

ARTICLE

# Deconstructing Gender-Based Hierarchical Structures: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Matshepo Msibi's Monologue in TEDx Talks

Silvani Zulia, Fadhlur Rahman

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Lhokseumawe

## ABSTRACT ENGLISH:

Gender inequality is one of the recurring structural problems in various spheres of life—social, cultural, political, and economic—that not only appears in the form of violations in public spaces such as mass media, government institutions, or the workplace, but is also deeply rooted in the private sphere, especially in the family as the smallest social unit. This research aims to uncover the types of representations of gender inequality in Matshepo Msibi's TEDx Talks and analyse how Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis model can be used to unpack the power structure in gender discourse shaped. In addition to deconstructing gender representations and patriarchal ideologies in monologue (in this context TEDx Talks), this paper also aims to increase understanding of how gender inequality stems from the family settings and emphasizes the importance of addressing gender bias in everyday life. The results reveal that a hierarchical representation of gender, where men are placed as dominant figures—protective, strong, and strategic—while women are reduced to domestic roles such as washing dishes and taking care of the house. The narrative of the (monologue) talk reflects the patriarchal ideology that is still strong in the culture of society. This ideology is manifested through social rules that restrict women from accessing education, physical freedom, and equal social opportunities.

## ABSTRACT INDONESIAN:

Ketidaksetaraan gender merupakan salah satu masalah struktural yang berulang di berbagai aspek kehidupan—sosial, budaya, politik, dan ekonomi—yang tidak hanya muncul dalam bentuk “kekerasan” di ruang publik seperti media massa, lembaga pemerintah, atau tempat kerja, tetapi juga mendalam di ruang yang lebih pribadi, terutama dalam keluarga sebagai unit sosial terkecil. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap jenis-jenis representasi ketidaksetaraan gender dalam *TEDx Talks* Matshepo Msibi dan menganalisis bagaimana model Analisis Wacana Kritis Van Dijk dapat digunakan untuk mengurai struktur kekuasaan dalam diskursus gender yang terbentuk. Selain mendekonstruksi representasi gender dan ideologi patriarki dalam monolog (dalam konteks ini di *event TEDx Talks*), penelitian ini juga bertujuan untuk meningkatkan pemahaman tentang bagaimana ketidaksetaraan gender berasal dari lingkungan keluarga dan menekankan pentingnya mengatasi bias gender dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat representasi hierarkis gender, di mana pria ditempatkan sebagai figur dominan—pelindung, kuat, dan strategis—sedangkan wanita dengan “sengaja” dikurangi perannya menjadi tugas rumah tangga seperti mencuci piring dan merawat rumah. Narasi dalam pidato monolog tersebut mencerminkan ideologi patriarki yang masih kuat dalam budaya masyarakat. Ideologi ini tercermin melalui aturan sosial yang membatasi akses wanita terhadap pendidikan, kebebasan fisik, dan kesempatan sosial yang setara.

## Introduction

One of the recurring structural problems in various walks of social, cultural, political and economic life is gender inequality (Iversen et al., 2010; Choudhury & Kumar, 2022; Adisa et al., 2021). This inequality not only stems from violations committed in public environments, such as the mass media, government institutions, or the workplace, but is also deeply rooted in private settings, such as the family (Sullivan, 2019; Rahman et al., 2024; Cerrato & Cifre, 2018). The family is the smallest yet most important social unit in shaping individual perspectives, including perceptions of male and female roles, and patriarchal values are often unconsciously institutionalized, passed down from generation to generation, and considered as a normal state that should not be questioned at all (Qiu, 2023).

Patriarchy is a social system in which men hold dominant power in various spheres of life. In this system, women are often positioned as subordinate and dependent. Although many countries and societies have adopted various policies to promote gender equality, patriarchal structures persist in more sophisticated forms, one of which is through the family (Karim et al., 2024; Elomäki & Ylöstalo, 2021). The household (or the family) is often assumed to be a neutral and private place, yet it is where the reproduction of gender ideology takes place most intensively. Boys and girls are treated differently in terms of household responsibilities, educational choices, how they dress, and even how they are spoken to by adults. These differences in treatment not only shape gender identity, but also reinforce social hierarchies based on sex (Nagoshi, 2014).

