

Deconstructing Gender Roles in Urban Indonesian Family Education: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Contemporary Social Media Parenting Content

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to critically analyze the discourse surrounding the deconstruction of gender roles in contemporary Indonesian parenting media. **Method:** The research employs a literature review methodology, integrating Norman Fairclough's model of critical discourse analysis with qualitative content analysis. Data sources, comprising academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and research reports, were examined across three dimensions of discourse analysis: textual, discursive practice, and social practice. **Results:** The research yields four primary findings. First, the representation of gender equality discourse in parenting content exhibits a superficial progressivism that subtly perpetuates gender biases through a strategy of discursive harmonization between modern and traditional values. Second, the negotiation of urban paternal identity indicates a paradigm shift toward participatory fatherhood, though it remains obstructed by hierarchies of recognition and representational class biases. Third, the commodification of the ideal maternal role engenders a paradox of empowerment and double burden through the neoliberal construction of the "supermom." Fourth, the power relations underlying parenting content reveal a hybrid ideological formation that accommodates societal shifts without destabilizing foundational patriarchal structures. **Novelty:** The transformation of gender roles within urban Indonesian families confronts a fundamental contradiction between the imperatives of economic equality and deeply entrenched patriarchal ideologies, a dynamic that is currently mediated on a massive scale through social media parenting content. The study concludes that the deconstruction of gender roles within Indonesian parenting content is predominantly cosmetic and confined to a superficial discursive level. The implications of these findings emphasize the necessity of advancing critical media literacy among parents and formulating more gender-equitable parenting policies.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, fundamental transformations within the structure of urban Indonesian families have generated a novel landscape that significantly disrupts the established paradigm of traditional gender roles within the familial institution. Unprecedented urbanization reaching 56.7 percent in 2020 and projected to escalate to 66.6 percent by 2035 has catalyzed a shift in Indonesian family dynamics, transitioning from an extended family model rooted in agrarian communities to a nuclear family structure navigating the economic constraints of metropolitan environments.

Within the competitive and efficiency-driven context of urban spaces, the participation of Indonesian women in the formal labor force surged from 38.2 percent in 2010 to 53.6 percent in 2022. This demographic shift has given rise to dual-income households, thereby necessitating a renegotiation regarding the division of domestic

labor and childcare. These objective conditions engender structural tension between economic imperatives that compel egalitarian participation and the deeply entrenched patriarchal cultural values prevalent in Indonesian society. This dichotomy is evidenced by a 2022 national survey indicating that while 72 percent of respondents acknowledge the critical necessity of women's economic contributions for familial sustenance, 67 percent simultaneously maintain that the primary responsibility for childcare rests with mothers [1].

The contradiction between economic realities and prevailing gender ideologies cultivates a sphere of intense negotiation within the daily existence of urban Indonesian families. Consequently, this engenders domestic disorientation and ambiguity regarding intrafamilial relations and role expectations. This phenomenon is increasingly mediated and represented across social media platforms, which function as novel public spheres wherein discourses concerning gender roles are massively produced, disseminated, and contested [2], [3].

Social media has emerged as a pivotal arena for the formation and transformation of parenting discourse in contemporary Indonesia. Empirical data indicates that 89 percent of urban Millennial and Generation Z mothers engage with parenting content across platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube a minimum of three times per week. This phenomenon signifies a fundamental paradigm shift from traditional child-rearing practices which predominantly relied upon the intergenerational transmission of knowledge within extended families toward a digitally mediated pedagogical model. This contemporary framework is heavily influenced by digital influencers who, despite potentially lacking traditional authoritative credentials, have cultivated credibility through the accumulation of digital social capital.

The production of parenting content within Indonesian social media has proliferated into a substantial industry, generating an estimated economic value exceeding 2 trillion rupiah annually. This sector encompasses thousands of content creators and reaches an audience of tens of millions, primarily comprising young, urban mothers seeking both guidance and validation in their caregiving roles. The prominence of content creators such as Dr. Reisa Broto Asmoro, who commands an audience of over 5 million followers, and Mona Ratuliu, with 3 million followers, alongside the emergence of caregiving father figures like Danang Aji and Dimas Danang, illustrates a notable diversification and democratization within Indonesia's digital parenting landscape.

Consequently, the content disseminated is no longer a mere reproduction of conventional child-rearing values; rather, it functions as an articulatory space for novel discourses that challenge, negotiate, and transform the traditional construction of gender roles within the Indonesian familial structure [4]. Nevertheless, optimism surrounding the emancipatory potential of social media warrants critical scrutiny. Digital platforms inherently operate within the framework of attention capitalism, a mechanism possessing the capacity to co-opt and subsequently neutralize progressive discourses to serve commercial imperatives.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) constitutes a highly pertinent theoretical and methodological framework for dissecting the intricacies of parenting content on Indonesian social media. Its fundamental relevance lies in its capacity to unearth the power dynamics, ideologies, and vested interests concealed beneath ostensibly neutral and natural textual facades. Pioneered by Norman Fairclough, this approach facilitates the examination of discourse not merely as a linguistic phenomenon, but as a social practice that dialectically constructs, and is constructed by, overarching social structures. Within the milieu of Indonesian parenting content, CDA elucidates how specific linguistic and visual selections operate to perpetuate, alter, or transform asymmetrical gender relations across familial and societal domains. Furthermore, this paradigm affords an analysis at the level of discursive practice by investigating the production of parenting texts within the distinct political economy of digital platforms, alongside their subsequent consumption and interpretation by heterogeneous audiences. It is this inherent complexity that establishes CDA as a robust analytical instrument for untangling the paradoxes prevalent in Indonesian parenting media. While such content frequently projects a superficial facade of progressivism and advocacy for gender equality, it concurrently and subtly reproduces gender hierarchies and stereotypes through novel, sophisticated, and elusive mechanisms [5].

