

GENDER NORMS ON INSTAGRAM @KALIS.MARDIASIH: A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS BY ROLAND BARTHES

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Abstract. Gender norms serve as social constructs that regulate, establish ideal standards, and set expectations for the behavior of specific genders. These norms are socially constructed and vary depending on social, cultural, and temporal conditions. They significantly influence individuals' thoughts, interactions, understanding, and emotions within various social units, such as family, friends, society, workplace, media, and even government policies. The @kalis.mardiasih Instagram account features two posts depicting gender norms for women and men. This research aims to elucidate the meaning of these gender norm posts on the @kalis.mardiasih account. The research methodology employs qualitative research, utilizing Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis technique. The study explores how humanity attributes meaning to things through three levels of signification: denotation, connotation, and myth. To achieve the research objective, the researcher analyzes the sign systems accompanying the two posts related to gender norms for women and men as understood by society. The discussion in this research will address how the discourse on gender norms applies in society and how these norms impact issues in the lives of both women and men.

Keywords: gender norms, semiotic analysis, instagram, @kalis.mardiasih.

INTRODUCTION

We are now entering an era of technology that allows us to send and receive information very easily. With the existence of technology, it can nullify the barriers that limit us in receiving and sending information. Even technological advances have entered the social aspect, namely with the emergence of social media as a result of the development of technology itself so that the delivery of ideas and information does not have to be through face-to-face in one place, but simply by utilizing social media to convey messages widely.

Media culture, which is characterized by the use of technology-based media, places us as part of a media-saturated society, a society that is heavily influenced or dependent on media, which is often in the form of high technology. Banner (2005: 75) explains the concept of media culture as a media-saturated culture or even born from a particular media technology. This identifies the understanding that the media has an increasingly fundamental role in directing, shaping, and even creating daily habits. Thus, it can be said that the development of the media has a relationship with the development of life in society. The ease of communication facilities provided by the internet makes social media a forum for free speech among its followers, which is a practice of free communication in uploading status, comments, criticism, and so on. (Sukirmiyadi, Sholihatin, & Denhas, 2018 : 1380).

Social media users can easily participate in sharing forums. Communication media that are widely used and growing so rapidly today include social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Path, WhatsApp, Instagram, Line, Telegram and others. A number of social media provide various kinds of convenience in communicating with various features embedded in them.

Instagram is one type of social media that is currently popular in the world. Quoting from the book JACK MA Thoughts, Actions, Business Messages that Go Global by T.S. ARUNDA (Arunda, 2020), Instagram comes from the words "Insta" and "Gram". The meaning of Insta is taken from the term instant or fast and easy while Gram comes from telegram which is associated as a medium for sending fast information. The definition of Instagram according to the book Instagram for Digital

Photography and Creative Business by Jubilee Enterprise, is a community that shares photos between one member and another from all over the world. The Instagram app is similar to a giant gallery. Users can see other people's work and eventually create a network of friends. In the Instagram application, there are various features, one of which is the Instagram feed. The Instagram Feed feature can be filled by its users with photos, videos, and even images containing text. This Instagram feed contains content with various themes, depending on the orientation of the user.

Kalis Mardiasih is a young Muslim writer and activist who campaigns for Indonesian diversity and gender equality in Islamic discourse. She writes a weekly column for several digital media, including detik.com, the largest online digital media in Indonesia. Her article Don't Let Women Left Behind was nominated for the 2018 Anugerah Swara Saraswati Award from the Indonesian Women's Coalition for Justice and Democracy categorized as the best online media journalism essay. She has published four books that sold more than 20 thousand copies across the country titled: *Berislam Seperti kanak-kanak* (Menjadi Muslim seolah-olah Anda Adalah Seorang Anak), *Muslimah yang Diperdebatkan* (The Contested Muslimah), *Hijrah Jangan Jauh-Jauh Nanti Nyasar* (Never Hijrah Too Far: You Might Get Lost!), dan *Sisterfillah, You'll Never Be Alone!* (Mardiasih, 2023).

Kalis runs her independent class @kelas.kalis which has traveled to cities across Indonesia and focuses on Islamic digital media literacy and the gendered impact of religious attitudes on women. With the Gusdurian National Network, she maps and analyzes challenges, facilitates trainings, and produces content for Indonesia Rumah Bersama in response to the rise of hate speech on digital media. Kalis speaks about everyday issues relevant to young people in language they understand, and she is also known as one of the few Muslim women with the courage to speak out against religious orthodoxy when it does not respect the rights of women and girls. She is proud to be a Muslim feminist.

One of the content uploaded by Kalis Mardiasih on her Instagram is related to posters of male gender norms and female gender norms. The poster contains symbols and text that explain the symbols in the form of images. In this article, the upload on Instagram @kalis.mardiasih will be analyzed using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory.