Therefore, it is important to remember that gender inequality does not originate only from the macro system; it originates from micro spheres, such as the family. Language serves as a very important tool in reproducing and challenging gender-based power hierarchies. Language also functions as an ideological medium that shapes the way we see the world. Language performs to construct, propagate and support social values. Language has the potential to reinforce gender stereotypes, block criticism, and normalize inequality (Ashrafova, 2024; Boso, 2017; Bartmiński, 2017). As a consequence, it is crucial to use methods of analyzing texts, both written and spoken, that can reveal the ideologies and power structures hidden behind them. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), especially the model developed by Teun A. van Dijk, is a relevant method that allows us to understand how discourse shapes and replicates social inequality.

Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is used to reveal hidden power relations in discourse, including in gender discourse. According to Van Dijk (2015), CDA examines how power, domination, and inequality are realized and reproduced through text and speech in a socio-political context. This approach is relevant for gender discourse because in a patriarchal society language is often used to perpetuate gender differences (Lakoff, 2003; Azmy et al., 2024). Van Dijk divides the CDA model into three main dimensions: text, social cognition, and social context (Sakka, Nurhadi, & Sari, 2023).

The three dimensions together help to uncover the implicit ideologies and power biases implicit in gender-themed speech structures. Conceptually, Van Dijk suggests a multi-dimensional discourse analysis approach. In the text dimension, he breaks down the discourse

into macro structure (main theme/topic), superstructure (speech narrative flow), and micro (lexicon choice, sentence structure, rhetoric). Macro analysis, for example, identifies whether the main theme of the speech emphasizes equality or reinforces traditional stereotypes. Superstructure highlights how arguments are organized from opening to closing, while micro-analysis explores details such as the use of gender-specific words, metaphors, or active/passive sentences that reveal hidden gender representations. In the social cognition dimension, the focus is on the mental frameworks of speakers and audiences: the beliefs, knowledge and attitudes that influence discourse production. Van Dijk emphasizes that the meaning produced is strongly influenced by the speaker's ideology, so that implicit gender prejudice can be read from language choices and topic emphasis. Meanwhile, the social context dimension considers external factors such as cultural norms, the power structure of society, and the institutional position of the speaker. Here Van Dijk highlights the role of elites or powerful groups that control the production of public discourse to influence collective awareness (Jayanti & Pribadi, 2024; Rahman et al., 2024; Zurriyati et al., 2023).

Thus, these three dimensions complement each other in revealing how domination or resistance to gender norms is manifested in speech structures. The application of Van Dijk's CDA in gender speech content analysis can be done concretely. For example, Davisca (2022) analyzed the speeches of female cultural figures on gender equality with Van Dijk's approach at the text level. The researcher found that the macro theme of both speeches was gender equality as an “enlightenment discourse” in the midst of patriarchal culture (Davisca, 2022).

Further analysis also revealed how cultural context (patrilineal versus matrilineal kinship systems) and persuasive diction choices shaped rhetoric in favor of or against gender norms. The same approach could be applied to other speeches: for example, by counting the frequency of mentioning the word “leader” versus “caretaker”, or examining the use of passive voice when mentioning women's actions. Overall, Van Dijk's CDA provides a comprehensive framework for mapping patterns of dominance or resistance to gender norms through discourse structures, from topic setting to language and style analysis.

In this paper, the authors use Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis method to analyze the speech of Matshepo Msibi, an activist and public speaker who has consistently raised gender issues. Msibi's speech is important because it raises the often-overlooked social fact that gender inequality starts inside the home, not outside the home. In her speech, Msibi explicitly and implicitly highlighted how patriarchal norms are embedded in seemingly normal domestic practices, but impact gender perceptions and behaviors in the long run.

The main focus of this paper is how Matshepo Msibi's speech illustrates the relationship between gender and patriarchal ideology in the text. Matshepo Msibi is a gender activist and public speaker who has appeared several times in international forums discussing issues of social inequality, education, and women. In one of her speeches entitled “Gender Inequality Starts in the Home”: she underlines that inequality does not start in the workplace, school, or society, but from the values and habits instilled since childhood in the household. This speech is interesting to study because it touches on an aspect that is often overlooked in gender studies: how inequality is reproduced through everyday practices that are considered 'normal'.