The socio-historical context of Indonesia imparts distinctive characteristics to the dynamics of gender role deconstruction, distinguishing it from Western societal paradigms. Although Indonesia possesses a prolonged history of women's movements dating back to the colonial era exemplified by figures such as R.A. Kartini these movements operate within a complex sphere of negotiation. This environment is fundamentally shaped by the Islamic values adhered to by the demographic majority, deeply entrenched patriarchal norms within the social structure, and the legacy of the New Order's gender ideology, which sanctified the role of the housewife through the concept of "Ibuisim." The post-1998 democratic transition broadened the avenues for articulating gender equality discourse; however, it concurrently precipitated a new wave of conservatism that rejects feminist ideologies as a threat to traditional family structures and Islamic morality. Within this polarized landscape, social media has emerged as an intense ideological battleground among various factions striving to define the legitimate parameters of family, child-rearing, and gender roles. Contemporary Indonesian parenting content cannot be comprehended in isolation from this broader cultural contestation; rather, it functions as a strategic site where the inherent tensions among modernity, religion, capitalism, and tradition are continuously negotiated. Comprehending the complexity of this context is imperative to circumvent simplistic analyses that evaluate the phenomenon of Indonesian parenting content through a Western-centric framework, which inherently neglects the historical and cultural specificities of Indonesian society [6].

Family education, as a fundamental function of the family institution, is undergoing a profound transformation in the digital era. The socialization of gender values and norms formerly an organic process occurring through daily interactions is now

increasingly mediated by screen-based content consumption. Children within urban Indonesian families are developing in digitally saturated environments where their conceptualization of gender roles is constructed not only by parental practices but also by the representations they consume across social media, YouTube, and alternative digital platforms.

Furthermore, parents themselves, particularly young mothers, heavily consume parenting content that frequently propagates specific child-rearing models embedded with prominent gender ideologies. This dynamic generates a mutually reinforcing cycle comprising the consumption of parenting content, the internalization of distinct gender values, the manifestation of these values in parenting practices, and their subsequent socialization to the next generation.

The imperative to critically evaluate parenting content on social media is heightened by the realization that discourses circulating within digital spheres possess tangible material consequences. These discourses significantly impact the formation of future generations' gender subjectivity and the (re)production or transformation of structural gender inequalities within Indonesian society. Ultimately, the question of whether this digital content contributes to the deconstruction of gender roles into a more egalitarian framework or merely reproduces inequalities in a more insidious form is not only academically pertinent but also carries significant practical implications for family education policies and practices [7].

This research centers on a critical discourse analysis of contemporary parenting content on Indonesian social media, employing a contextually elaborated theoretical framework of gender role deconstruction. The principal contribution of this study is to provide a comprehensive mapping of the discursive landscape of parenting in contemporary Indonesia. Furthermore, it seeks to identify the discursive strategies utilized by content creators in negotiating gender roles, to uncover the contradictions and paradoxes inherent within gender deconstruction discourses in digital spaces, and to analyze the ideological implications of these discourses regarding the transformation or reproduction of gender relations within Indonesian families. By integrating the analytical rigor of critical discourse analysis with a keen sensitivity to the Indonesian socio-cultural context, this study aims to deliver a profound and nuanced understanding of the ongoing dynamics of gender role deconstruction in contemporary urban Indonesian society. Ultimately, this research transcends simplistic narratives of progress or regression, revealing the profound complexities, ambivalences, and contestations that shape the realities of parenting and gender in the digital age [8].

This research is driven by the fundamental problematic that while parenting social media content in Indonesia prolifically disseminates discourse claiming to promote gender equality in child-rearing, there remains a dearth of systematic and critical scholarly inquiry investigating the extent to which this discourse genuinely deconstructs, or conversely, subtly reproduces gender hierarchies in novel, concealed iterations. A significant analytical gap exists due to the scarcity of studies employing a comprehensive critical discourse analysis framework, integrated with a gender perspective, to examine

digital parenting content in Indonesia. This gap is particularly salient given that such content constitutes the daily consumption of millions of urban families and holds substantial potential to significantly shape parenting paradigms and practices.

The exigency of this study resides in the pressing need to cultivate a critical, evidence-based understanding of the ideological mechanisms through which digital parenting discourse operates. Such insights are imperative for establishing a foundation to enhance media literacy among parents and to formulate policies that facilitate a more equitable transformation of gender roles within Indonesian families.

Accordingly, the primary objectives of this study are to analyze the representation of gender equality discourse in contemporary parenting content, examine the negotiation of urban paternal identities toward a participatory fatherhood model, uncover the mechanisms driving the commodification of the ideal maternal role within the digital ecosystem, and dismantle the power dynamics and ideologies underlying the production and consumption of parenting content in Indonesia. Through these objectives, the study aims to achieve a comprehensive and critical comprehension of the complexities inherent in the deconstruction of gender roles within the contemporary Indonesian digital landscape.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative approach through a literature review, focusing on the collection, examination, and in-depth analysis of relevant textual sources concerning the deconstruction of gender roles in Indonesian urban family education via contemporary parenting social media content. The selection of a literature review is predicated on the premise that the phenomenon of gender discourse within parenting social media constitutes a discursive reality extensively recorded and documented in scientific literature. Consequently, this method facilitates a comprehensive exploration without the constraints of primary data collection, which is often limited to transient temporal instances. Furthermore, this approach offers the flexibility to integrate prior research findings, diverse theoretical perspectives, and validated empirical documentation, thereby constructing a coherent argument regarding gender transformation within the Indonesian digital landscape. A systematic and rigorous literature review is capable of yielding profound findings equivalent to those of field research [9].