Roland Barthes developed the semiotic theory established by Ferdinand De Saussure. As a linguist, Ferdinand De Saussure applied the concept of semiotics only at the denotative level. According to Ferdinand De Saussure, the sign in producing meaning is broken down into signified and signifier. At the denotative level, the production of meaning only stops at the order that describes the relationship between the signifier and the sign within the sign and between the sign and its referent in external reality (Wilandra & Supratman, 2017).

Roland Barthes then developed Ferdinand De Saussure's concept to the connotative level or myth. The connotative level is used to explain one of the three ways signs work in the second order of signification. In this order, connotation describes the interaction that takes place when a sign meets the feelings or emotions of its users and their cultural values.

According to Roland Barthes in the analysis of the "Paris Match" poster, myth is defined as history transformed into something natural or natural. So that myth cannot be a symbol because myth is ambiguous which has a binary function. For example, the myth in the "Paris Match" poster has a binary function in the background of negroes who want freedom. But on the poster, the meaning of freedom is not depicted because the negro actually salutes the French flag. Based on this background and explanation. Research with the title *Gender Norms on Instagram @kalis.mardiasih: A Semiotic Analysis by Roland Barthes* is very important to be carried out.

RESEARCH METHOD

According to (Sugiyono, 2021) research methods are basically scientific ways to get data with specific purposes and uses. This research uses descriptive qualitative research methods. This is based on the characteristics of research proposed by (Yusuf, 2014) that: "Qualitative research is an inquiry strategy that emphasizes the search for meaning, understanding, concepts, characteristics, symptoms, symbols and descriptions of a phenomenon; prioritizes quality, uses several methods, and is presented in a narrative manner."

In accordance with the object of this research study in an effort to interpret the meaning of denotation, connotation and ideology of posters on Instagram @kalis.mardiasih regarding gender norms. this research uses a qualitative descriptive approach, namely researchers trying to interpret Gender Norms posters on Instagram @kalis.mardiasih through the application of Roland Barthes' semiotic theory to provide a clear picture of the meaning of denotation, connotation and ideology. The results of the classification were then analyzed using Roland Barthes' semiotic model by looking for denotation, connotation, and ideology/myth in the two posters analyzed.

The indicators of each as written in (Sobur, 2013) are: 1) Denotation, the most obvious meaning of the sign, what the sign describes to an object or its meaning is explicit based on lexia (pieces of images) that contain reading codes. Reading codes are systems that allow humans to perceive certain entities as signs; 2) Connotation, the second layer of meaning that is open to various possible interpretations, which is formed when the signifier is associated with various aspects; 3) Ideology, the process of synchronizing or uniting each connotation that has been expressed by describing it clearly. This process produces myths, or the development of connotations, or long-established connotations in society.

After a brief discussion of Roland Barthes' semiotics, then the poster or research data is processed by observing various signs that are directly visible based on the visualization on the Gender Norms poster on Instagram @kalis.mardiasih to find the denotation meaning as the first level of meaning. Then reveal each connotation meaning of the sign that has been found before in order to create the implied meaning of the poster as the second level of meaning. Thus, the ideology of each poster will be found which contains hopes to be achieved in the future, in other words, the ideology contains the vision of the poster.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

In Barthes' semiotic theory there is a chart:

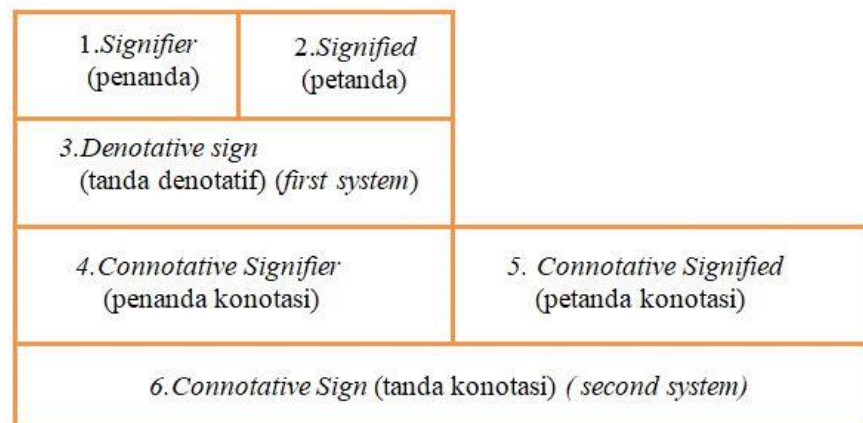


Chart 1 (Roland Barthes' Semiotic Theory)

From Barthes' map above, it can be seen that the denotative sign (3) consists of a signifier (1) and a signified (2). However, at the same time, the denotative sign is also the connotative signifier

(4). Thus, in Barthes' concept, the connotative sign does not simply have additional meaning but also contains both parts of the denotative sign that underlies its existence (Sobur, 2009: 69).