The speech uses straightforward language but is full of ideological meaning. Msibi not only conveys facts, but also forms a strong narrative to dismantle patriarchal structures of thought. Therefore, the text of this speech is an ideal object to be analyzed with a critical discourse analysis.

The purpose of this research is to find the type of representation of gender inequality found in the speech. In addition, this study also examines how Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis method can be used to reveal the power structure in the gender discourse presented. The main objective of this paper is in line with the formulation of the problem, is to reveal the representation of gender in Msibi's speech and analyze how language is used in the text to reproduce or critique patriarchal ideology. Another aim of this paper is to increase our understanding of how gender inequality begins at home and how important it is to correct gender bias in everyday life.

## Method

Van Dijk (2015) defines Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a discipline focused on investigating and interpreting both written and spoken texts to uncover the underlying sources of power, dominance, inequality, and bias within them. It also explores how these sources are sustained and propagated in particular social, political, and historical settings. This analysis uses Teun A. van Dijk's understanding representation approach, which emphasizes the relationship between discourse, ideology, and social structure. According to Teun A van Dijk, representation is understood as the result of the interaction between discourse, ideology and social structure. In his approach, ideology is seen as a cognitive framework owned by members of social groups to organize their perceptions, values, and actions.

In addition, ideology not only acts as a cognitive tool, but also acts as a link between social structures at the macro level (such as group positions, norms, and goals) and individual interactions at the micro level through discourse. Van Dijk asserts that discourse is the primary means of conveying and reproducing ideology. He said that "Ideologies are the basic frameworks for organizing the social cognitions shared by members of social groups, organizations or institutions. They essentially function as the interface between the cognitive representations and processes underlying discourse and action, on the one hand, and the societal position and interests of social groups, on the other hand. This conception of ideology also allows us to establish the crucial link between macrolevel analyses of groups, social formations and social structure, and microlevel studies of situated, individual interaction and discourse" (van Dijk, 2005).

Through discourse, social groups can structure and maintain social structures, including power relations, domination, and resistance. Ideologies represented in discourse are often seen through self-presentation, which is the positive highlighting of one's own group and other presentation, which is the negative representation of other groups. This approach allows the analysis of the dialectical relationship between the macro and micro levels, namely how texts and utterances can be influenced by ideology and social structures, as well as how they contribute to reshaping social structures. Van Dijk also emphasizes the importance of analyzing mental models, which are individual mental representations influenced by personal

experiences and social values of the group, as a basis for understanding how discourse is created and understood. Van Dijk explains that his speech analysis approach includes two main dimensions.

Within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis developed by Teun A. Van Dijk, discourse analysis is conducted at two interrelated levels: micro and macro. At the micro level, the focus is directed at the linguistic aspects that make up the text or verbal communication. This includes word choice, syntactical structure, as well as the use of metaphors and other rhetorical strategies. Through this analysis, it can be seen how elements of language are used to illustrate and convey certain ideologies in a discernible yet powerful way. For example, the choice of words with negative connotations to describe certain groups can reinforce existing stereotypes, while passive sentence structures can disguise the perpetrators of actions in issues of gender inequality.

Meanwhile, the macro level focuses on the broader social structures that frame and influence discourse practices. At this stage, the analysis is directed at the social, political and historical context behind the production and reception of discourse. This includes power relations, inequality, and social hierarchies present in society. In other words, Van Dijk places discourse not only as a reflection of language, but also as a means of reproducing social power. For example, in the context of political speeches on gender, macro analysis can reveal how the discourse reinforces or challenges patriarchal structures through the arrangement of narratives, topic selection, or the speaker's position in the social structure.

These two levels complement each other in uncovering hidden ideologies in the text. The micro level helps map how language works to convey ideological messages, while the macro level explains why and under what social conditions the discourse emerges. It is this combination of micro and macro analysis that allows us to understand how power is reproduced and maintained through everyday language.

Further, Teun A. Van Dijk introduced the socio-cognitive approach in Critical Discourse Analysis, which positions social cognition as a bridge between the microstructure of the text and the macro social structure. This approach allows for a comprehensive analysis because it not only pays attention to the form of language used, but also how the text is produced, understood, and influenced by the wider social context. In this research, the approach is applied through three main stages to explore how gender representation is constructed in the speech.