The data sources comprise three primary categories, selected based on their relevance, credibility, and timeliness. First, international and national scholarly books on gender theory and deconstruction, critical discourse analysis, family sociology, digital media studies, and contemporary Indonesian social transformation are utilized to establish a robust conceptual foundation. Second, reputable scientific journal articles examining the deconstruction of gender roles, gender representation in social media, urban family parenting dynamics, and discourse analysis of digital parenting content are incorporated to provide current, peer-reviewed empirical findings. Third, research reports from credible research institutions and policy documents pertaining to gender

and family are included. The utilization of these three source categories facilitates data triangulation, which enriches the analytical perspective and mitigates potential bias. A temporal delimitation restricting publications to the 2021–2026 period is implemented to ensure the analysis accurately captures the contemporary dynamics of the digital era [10].

The data collection technique was executed through a systematic procedure. The initial phase involved the identification and inventory of sources by searching international academic databases, such as Scopus and Google Scholar, alongside national databases, including Garuda and SINTA, utilizing relevant keywords. The second phase encompassed source selection predicated on specific inclusion criteria namely thematic relevance, credibility, timeliness, and substantive contribution followed by classification based on overarching themes and theoretical frameworks. The third phase comprised systematic data extraction utilizing an extraction sheet instrument designed to capture bibliographic information, key findings, principal arguments, and pertinent quotations. The final phase involved documentation within a digital reference management system to facilitate efficient tracking. This comprehensive procedure was conducted in strict adherence to the principles of rigor and transparency, which serve as the foundational elements for high-quality literature review research [11].

The data analysis technique employed critical discourse analysis (CDA) integrated with qualitative content analysis. CDA was selected for its efficacy in deconstructing power dynamics and uncovering latent ideologies embedded within ostensibly neutral texts. Adopting Fairclough's model, the analysis operated concurrently across three dimensions. The micro-level examined linguistic and semiotic features, including lexical choices, metaphors, and visual elements. The meso-level investigated the processes of production, distribution, and consumption of parenting texts, incorporating the influence of platform algorithms. The macro-level contextualized the findings within the broader social, cultural, political, and economic landscape of Indonesia, which is characterized by patriarchal and capitalistic paradigms [12]. The integration of qualitative content analysis was executed through a systematic coding procedure: commencing with in-depth reading, proceeding to open coding to identify relevant textual segments, utilizing axial coding to aggregate categories, and culminating in selective coding to determine core categories and construct a coherent analytical narrative. The entirety of the analytical process was conducted with a reflexive awareness of the researcher's positionality [13].

The assessment of data validity utilizing the trustworthiness framework encompasses credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is established through source and theoretical triangulation, peer debriefing with experts, systematic cross-referencing, and prolonged engagement with the data to preclude premature conclusions [14]. Transferability is achieved by providing a thick and detailed description of the comprehensive research process, thereby enabling readers to evaluate the applicability of the findings to analogous contexts. Dependability is ensured via systematic and transparent documentation in the form of an audit trail, which delineates every methodological decision and facilitates external verification. Confirmability is realized through the researcher's reflexivity regarding underlying assumptions and

potential biases, coupled with a deliberate pursuit of evidence that may contradict preliminary interpretations. The integration of these four criteria guarantees that the literature review research adheres to rigorous methodological standards, establishing both academic and ethical accountability [15].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Representation of Gender Equality Discourse in Contemporary Parenting Social Media Content

The findings of this literature review reveal that the representation of gender equality discourse within contemporary parenting social media content in Indonesia has undergone a significant transformation, albeit retaining paradoxical complexities. Indonesian parenting content creators are progressively adopting narratives that emphasize egalitarian caregiving roles between fathers and mothers, employing diction that explicitly rejects the traditional dichotomy of familial gender roles. A critical discourse analysis across various social media platforms, including Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, demonstrates a substantial surge in the popularity of content utilizing hashtags such as #AyahSiaga, #ParentingSetara, #AyahASI, and #BapakBapakPengasuh between the years 2021 and 2026. Prominent parenting content creators, such as Dr. Reisa Broto Asmoro, Mona Ratuliu, and Danang Aji, consistently cultivate a discourse framing child-rearing as a mutual responsibility, independent of biological sex or specific societal gender constructs.

Nevertheless, a pivotal finding of this analysis indicates that beneath these ostensibly progressive narratives exists a subtle reproduction of gender bias, internalized through the creators' selection of metaphors and visual symbolism. Visual representations within this content predominantly continue to position mothers as the primary figures responsible for emotional and nutritional care, whereas fathers are largely represented in instrumental and recreational capacities. Consequently, the shifting paradigm of parenting within the Indonesian urban context illustrates a persistent tension between deeply entrenched traditional values and the imperatives of modernity, which advocate for a more egalitarian redistribution of gender roles [16].

Further analysis indicates that the discourse on gender equality within Indonesian parenting social media content frequently employs a discursive strategy characterized by the "recognition of the father's domestic role," which is framed as a matter of appreciation rather than a fundamental obligation. This phenomenon engenders a latent hierarchy wherein paternal participation in childcare is positioned as a commendable, voluntary act, whereas maternal participation is perceived as a natural inevitability requiring no specific acknowledgment. The linguistic constructs utilized by parenting content creators, such as "a proactive husband assisting his wife" or "an understanding father willing to spend time with his child," implicitly substantiate the assumption that the primary responsibility for child-rearing remains with women, thereby relegating men to the status of supporting actors within the narrative.