1.1 Analysis of Female Gender Norms in Instagram Posts @Kalis.Mardiasih



Image. 1 (Female gender norms)

In picture 1 related to women's gender norms, the account @kalis.mardiasih depicts a woman holding a small child with her two hands. However, it is depicted that the woman has two more hands holding a broom in her right hand and holding a pan in her left hand. The picture also shows the woman shedding tears with various written captions, including: "motherly", "not dominant", "not like a man", "easy to manage", "domestic duties", "can work, but still stoic, gentle and full of smiles", "originally winyss", "cooking", "must be able and willing to have children and take good care of them (if the father is not asked about his role)".

From the explanations in the form of these writings, it shows us that these are gender norms owned by women and justified by society, both female and male gender. In fact, these explanations can be done not only by women, but also by men. Women do not have the power and obtain their rights as human beings.

1) Denotative meaning

In the picture. 1 with the title Women's gender norms has a denotative meaning, which reveals the gender norms that apply and are considered correct by society related to the role of women. The picture shows a woman who has four hands who can carry children, sweep and cook. In addition, it also shows a woman crying. Identical to the nature of women.

2) Connotative meaning

The connotative meaning is also found in image.1. It can be noticed from the title that it is about women's gender norms, which means the values that society considers to be true about the traits and gender roles that women must have. If you do not have one of them, then you are not considered to be a perfect woman. This is supported by the writings that state the female gender characteristics that prevail in our society today.

3) The meaning to be conveyed

In the post uploaded by the @kalis.mardiasih account, it has the intent and purpose to be conveyed. The meaning of the picture. 1 is that @kalis.mardiasih as a Muslim feminist wants to convey to the public about the wrong values regarding women's gender that are considered correct by society. That sometimes, those who undervalue women are other women. Women are considered to be multitasking in terms of housework, children, and even work. This is illustrated by women having four hands. That women are forced to be able to do things that exceed their capacity.

The female figure is also depicted crying. This is interpreted as women being weak, often crying, or even feeling sad about the obligations that are carried out on the basis of society's judgment.

1.2 Analysis of male gender norms in @kalis.mardiasih's Instagram posts



Image. 2 (Male gender norms)

In image. 2 related to male gender norms shows a male figure holding a briefcase in his right hand and money in his left hand. In addition, a house and a car (vehicle) are also depicted as if they are in his shadow. The male figure is also depicted wearing a suit like an office worker, but crying with a sad face. Male gender norms are also described in writings including: "loud voice", "can't cry (because you're not allowed to cry, you channel it through anger and beating)", "office work", "must be able to fight", "can manage", "can't like kpop", "work in macho fields", "can't vent", "accessories symbol of stability", "can't fail financially", "tired of bearing the burden of masculinity", and "can't do housework".

Based on the images and explanations in the form of writing displayed in the @kalis.mardiasih account posts, it can be seen that image 2 reveals male gender norms or values that are believed and considered correct by society. These standards are also owned by women as previously explained. The norm standards that are "yes" by society actually have a negated impact on each individual. This is illustrated by the man/woman crying.

1. Denotative meaning

In the picture. 2 with the title male gender norms has a denotative meaning, namely expressing the standard gender values that must be owned by men and this is justified by society. The picture shows a man carrying a briefcase, neatly dressed, holding money and there are pictures of cars and houses. Those are the values that men should have,

namely working to make money, being able to buy a house for the family and providing a car for the family and going to work. The picture also contains written statements about the imperatives that men have. However, in the picture, the man is crying, as if saddened by the necessities that men have.

2. Connotative meaning

The connotative meaning of the image is that a man is distressed by the obligations he must carry out. In the picture, male gender norms must work, make money, cannot cry, seem fierce and emotional, must be macho, cannot do housework or help women to take care of children. The @kalis.mardiasih account expresses male sadness over gender norms that are justified by society, but individually or personally are very contrary to Conscience and force conditions to adjust norms, not norms to adjust conditions.

3. The meaning to be expressed

In the post, there is a meaning that wants to be conveyed to the community, namely that a man with all his obligations greatly affects the individual's mentality. That men are led to do everything that smells of masculinity and are forbidden to be feminine. But gender norms are not nature. Many people consider these norms as natures that must be carried out by each gender, even though it can be done by both male and female genders.

CONCLUSION

Based on Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis of gender norms in Instagram @kalis.mardiasih, researchers can conclude several things, including:

1. The denotation meaning contained in the two images regarding gender norms is presenting female and male figures with distinctive attributes, body shapes, and roles. Accompanied by an explanation of the norms that are considered correct by society regarding a woman or man.
2. The connotative meaning in the two images is to express the sadness experienced by women or men over the gender norms attached to them, expressed by crying. This means that a woman or man cannot fully accept the norms that society has imposed on them.
3. The meaning conveyed in the two images is to compare the gender norms prevailing in society between women and men. This is a direct criticism expressed on the @kalis.mardiasih account, that gender norms are not natures that should not be imposed on either gender. That the norms of women that currently exist can actually be done by men, women have the right to choose to do it or not, as well as men have the right to do female gender norms.

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