The first stage is to identify gender representations in the speech. This process is done by examining how men and women are portrayed and what roles are assigned to each gender by the speaker. In the analyzed scripts, it was found that men were taught martial arts such as karate with the aim of protecting their younger sister, future wife, and themselves. In contrast, women are taught to wash dishes and take care of the house. This shows the social construction that positions men as protectors, while women are identified with the domestic sphere. This representation reflects the traditional gender roles that often arise in patriarchal cultures.

The second stage is to analyze the linguistic elements used in the script. This analysis includes several important elements. First, word choices such as “protect” for men and “take care” for women indicate the existence of gender stereotypes that reinforce the dominant role of men and the supporting role of women. Secondly, the phrases and sentence structures used also reinforce these roles, such as in the sentence “Tepo learned karate to protect his younger sister,” which emphasizes the role of strength and protective responsibility in men. Third, rhetorical strategies used by the speaker, such as comparing access to bicycles between men and women, are used to build a narrative of injustice. This comparison underscores the unequal opportunities that both genders have and creates a discourse that highlights the gender inequality that still occurs in everyday life.

The final step is to relate the representations in the text to the social and cultural context. The script illustrates the patriarchal norms that are still dominant in South Africa, where women are often limited by gender stereotypes. For example, the fear that cycling could jeopardize women's reproductive health demonstrates a cultural bias that hinders women's access to education and mobility. The focus on the roles performed by women in the household shows how patriarchal ideologies are still strong in traditional families. This relationship analysis aims to show how discourse can reproduce prevailing gender ideologies in society, shaping and reinforcing gender inequality at the social and cultural levels. The data for this study was taken from the transcript of a YouTube video titled “Gender Inequality starts in the home” with speaker Matshepo Msibi. This video was chosen because it provides a personal perspective on the gender inequality experienced by the speaker, which illustrates the gender dynamics in South Africa. The video transcript was used as the main material to analyze gender representations, linguistic elements, and their relation to the sociocultural context.

## Result and Discussion

Analysis of the speech shows that gender representation is hierarchical, with men consistently placed in a more dominant position than women. The roles assigned to each gender contain a clear element of inequality: men are portrayed as protective, strong, and strategically responsible, while women are identified with household tasks such as washing dishes and taking care of the house (Nadirra & Nadilla, 2023). These representations not only reflect traditional gender stereotypes, but also reinforce the unequal division of roles between men and women in society.

The inequality of power in this narrative is also evident in the different access to resources and opportunities between men and women (Widiyanti & Firdaus, 2023). Men are given space to develop physical abilities and strategies such as learning karate, which symbolically reflects power and control over social mobility. In contrast, women are restricted to domestic roles that tend not to provide opportunities to develop in the public sphere. This imbalance suggests that the construction of gender in the spoken text is not neutral, but rather loaded with power structures that place women at a disadvantage (Harjoni, 2021).

Furthermore, the narrative reflects the patriarchal ideology that is still strong in the culture of society. This ideology is manifested through social rules that restrict women from accessing education, physical freedom, and equal social opportunities. In this context, the role of parents is crucial. Both fathers and mothers have the responsibility to shape equitable gender norms from within the household. By dividing tasks equally and teaching boys and girls the same skills, parents can become agents of change who challenge patriarchal domination and shape a new generation that upholds gender equality.

### **The Gender Inequality Triangle: A framework for addressing gender disparity**

The speaker presented the Gender Inequality Triangle approach as a concrete solution to overcome gender bias, emphasizing that social change must start from the closest sphere: the family (Mose, 2022). Through this model, the family is positioned as the main foundation in shaping more equal values and behaviours. The main goal of this approach is to break the often-unconscious practice of gender favouritism that continues to take place in everyday life. The triangle consists of three sequential steps: scanning the room, providing solutions and taking action, which together form a change strategy based on awareness, reflection and action.

The first step, scanning the room, emphasizes the importance of creating awareness of gender inequalities that occur in the immediate environment, such as within the family or workplace. This means critically observing and assessing who does the housework, who gets access to resources, and how roles are shared between men and women. For example, ensuring that housework is not only assigned to girls, but shared equally with boys, is the first step in changing perceptions of unequal traditional roles.