These findings corroborate critiques of contemporary gender equality discourse, which is often characterized as being trapped in an illusion of progress, wherein superficial discursive modifications fail to dismantle the asymmetrical structural power relations between men and women within the family institution [17]. Additionally, subsequent examination of content that utilizes humor and satire to convey messages of gender equality reveals the operation of a cultural defense mechanism. This mechanism renders deconstructive messages more acceptable to an Indonesian audience that largely retains traditional values. Although this strategy proves effective in introducing novel ideas without eliciting direct resistance, it simultaneously threatens to undermine the transformative potential of the equality discourse itself; the resulting ambiguity leaves the messages open to interpretations that may ultimately reinforce the status quo. Viewed through the lens of Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, which serves as the principal theoretical framework of this study, the findings demonstrate that parenting content on social media operates simultaneously across three dimensions: as text, discursive practice, and social practice. As text, parenting content exhibits linguistic and visual choices that consciously or unconsciously reproduce or challenge dominant gender ideologies. As a discursive practice, such content is produced, disseminated, and consumed within the attention economy of digital platforms, which are governed by their own distinct logic and interests. Furthermore, as a social practice, parenting content is situated within the tension between deeply entrenched patriarchal structures in Indonesian society and the agency of social actors advocating for transformation. The complex interplay among these three dimensions engenders a hybrid and contradictory discourse, wherein emancipatory messages regarding gender equality coexist with discursive elements that subtly and sophisticatedly reinforce patriarchal ideologies [18]. Ultimately, these findings corroborate the assertion that the deconstruction of gender roles in contemporary Indonesia cannot be conceptualized as a linear progression from traditional to modern paradigms; rather, it constitutes a perpetual and highly contested negotiation among intricately intertwined value systems.

The temporal dimension plays a pivotal role in shaping the characteristics of gender equality discourse within Indonesian parenting content. A longitudinal analysis of the evolution of parenting content between 2021 and 2026 reveals a gradual paradigm shift from narratives framing "fathers as maternal assistants" toward those advocating "co-parenting as an egalitarian partnership." Nevertheless, this transition does not manifest uniformly across diverse audience segments or social media platforms. Platforms such as Instagram, characterized by a predominantly female user base, tend to propagate more progressive and explicit discourses promoting gender equality. Conversely, platforms with more heterogeneous user demographics, such as Facebook and YouTube, generally exhibit a more moderate and circumspect approach when addressing sensitive gender-related issues. This variance indicates that platform-specific attributes and audience demographic compositions significantly influence the articulation, negotiation, and reception of gender equality discourse within the Indonesian social media ecosystem. Ultimately, these findings corroborate the assertion that social media operates not as a

homogeneous sphere, but as a fragmented arena wherein competing discourses negotiate for legitimacy and influence [19].

Furthermore, the findings identify the phenomenon of "femvertising" within Indonesian parenting content, a marketing strategy that leverages narratives of women's empowerment and gender equality to promote products or services. Numerous parenting content creators partnering with baby and family brands utilize gender equality as a marketing appeal; however, these messages are frequently instrumentalized, losing their critical substance when subjected to commercial logic. For instance, campaigns depicting involved fathers are commonly deployed to market items such as diapers, infant formula, or baby equipment, operating on the premise that these commodities facilitate paternal participation in childcare. Rather than advocating for structural transformations in the domestic division of labor, such campaigns individualize solutions by positioning consumer goods as remedies for gender disparity, thereby neglecting the systemic roots of the issue. This commodification of gender equality discourse illustrates the capacity of digital capitalism to co-opt and neutralize the subversive potential of gender deconstruction for the purpose of capital accumulation. Within the Indonesian context characterized by a rapidly expanding digital parenting industry valued at billions of rupiah this commodification is intensifying, engendering a complex discursive landscape wherein the demarcation between empowerment and exploitation becomes increasingly ambiguous [20].

An analysis of audience commentary and interaction regarding parenting content focused on gender equality provides valuable insights into the public reception of the discourse surrounding the deconstruction of gender roles. The findings reveal a distinct polarization in audience responses. On one hand, a highly educated, urban demographic exhibits positive engagement, supporting narratives of gender egalitarianism and frequently sharing personal accounts of co-parenting implementation within their own households. Conversely, another segment demonstrates resistance and even hostility toward this discourse, relying on arguments grounded in conservative interpretations of religious doctrines and Eastern cultural values.

Notably, this resistance is often articulated not through an explicit rejection of gender equality, but rather via discursive strategies such as "whataboutism" or thematic deflection. Such strategies include assertions that "feminism has dismantled the family structure" or that "gender equality is a foreign agenda incongruent with Indonesian culture." This indicates that the discursive contestation over gender roles within Indonesian families extends beyond the sphere of content production, actively occurring at the level of consumption and interpretation by engaged audiences. Ultimately, the dialectical interplay between content producers and consumers engenders a dynamic and contested discursive arena, wherein the meaning and legitimacy of diverse gender subject positions are subjected to perpetual negotiation [6]

Negotiating Urban Father Identity: From Traditional Masculinity to Participatory Fatherhood

The research findings within this second sub-theme reveal a profound transformation in the identity construction of urban Indonesian fathers, as represented and negotiated through contemporary parenting content on social media. A critical discourse analysis of various media featuring father figures in caregiving roles indicates a paradigmatic shift from a traditional model of masculinity which primarily emphasizes the roles of breadwinner and authority figure toward a model of "participatory fatherhood" that prioritizes emotional engagement, physical presence, and active involvement in daily child-rearing activities. Viral media, including "A Day in My Life as a Stay-at-Home Dad" videos produced by Indonesian content creators, daily vlogs depicting fathers managing childcare independently, and tutorials on domestic tasks such as preparing baby food or changing diapers, serve as compelling visual representations of this renegotiated masculine identity within the context of contemporary urban families. Furthermore, this phenomenon signifies the emergence of a novel consciousness among urban Indonesian men: the realization that masculinity is not inherently antithetical to tenderness, nurturing, and emotional expression traits historically and stereotypically ascribed to femininity. This paradigm shift does not manifest in a vacuum; rather, it constitutes a direct response to broader structural transformations within urban Indonesian society, such as the escalating participation of women in the professional workforce, expanding demands for gender equality, and a discernible crisis in patriarchal authority catalyzed by modernization and globalization [21]. Specifically, discourse analysis identifies several discursive strategies employed by father content creators to negotiate their emerging identities. The initial strategy, "reframing masculinity," involves redefining the concepts of manhood and fatherhood by associating caregiving with traditionally masculine traits, including responsibility, strength, and leadership. For instance, some creators utilize narratives asserting that "a true father courageously engages in childcare" or that "the new masculinity is characterized by men who are unafraid to display affection." This strategy proves highly effective because, rather than entirely rejecting the concept of masculinity, it expands and transforms the paradigm to encompass practices previously categorized as feminine.

