

The content chosen in this study shows the expression of women's bodies. This stigma is present on women's good and bad behavior based on culture, similar feelings and justice, objectification of women, and human freedom in determining their lives. Uploading the content is included in liberal feminism. They want equal rights as fellow human beings even though they are different from their gender. However, there is no marginalization in one of them. Information about women uploaded to the media generally still emphasizes women as figures who do domestic tasks rather than the capacity of women who can compete with men. The image of women shown in the media still carries their figure as humans under domination. In social construction, women are labeled as good or bad based on the media's display (Asry, 2018).

### **b. Gender Equality**

The steps taken by the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account, which is aggressively uploading feminism and gender equality content, are actions to make people aware of being more gender-sensitive. The existence of many followers on the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account makes public relations, and the feminist movement put to good use to slowly change the perception of gender stereotypes in today's society. Uploaded content that mentions a lot of women's rights and demands for gender equality is carried out openly using Instagram social media. The desired effect is that the voice of gender equality can be reached more broadly. Efforts to realize the equality of human rights that are carried out continuously by the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account are one way to realize gender equality. Gender equality, which is also used by the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account, is about accepting that women and men are free to determine their lives as long as they do not violate applicable laws. There is respect for fellow human beings.

Koentjaraningrat in Susanto said that realizing gender equality is not something that cannot be done even though patriarchal practices have been going on for a long time. Creating gender equality is a long process that cannot be done all at once. Changing culture needs to be carried out starting from mental changes and taking a long time. Education is the

main trick to creating gender justice so that slowly the existing patriarchal practices in society can fade (Susanto, 2015). Therefore, education and straightening of gender understanding in values and norms need to be pursued through gender equality forums.

#### IV. Conclusion

The construction of feminism and gender equality, which is uploaded via Instagram @indonesiabutuhfeminis, is done by raising several issues in society and issues currently being discussed in the hope that gender justice can be realized and become something that usually happens. Instagram social media is a medium used to voice equality between men and women because of its easy and fast access and reach. The use of satirical words and sentences is intended as a form of protest against the injustice, hoping that it will touch and be caught more easily by people. The two main issues raised, namely, the issue of feminism and gender equality, are an effort carried out by @indonesiabutuhfeminis as the subject of this research to involve the community in the formation of a society that is aware of gender equality. Through the two main issues that have been described, the construction of feminism and gender equality, they then rearrange the concept of feminism and gender equality from the perspective of women and men. In addition, the views of women and men who are used as objects can be slowly dissipated through a narrative that is built as an awareness of the ownership rights of each person's body.

The allegation that feminism makes women dissidents and wants to compete with men has finally triggered the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account to straighten things out and criticize what the social structure of society builds on the position of women and men. According to society, the standards on what is good and evil about women and men both in behavior and in the division of roles are the leading cause of the construction of feminism and gender equality in the content uploaded by the @indonesiabutuhfeminis account. The issue often raised is about controlling women in their actions or attitudes. Women seem to be limited in expressing what they want and regulating women's clothing which is always a matter of good or bad and inappropriate. Women are controlled based on their biology (gender), making @indonesiabutuhfeminis create content about feminism and gender equality. It is a form of concern for women's rights, which is limited and manifested in content uploaded educate that women also have the right to their lives.

Women who voice their opinions and want equal relations are considered women who cannot be regulated and controlled. People who still adhere to a patriarchal culture feel that feminism and gender equality keep women from nature. If we look further, the discourse of gender equality will make women more responsible for their life choices. Both women and men who are allowed to express what they want to do will make them feel ownership of themselves and free from pressure and the views of others on them. The freedom of women and men to show their qualifications has collided with the culture that exists in society so that in doing something, they will inevitably face other people's views, oppression, and objectification of themselves.

The phenomenon of the liberation of women and men in the construction of feminism always brings pros and cons and needs more discussion. What is good and bad for women and men has always been a debate because people support equality between the two. Some groups want to place women and men according to the sex they are born with. Through the account, @indonesiabutuhfeminis is an account that acts as a supporter of equality for women and men regardless of their gender so that education about feminism and gender equality can be accessed and understood by a broad audience.

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