The second step is to provide solutions once awareness is established. In this stage, the speaker encouraged the need for affirmative action to ensure fairness in opportunities. This can be realized by providing space for girls to develop strategic skills, such as driving, playing sports, or performing in public spaces—skills that have been more associated with men. Finally, in the action stage, families are expected to actually implement these changes consistently. For example, by dividing daily tasks, providing equal access to facilities such as bicycles or courses, and involving all family members in the decision-making process. When implemented widely, these changes at the family level can have a significant social impact and contribute to the creation of a more just and gender-equal society (Cin, 2017).

### **A Critical Discourse Analysis of Gender Representation within the Speech**

Gendering representation is a field of study that delineates, analyses, and elucidates the manner in which the "who" and "what" of political representation are established within the gender text. Gendering representation is an examination of the gendered nature of representatives, representation, and representativeness, which have always been gendered (Yuzar et al., 2023). Mapping, analysing, and elucidating the inclusion and exclusion of sex and gender in (the practice of) representation are not the only components of gendering representation, and it is

also a feminist activity (Celis Karen 2008). The experiences of Tepo and Matshepo with unjust gender roles since childhood are recounted in the speech. This division has implications for the twins' opportunities and development, in addition to exemplifying gender stereotypes.

### ***Male as Protector and Leader***

*“Tepo the boy is taken to karate lessons not only because he needs to learn how to fight and to defend himself but also so that he can be able to defend his twin sister and his future wife”*

This statement explains that Tepo's karate training is not only meant to protect himself but also others, especially the women around him. This shows the cultural rule that men play the role of protectors, while women are considered vulnerable and in need of protection. This reinforces the gender stereotype that women need protection. According to this story, men are expected to have greater physical and mental strength than women, as women are unable to protect themselves. This reinforces the gender stereotype that women need protection. Karate shows that Tepo is being groomed to take responsibility for leadership roles in the family. Tepo had the opportunity to become a confident and empowered person in public because he was given training that taught courage, resilience and discipline.

### ***Women as Household Caretakers***

*“Matepo the girl is taught how to wash dishes and how to clean the house”*

From a young age, Matshepo was directed to learn household tasks, demonstrating and instilling the belief that women are responsible for the household. Tepo gained relevant skills for the public sphere, while Matshepo only had skills for the home sphere, making it difficult for her to thrive outside the home.

*“In preparation for her being an amazing mother and an excellent wife in the future.”*

This statement illustrates that women are groomed to be good wives and mothers. and focuses on family and household roles. In addition, women are often responsible for nurturing and emotionally supporting the family (Aziza, 2020). This narrative emphasizes how women's roles can limit their potential outside of the family context.

### ***Influences on Early Gender Perception***

*“This bicycle belonged to both of them equally. However, in the home, it was called Tepo's bike.”*

The bicycle symbolizes freedom and mobility, but by referring to it as “Tepo's bike,” the family indirectly gives greater opportunities to Tepo, although officially Matshepo has the same rights. This makes it uncomfortable for Matshepo to use the bike and affects her confidence and perception of gender roles, so she stops using the bike after one failed attempt.

## Power and Strength in the Narrative

The narratives in this part show the difference in power between Tepo and Matshepo, which is shown by the division of roles and resources in the family.

### *Male Control over Resources at Home*

*“Bicycle belonged to both of them equally however in the home it was called tepo's bike this created an impression in both the twins mind that it belonged more to tepo than it belongs to matshepo tepo then monopolized on the bicycle he wrote it all the time matepo got onto the bike once fell off the bike and he never got onto any bike until he she was 35 years”*

Mastering the bicycle by Tepo not only demonstrate male dominance in the family, but it also has a lasting impact on Matshepo. The initial discomfort and failure made Matshepo lose the courage to try cycling again, even into adulthood. This shows how power inequality can be a barrier to women's development.

Tepo has greater access to cycling, which gives her the freedom of movement to reach education and employment opportunities. Matshepo, on the other hand, is deprived of this opportunity due to cultural myths that restrict women from using bicycles.