The second strategy, "normalization through humor," utilizes comedic elements and self-deprecation to mitigate the tension that may arise from transgressing traditional gender norms. Content portraying fathers as clumsy while attempting to hold infants, incorrectly fastening diapers, or expressing confusion over preparing school lunches frames these shortcomings not as failures of masculinity, but rather as relatable and endearing human learning processes. In this context, humor serves as a safety valve, enabling audiences to internalize novel paradigms without perceiving a threat to their own identities.

The third strategy, "legitimation through alternative authority," involves these content creators referencing scientific research on the developmental benefits of paternal involvement, recommendations from parenting experts, or examples drawn from more

egalitarian cultures to justify their caregiving roles. The invocation of this scientific and cultural authority establishes a robust foundation for the renegotiation of gender roles, rendering them resilient against traditionalist counterarguments grounded in custom or literal religious interpretations [22].

Nevertheless, the research findings indicate that the identity negotiation process among urban fathers is not devoid of resistance and internal contradictions. An analysis of audience interactions with participatory fatherhood content reveals substantial cultural resistance, particularly from older male demographics or individuals originating from more conservative socioeconomic backgrounds. Comments such as "it is unfortunate that the wife cannot care for the child herself," "why is the man behaving like a woman," or "this is the consequence of a wife being excessively career-oriented" demonstrate that traditional constructs regarding the gendered division of labor continue to exert a profound influence on the social imagination of certain segments of Indonesian society.

More notably, the findings illustrate that this resistance is not exclusive to male audiences; it also emanates from a subset of female audiences who have internalized conventional gender roles to such a degree that they perceive a threat when men encroach upon a domain that has historically served as their primary source of identity and pride. Furthermore, the phenomenon of "maternal gatekeeping" characterized by mothers restricting or regulating paternal involvement in childcare due to the assumption of their own superior caregiving competence was also identified within the discourse of the comment sections. This implies that the deconstruction of gender roles transcends the mere modification of male attitudes; it necessitates a concurrent transformation in how women conceptualize and enact their maternal roles. Asymmetrical gender relations are not unilaterally produced but are rather the outcome of persistent negotiations and compromises between men and women within the confines of social structures that restrict the alternatives available to both [23].

At a deeper analytical level, the research findings identify a distinct hierarchy in the recognition of various forms of paternal involvement in childcare. Fathers' participation in public and recreational activities such as playing in parks, taking children on outings, or attending school events tends to elicit significantly greater appreciation and acknowledgment than their engagement in routine, repetitive domestic duties, such as changing diapers, feeding children, or household cleaning. This hierarchy reflects the persistence of patriarchal logic in the evaluation and valuation of caregiving labor, wherein highly visible activities that generate public pride are deemed more valuable than the daily "dirty" work traditionally relegated to women.

These findings indicate that while there has been a notable shift in the construction of paternal identity, this evolution remains confined to specific dimensions of the caregiving role and falls short of a comprehensive transformation in the domestic division of labor. Consequently, urban fathers who adopt a participatory model of fatherhood frequently experience "praise inflation." Within this context, their caregiving contributions despite being quantitatively far lower than those of mothers receive

disproportionate adulation and recognition, whereas the substantially larger contributions of mothers are normalized and perceived as unremarkable. Ultimately, this phenomenon threatens to reinforce gender inequality in a more subtle form by establishing disparate standards for evaluating the respective caregiving performances of fathers and mothers [24].

Intersectional dimensions play a pivotal role in shaping the diverse experiences and representations of participatory fatherhood in Indonesia. Analysis reveals that the capacity and opportunity to embrace this model are inequitably distributed among Indonesian men, as they are heavily contingent upon variables such as social class, educational attainment, occupational sector, and geographic location. Contemporary parenting discourse on social media is disproportionately saturated with portrayals of urban, upper-middle-class fathers. These individuals typically hold professional occupations affording temporal flexibility, possess advanced education levels that grant access to progressive parenting paradigms, and command the financial capital necessary to delegate domestic labor to household staff.

Consequently, such representations perpetuate the fallacy that participatory fatherhood is a universally accessible lifestyle choice. In reality, numerous working-class men and those operating within the informal economy are deprived of the privilege of intensive parental involvement due to economic imperatives that necessitate extended working hours for marginal compensation. The marginalization of lower-class fathers within mainstream participatory fatherhood narratives underscores a profound class bias inherent in the gender role deconstruction movement, which warrants rigorous critical scrutiny. Ultimately, the reconfiguration of familial gender relations cannot be realized exclusively through attitudinal and ideological shifts; it inherently demands structural transformations within economic and labor systems to empower all men, irrespective of their socioeconomic status, to engage equitably in child-rearing [25].

The Commodification of the Ideal Mother Role: Between Empowerment and the Double Burden in Digital Discourse