*“Boys who learn how to ride bikes at an early age and have access to bicycles therefore have an opportunity to go to school and get educated”*

### *Inequality in Strategic Learning*

*“Tepo the boy was taught how to drive a car so driving a car means that you get to do chores that I call strategic, some people call them functional, where you learn skills like decision making communication networking and just overall people relation skills”*

*“Matshepo the girl in the home she was taught how to keep the family and how to look after her younger siblings”*

The narrative explains that the ability to drive allows Tepo to access larger public spaces and enables him to build relationships, make decisions and support the family economy. Men are educated with relevant skills for public and professional environments, which enhances their ability to lead and organize social interactions. On the other hand, Matshepo is only equipped for domestic roles such as looking after the family and taking care of her younger siblings, which does not have a direct impact on social or economic mobility. the tasks assigned to her do not allow for the development of strategies. thus, limiting women to remain in domestic roles (Cerrato & Cifre, 2018).

*“Boys who learn how to ride bikes at an early age and have access to bicycles therefore have an opportunity to go to school and get educated”*

This narrative shows inequality in access to education on a broader scale. While men are facilitated to pursue education, women are often hindered by cultural norms that limit their space.

### ***Women's Dependence on Men***

Although Matshepo eventually learned to drive, it was only after Tepo taught her. This dependency demonstrates inequality within the family, where men have control over strategic skills, while women must depend on them for the same opportunities. Matshepo's dependence on Tepo to learn to drive shows that women often only gain strategic skills through male assistance, which reinforces their subordinate position in the social structure.

*“When the twins were 21 years old temple the boy is the one that taught her his twin sister matebo how to drive a car”*

*“Matshepo the girl was taught how to keep the family and look after her younger siblings”*

This statement explains how women are directed to be full-time housekeepers, which is responsible for looking after and taking care of the family, without the opportunity to learn relevant economic skills. This also reinforces women's dependence on men both financially and socially (Lavee, 2016). In conclusion, women who do not have the ability to learn independently are more easily taken advantage of and inequality in household relationships occurs. This dependency also limits women from making or taking major decisions in the family because they do not have enough potential or resources to be independent.

### **Hidden Ideologies**

An ideology is a set of ideas, beliefs and attitudes, consciously or unconsciously held, which reflects or shapes understandings or misconceptions of the social and political world (Van Dijk, 2013). It serves to recommend, justify or endorse collective action aimed at preserving or changing political practices and institutions. The concept of ideology is split almost irreconcilably between two major senses. The first is pejorative, denoting particular, historically distorted (political) thought which reinforces certain relationships of domination and in respect of which ideology functions as a critical unmasking concept (Vincent, 2023).

The second is a non-pejorative assertion about the different families of cultural symbols and ideas human beings employ in perceiving, comprehending and evaluating social and political realities in general, often within a systemic framework (Freedon, 2013). Those families perform significant mapping and integrating functions. With this definition of ideology, of course, we are familiar with the name hidden ideology. Hidden ideology is an idea or statement that is not directly stated but is subtly inserted into the thoughts or actions of a person or group. Hidden ideologies can occur due to several factors such as tools to achieve certain political goals, economic interests and to influence a culture because culture plays a role in the formation of ideologies. cultural values can influence the way we think and view the world so that often hidden ideologies are inserted in culture because it is difficult to recognize them.

The monologue states the various patriarchal ideologies that run implicitly through the family (Gittins, 2017). These ideologies not only limit opportunities for women, but also reinforce established gender roles in society. The following points will be discussed thoroughly.

### ***Myths about Bicycles and Reproduction***

*“If you're a girl and you start riding a bike at an early age you run the risk of being better than being unable to have children when you're older”*

This myth serves as a tool of social control designed to limit women's freedom. Despite having no scientific basis, the myth continues to be used to restrict women's movement. Society indirectly prevents women from engaging in physical activities such as cycling for fear that such physical activities could harm women's reproductive health. In this context, a bicycle is not only a means of transportation but also a symbol of access to education and economic opportunities. When women are prohibited from using bicycles and are afraid to do so, they lose the opportunity to go to school or find work, which increases gender inequality. In addition, this myth shows that women's reproductive roles are often the main focus which results in their potential being sidelined in other areas of life, such as education and careers. The impact goes far beyond the individual. Because these restrictions hinder women's advancement at the community and societal level. By limiting women's space from the time they were young, society effectively creates structural barriers that are difficult for the next generation to overcome.

*“In preparation for her being an amazing mother and an excellent wife in the future.”*

*“This bicycle belonged to both of them equally however, in the home, it was called Tebow's bike.”*

The above statement demonstrates the patriarchal ideology that places women in domestic roles as wives and mothers at home (Rothman, 2016). This narrative indicates that a woman's main role is to focus only on serving her family, without giving them space to develop outside the household. By placing women's value in the domestic context, this ideology ignores their potential in the public sphere. Women raised with this narrative tend to have low expectations for advancement in education or career because they have been educated that household responsibilities are their only goal.

Further, the statement shows how the family is often the place where patriarchal ideology is instilled. The symbol of ownership of the bicycle is given to Tepo, even though both formally own it. This creates the perception that men have greater rights over resources, even though women have equal rights. This normalization affects Matshepo's self-confidence, leading her to feel that the bicycle is not for her. When she stops using the bike after failing, it shows how symbolic gender norms can restrict women from trying or obtaining something they are entitled to. This male dominance in the family creates a structure of injustice that is passed down from generation to generation. Children who grow up in these environments tend to take these rules for granted, which reinforces patriarchy to recur in society.

### ***Patriarchal Ideology generated through Unequal Education***

*“In Africa, there's 9 million girls between the ages of 6 and 11 who will never get an opportunity to go to school why because they were born girls that's it as compared to 4 million boys.”*

The above data suggests that family narratives are illustrative of broader systemic problems. Unequal access to education for men and women not only limits individuals but also has the same effect on the development of society (Lamphere, 2024). When families receive unequal education that supports patriarchal ideologies and acts as a primary agent in creating unequal social structures, it stigmatizes and disenfranchises gender in education. This means that in the future, African women face much bigger hurdles to achieve gender equality.

*“my parents were able in their mature life to implement the inequality gender inequality triangle very well so they scan their environment the environment is the home and they then realize that you cannot raise generation x's in the same way, then you cannot raise millennials the same way that you raise generation x because you know you need to prepare them differently they need a different skill set and they need to be multifaceted. They went into solutioning and they said okay so what are some of the things as parents that we need to do that we need to change what are some of the decisions that we need to put in place in order for us to create an environment in our home that allows our children to be able to be global citizens that contribute towards and participate in in society they went into action and they created what I call an equitable shay or an equitable allocation of chores in the home”*

In the context of gender socialization theory, the mother's role holds a central position as the primary agent that influences the construction of children's gender identity and norms from an early age. Through daily parenting practices, mothers not only reproduce cultural values, but also have the potential to deconstruct patriarchal ideologies that place domestic work as the “domain” of women alone. If mothers consistently initiate an equal division of household tasks between boys and girls - for example by assigning responsibility for washing dishes, cleaning the living room, or helping with simple repairs - then they are instilling a foundation of structural equality in the child's mindset. This step is in line with the principles of social learning theory, where children imitate the behavioural models they see most often in their immediate environment. Thus, the mother's decision to share tasks in an egalitarian manner has long-term implications: she not only changes the distribution of housework, but also facilitates the internalization of gender equality norms that can transcend family boundaries.

As a counterbalance and cooperative partner in the family structure, the father's role is equally important in creating an ecosystem of equality. Within the co-parenting framework, active collaboration between mothers and fathers in childcare is an important variable that mediates children's attitudes and behaviours towards gender roles. When fathers voluntarily demonstrate participation in domestic work - such as cooking, doing laundry or babysitting - they present an alternative model for boys that housework is not an exclusive burden for women.

This evidence showed that fathers' involvement in domestic activities has a positive impact on boys' egalitarian attitudes (Cano & Hofmeister, 2023). In addition, fathers are also expected to contribute to providing practical and economic skills training to girls, on par with that provided to boys. This approach reflects the principle of distributive justice in parenting, where resources (skill-building, access to education, responsibilities) are shared proportionally regardless of gender - a key mechanism to reject traditional patriarchal normativity.