Research findings from the third sub-theme elucidate a fundamental contradiction inherent in the discursive construction of motherhood within contemporary Indonesian parenting content on social media. On the one hand, such content explicitly advocates for female empowerment narratives, urging mothers to pursue professional aspirations, engage in self-actualization, and prevent motherhood from completely subsuming their individual identities. Consequently, hashtags such as #IbuBerkarya, #MomBoss, #PerempuanProduktif, and maternal #SelfCare have emerged as prominent trends, accumulating millions of impressions across diverse digital platforms. Conversely, critical discourse analysis demonstrates that these empowerment narratives are paradoxically framed in a manner that exacerbates the burden on women by establishing novel standards that are as exacting as their traditional counterparts. The contemporary urban Indonesian mother is no longer solely subjected to the expectation of being a proficient homemaker; she is simultaneously pressured to attain career success, maintain an impeccable physical appearance, adhere to a healthy lifestyle, execute flawless

household management, and document these multifaceted achievements on social media through a highly curated aesthetic. This pressure is further compounded by the prevalent issue that numerous married women remain unprepared for the realities of child-rearing [26]. Ultimately, this phenomenon precipitates the emergence of a modernized "supermom" archetype that deconstructs traditional gender roles while concurrently reconstructing new mechanisms of control and exploitation over women's bodies, time, and subjectivity under the logic of digital capitalism. Within the contemporary social media ecosystem, the construction of maternal identity has metamorphosed into a commodity possessing exchange value in the attention economy, wherein a mother's proficiency in projecting an inspirational facade of perfection dictates her socio-economic worth as an influencer [27]. An in-depth analysis of the content produced by parenting influencers reveals the operationalization of "gender technology" discursive and material mechanisms that construct feminine subjectivity in accordance with the dictates of specific social regimes. In contemporary Indonesia, gender technology operating through parenting social media cultivates an "ideal mother" standard, which functions as a hybrid of traditional maternal values and neoliberal demands for self-entrepreneurship. This modern iteration of the ideal mother is characterized as an individual capable of exclusively breastfeeding for up to two years (adhering to contemporary health standards), preparing organic, homemade meals (satisfying nutritional and environmental consciousness criteria), managing an online business or remote professional career (meeting economic productivity expectations), maintaining physical fitness through regular exercise (conforming to beauty and wellness norms), educating children via Montessori or gentle parenting techniques (aligning with progressive child-rearing standards), and documenting her journey through aesthetically curated, inspirational social media posts (fulfilling the demands of the influencer economy). Furthermore, within this framework, parents operate not merely as protectors, but as facilitators of resilience by modeling behavior, fostering open communication, providing age-appropriate challenges, instilling gratitude, involving children in decision-making, and guiding them to learn from failures [28].

These practically unattainable standards are continuously produced and reproduced through the relentless circulation of digital content, subsequently generating anxiety and a pervasive sense of inadequacy among the mothers who consume it. Most problematically, these standards are framed not as burdensome external impositions, but rather as empowering personal choices. As a result, when a mother fails to meet these expectations, the shortcoming is internalized as an individual deficit rather than attributed to fundamentally inequitable social structures [29].

The research findings identify the phenomenon of "intensive mothering 2.0," which represents an intensification of Sharon Hays's ideology of intensive mothering mediated through digital technology. While traditional intensive mothering dictates that mothers dedicate their entire time, energy, and material resources to child-rearing, the digital iteration introduces a novel layer of demands: the imperative to document, curate, and broadcast these parenting practices on social media platforms. Consequently, caregiving

labor is rendered incomplete without its digital representation, which necessitates substantial supplementary work. This entails capturing photographs and videos, editing content, drafting engaging captions, and continuously interacting with audiences in comment sections.

Such invisible and uncompensated digital labor is disproportionately imposed upon women, exacerbating already extensive domestic working hours with new responsibilities that are equally demanding of time and energy. An analysis of the time allocated by parenting influencer mothers to manage their digital presence indicates that many effectively operate in double or even triple shifts. The primary shift consists of caregiving and household management; the secondary shift involves professional or entrepreneurial endeavors; and the tertiary shift requires functioning as content creators who must remain perpetually connected and responsive to their audiences. Notably, this triple burden is not perceived as a form of coercion but is rather internalized as a vocation and passion, propelled by the prospects of economic empowerment, social recognition, and self-actualization facilitated by digital platforms [30].

This paradox of empowerment and exploitation is further compounded by the mechanisms of the platform economy, which provide financial incentives for mothers to continuously generate and disseminate content concerning their family lives. The monetization of parenting content achieved through endorsements, sponsored posts, affiliate marketing, and proprietary product sales constructs an illusion that social media presents a viable escape from economic reliance on a spouse and the financial constraints that typically engender vulnerability for women within traditional familial structures. However, this traditional dependency is merely supplanted by a novel reliance on platform algorithms, corporate brands, and audience engagement, a dynamic that remains equally precarious and exploitative.

Parenting influencers are compelled to perpetually recalibrate their content to satisfy volatile algorithmic preferences, the stringent demands of sponsoring brands, and fluctuating audience tastes. Consequently, the autonomy and self-sufficiency promised by the creator economy manifest as highly conditional and fragile constructs. Furthermore, the most commercially viable content frequently relies on projecting an illusion of perfection and affluence. This paradigm traps mother influencers under constant pressure to exhibit a meticulously curated version of their lives, thereby obscuring the chaotic and unglamorous realities inherent to actual child-rearing. Ultimately, parenting content on social media tends to project a distorted representation of motherhood, establishing unrealistic expectations and exacerbating anxiety and isolation among the conventional mothers who consume such media [31].

At a macro-structural level, the commodification of motherhood within Indonesian parenting social media reflects and reproduces the contradictions inherent in contemporary capitalism's approach to social reproduction. Although capitalism necessitates the reproduction of labor through the family institution, it concurrently erodes the material foundations required for this process to occur humanely. This erosion manifests through the exploitation of time, the privatization of caregiving, and the

relegation of reproductive responsibilities entirely to the nuclear family, devoid of adequate societal support. Within the Indonesian context characterized by minimal state-sponsored social safety nets for families with young children the onus of childcare rests entirely on the household and is disproportionately shouldered by women.

Parenting social media has emerged as a domain where these contradictions are both articulated and negotiated. However, rather than advancing collective solutions that contest systemic structures, parenting content frequently individualizes these dilemmas, prescribing commercial products, tips, and strategies as panaceas for what are fundamentally systemic issues. Consequently, an exhausted mother lacking support is not mobilized to demand structural changes, such as extended paternity leave or affordable childcare facilities; instead, she is directed toward consumerist remedies, such as purchasing baby spa services, attending time-management workshops, or consuming energy-enhancing supplements. Ultimately, this mechanism of commodification transfigures maternal struggles and distress into market opportunities, thereby neutralizing the potential for collective resistance by substituting it with individualized, consumption-based solutions [32].

Power Relations and Ideology Underlying Parenting Content: Between Agents of Change and the Reproduction of Patriarchy

The research findings within the fourth sub-theme elucidate the intricate power dynamics and ideologies operating behind the production, distribution, and consumption of parenting content across Indonesian social media platforms. By employing a critical discourse analysis that integrates Norman Fairclough's theoretical framework on the dialectical relationship between discourse and social structure with a political economy of communication perspective, this study reveals that parenting content functions as an arena of intense ideological contestation. This struggle primarily occurs between progressive forces advocating for the transformation of gender roles and conservative entities striving to preserve the patriarchal order.

Crucially, however, the research demonstrates that this ideological conflict does not manifest as a simplistic, bipolar dichotomy between "progressive" and "conservative" paradigms. Instead, it engenders a hybrid discursive formation wherein elements from both ideological poles converge and negotiate within the exact same texts. Contemporary Indonesian parenting content, particularly that produced by mainstream creators with substantial follower bases, exhibits a characteristic of "surface progressiveness" that frequently obscures and neutralizes the deconstructive substance inherent in gender equality discourse.

Content creators appropriate progressive language and symbols regarding equality, yet they embed these elements within a normative framework that fundamentally perpetuates patriarchal assumptions concerning gender essentialism, the "natural" division of labor, and the centrality of mothers in child-rearing. This hybrid formation serves a distinct ideological function: it accommodates demands for social change without genuinely threatening the foundational patriarchal structures. Consequently, it fabricates an illusion of transformation that appeases both the audiences desiring

progress and those resistant to it (Foucault's analysis of power and knowledge, as applied by Haryanto [33]).

A political-economic analysis of the parenting content creator ecosystem in Indonesia reveals that the industry's structural composition and dynamics are determinative in delineating the boundaries of articulable discourse. Predominantly, Indonesian parenting influencers who command substantial audiences hail from upper-middle-class backgrounds, possess advanced educational attainment, and exhibit modern, cosmopolitan value orientations. Nevertheless, as economic agents whose livelihoods depend on brand sponsorships and audience reception, they are compelled to operate within commercially secure and socially uncontroversial parameters. This economic dependency engenders a nuanced yet efficacious mechanism of self-censorship, whereby concepts deemed excessively radical or subversive to the normative beliefs of the majority audience are systematically eschewed to mitigate the risks of declining engagement, public backlash, or the dissolution of advertiser relationships.

Consequently, parenting content predominantly advocates for superficial, individualized modifications to gender roles while evading more foundational and contentious subjects, such as the radical redistribution of domestic labor, non-heteronormative parenting models, communal caregiving, or systemic critiques of the traditional institution of marriage. The discursive arena generated by these market mechanisms thus facilitates the propagation of "marketable feminism" a sanitized and commodified iteration of feminist thought that extols women's individual agency while leaving the overarching power structures that restrict such choices unexamined. Ultimately, gender equality is relegated to mere lifestyle and consumptive preferences, thereby neutralizing its efficacy as a critique of structural inequity [34].

Furthermore, this research delineates the critical role of platform algorithms in shaping the visibility and dissemination of diverse parenting discourses. Social media algorithms across platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube are engineered to optimize quantitative metrics namely watch time, user engagement, and sales conversions rather than to advance explicit social values or contest prevailing ideologies. Architecturally, these algorithms disproportionately amplify content that elicits intense emotional responses, whether positive or negative, as well as material that aligns with the audience's pre-existing preferences, thereby capitalizing on confirmation bias.

Within the context of parenting, these algorithmic mechanisms precipitate several distinct ideological implications: First, idealized and highly aestheticized representations of family life typically generate substantial engagement by appealing to user aspirations, prompting algorithms to prioritize their circulation. Second, content that incites controversy and debate surrounding gender roles similarly attains heightened visibility by driving interactions and commentary; however, such disputes are frequently polarized within frameworks that reduce the inherent complexity of the subject matter. Third, algorithmic curation inherently fosters echo chambers and filter bubbles, predominantly exposing audiences to information that validates their established perspectives. This phenomenon consequently exacerbates polarization and obstructs

nuanced, cross-ideological dialogue. Fourth, governed by the imperatives of the attention economy, algorithmic logic inherently privileges content that presents simplistic, immediate solutions over material requiring complex analysis and critical reflection. Collectively, these compounding factors engender a digital ecosystem that is fundamentally more conducive to the perpetuation of dominant ideologies than to radical social transformation [35].

Critical discourse analysis further reveals the operation of neoliberal ideology within Indonesian parenting content, which provides an individualistic interpretive framework for issues that are fundamentally structural and collective in nature. By prioritizing individual responsibility, self-entrepreneurship, and market-driven solutions, this neoliberal ideology systematically obscures the structural dimensions of gender inequality in caregiving. Rather than examining how public policies, work organizations, and social institutions systematically produce and reproduce gender disparities within the family, parenting content predominantly focuses on the actions individual mothers or fathers can take to navigate caregiving challenges within existing structural parameters.

Narratives that assert "communication with one's partner is the key," advise parents to "create efficient schedules and systems," or promote the "use of specific applications and products to facilitate childcare" offer an illusion of control and agency to the individual. However, they fail to interrogate why the burden of caregiving is disproportionately borne by women, or why systemic support for families remains profoundly inadequate. By reducing the complex issue of gender inequality to mere problems of time management, personal efficiency, or interpersonal communication, the neoliberal discourse embedded in parenting content serves to delegitimize and suppress demands for more fundamental structural transformations. Such marginalized demands include policies for equitable and fully compensated parental leave, the provision of high-quality universal childcare services, the reduction of working hours without a corresponding decrease in wages, and the radical reorganization of the relationship between production and reproduction within the capitalist economy [36].

Conversely, the present study also identifies the manifestation of agency and resistance within prevailing discursive frameworks. While mainstream parenting content frequently perpetuates dominant ideologies in modified forms, alternative creators notwithstanding their smaller audiences deliberately utilize social media platforms to articulate profound critiques of gender structures and advocate for social transformation. These creators, typically emerging from activist, academic, or grassroots backgrounds, generate content that explicitly confronts issues such as the mental load of parenting, gender-based domestic violence, reproductive rights, inclusive child-rearing for children with disabilities, and maternal solidarity within social movements. Furthermore, they leverage digital platforms to cultivate communities and support networks that serve as alternatives to the highly individualized parenting paradigms endorsed by mainstream media. Although these alternative narratives achieve lower visibility primarily because they are less optimized for algorithmic amplification and lack substantial economic

backing their presence indicates that social media is not entirely subjugated by capitalist logic. Instead, it provides novel avenues for the articulation of counter-discourses and collective mobilization. The inherent tension between co-optation and resistance constitutes a foundational element of cultural struggles in the digital age. Ultimately, the trajectory of this tension remains indeterminate, heavily contingent upon broader socio-political dynamics external to the digital ecosystem [37].

The Muhammadiyah Perspective on Family Discourse and Gender EqualityThe preceding findings demonstrate significant relevance to the ideological positioning of Islamic civil society organizations such as Muhammadiyah. Through its autonomous women's organization, 'Aisyiyah, Muhammadiyah has historically served as a catalyst for women's empowerment within the paradigm of progressive Islamic values. Female leadership within the organizational hierarchy exemplified by Nurrahma Amini, the Chairperson of the 'Aisyiyah Regional Board of North Sumatra [38] substantiates that the discourse on egalitarian familial roles is not exclusively a byproduct of secular social media content, but is comparably articulated through well-established religious channels. Muhammadiyah's framework posits that equal access and opportunities for men and women in family-based education are intrinsic to the Islamic principle of justice. Simultaneously, it advocates for a complementary division of roles between husbands and wives in child-rearing. This paradigm diverges from, yet does not inherently contradict, the gender equality discourse propagated by the digital parenting content analyzed in this study.

In accordance with the findings of this study regarding the necessity of critical media literacy for parents, prominent Muhammadiyah figures within the domain of family education have concurrently emphasized this urgency. Munawir Pasaribu, a lecturer in Islamic Education at the Faculty of Islamic Religion, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara, whose extensive research focuses on parenting and mental health, has underscored in various forums the critical need to educate families about the risks associated with social media consumption. Such risks encompass potential harassment and the internalization of misconstrued values among children and adolescents [39].

A corresponding sentiment is echoed by Mahmud Yunus Daulay, Vice Chairman of the Muhammadiyah Regional Board of North Sumatra, who actively guides Muslim families through religious assemblies (majelis tabligh) and educational study groups to ensure that Islamic values remain the primary normative reference amidst the rapid influx of digital information [40].

From this perspective, the partial and superficial deconstruction of gender roles identified in this research can be interpreted as both an opportunity and a challenge for religious organizations such as Muhammadiyah. It positions them to formulate an alternative framework for familial equality that is deeply rooted in Islamic principles, thereby circumventing the commodification logic of digital capitalism delineated in the preceding analysis.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : This study concludes that the deconstruction of gender roles within contemporary Indonesian parenting content on social media remains partial and paradoxical, largely confined to a discursive surface level without initiating fundamental structural transformations. The representation of gender equality discourse exhibits a superficial progressiveness that envelops emancipatory messages within traditional value frameworks, thereby subtly reproducing gender biases and hierarchies in a more nuanced and sophisticated manner. The negotiation of urban paternal identity toward participatory fatherhood indicates a positive shift; however, the disproportionate valorization of paternal involvement engenders a double standard that evaluates the caregiving contributions of fathers and mothers inequitably. Furthermore, the commodification of maternal roles in the digital ecosystem generates a neoliberal iteration of the "supermom" figure, which deconstructs traditional roles yet simultaneously reconstructs novel forms of exploitation concerning women's bodies, time, and subjectivity through the logic of attention capitalism. Structurally, the power dynamics and ideologies underlying parenting content reveal a hybrid formation that accommodates demands for change without genuinely threatening patriarchal foundations. In this context, platform algorithms, creators' economic imperatives, and audiences' conservative values interrelate to produce a discourse that is progressive in appearance but conservative in substance. **Implication :** Consequently, the transition toward egalitarian gender relations in Indonesian families necessitates interventions that transcend representational discourse, addressing the structural, material, and policy dimensions required to facilitate a more equitable redistribution of caregiving labor between men and women, as well as among the family, the state, and society. The practical implementation of these research findings is oriented toward three interrelated strategic domains. In the sphere of media literacy, the findings can inform the development of critical media literacy education modules for urban Indonesian parents. Such initiatives would equip them with the analytical competencies to deconstruct latent ideologies within ostensibly neutral parenting content, identify the mechanisms underlying the commodification of gender roles, and cultivate a reflective disposition in the consumption and production of social media parenting content. Regarding policy advocacy, this research provides empirical justification for formulating policies that foster the transformation of gender roles within the family. These include the expansion of fully compensated paternity leave, the provision of accessible and high-quality universal childcare services, and the regulation of commercial parenting content that possesses the potential to exploit maternal vulnerabilities and perpetuate gender stereotypes. **Limitation :** Finally, in the domain of alternative content production, the findings concerning the resistance and agency of alternative creators can stimulate the development of a more inclusive and gender-equitable parenting content ecosystem. **Future Research :** This ecosystem should extend beyond superficial narratives of equality to critically address structural issues, including the redistribution of domestic labor,

collective caregiving models, and the deconstruction of gender binarism within the familial institution.

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