The family as a fundamental unit of society has the unique capacity to be a laboratory of social change. When parents adopt egalitarian parenting-both in the division of domestic roles and the provision of access to skills-they are building a social environment where gender equality is perceived as a normal practice, not an exception. These micro-transformations in the domestic setting, while seemingly marginal, can grow into macro-change agents through a snowball effect (Tufuor, Sato & Niehof, 2016). Thus, children educated in egalitarian families are likely to pass on these principles in their interpersonal relationships and wider social structures. Although patriarchal norms still persist at the societal level, "small experiments" within the family will become a strategic value as a first step in deconstructing gender-based hierarchical structures. Thus, the family does not merely function as an institution of social reproduction, but also as a transformative entity capable of preparing new generations to advocate for gender justice and equality in a sustainable manner.

## Conclusion

Gender inequality is a structural problem that persists in various aspects of life—social, cultural, political, and economic. This discrimination is not only evident in public spaces such as the media, government institutions, or the workplace, but also deeply rooted in private spaces, especially the family as the most basic social unit. This paper demonstrated how power structures within gender discourse are formed and maintained through language and ideological representations. In this context, TEDx Talks are analysed as a public monologue medium reflecting how patriarchal constructs remain deeply entrenched in societal culture. Gender representation in this discourse shows a hierarchical division of roles—men are portrayed as dominant, rational, and protective, while women are often reduced to domestic roles such as taking care of the household or serving family members. This narrative shows how patriarchal ideology works through symbolic repetition and social norms, which indirectly limit women's access to education, physical freedom, and social and economic opportunities. The results of the analysis emphasize that the family plays a crucial role in the reproduction of gender values. When families apply the principle of equality in their daily practices, these values have the potential to be transmitted into interpersonal relationships and broader social structures. Thus, even though patriarchal norms remain deeply rooted in society, egalitarian families can serve as a "small experiment" with strategic implications for deconstructing gender-based power structures. Awareness of the importance of addressing gender bias in private spaces is a significant first step in the struggle for broader gender justice. Therefore, social transformation must begin at the closest point: the family as the first educational setting and the place where foundational values are formed.

## References

- Adisa, T. A., Gbadamosi, G., & Adekoya, O. D. (2021). Gender apartheid: The challenges of breaking into “man's world”. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 28(6), 2216-2234. <https://repository.uel.ac.uk/item/8991q>
- Ashrafova, I. (2024). Language and Gender: Exploring Structures and Bias in Linguistic Norms. *Acta Globalis Humanitatis et Linguarum*, 1(1), 39-50. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.69760/aghel.024048>
- Aziza, N. (2020). Honing, Loving, and Nurturing: A Study of Mothers' Role in Family. *Martabat: Jurnal Perempuan Dan Anak*, 4(2), 251-266.
- Azmy, K., Rahman, F., & Muntasir, M. (2024). Discourse in Gender Studies: How Language Shapes Gender Narratives? *Saree: Research in Gender Studies*, 6(1), 25–38. <https://doi.org/10.47766/saree.v6i1.2553>
- Bartmiński, J. (2017). *What does it mean for stereotypes to “reside in language”*. Stereotypes and linguistic prejudices in Europe, 115-135. <http://efnil.nytud.hu/documents/conference-publications/warsaw-2016>
- Boso, L. A. (2017). Dignity, Inequality, and Stereotypes. *Wash. L. Rev.*, 92, 1119. <https://digitalcommons.law.uw.edu/wlr/vol92/iss3/2>
- Cano, T., & Hofmeister, H. (2023). The intergenerational transmission of gender: Paternal influences on children's gender attitudes. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 85(1), 193-214. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12863>
- Cerrato, J., & Cifre, E. (2018). Gender inequality in household chores and work-family conflict. *Frontiers in psychology*, 9, 1330. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01330>
- Choudhury, S., & Kumar, S. (2022). Gender discrimination and marginalization of women in North-East India. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 22(4), e2625. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.2625>
- Cin, F. M. (2017). *Gender justice, education and equality: Creating capabilities for girls' and women's development*. Springer.
- Davisca, M., A. (2022). Pesan Kesetaraan Gender dalam Pidato Perempuan Indonesia (Analisis Wacana Kritis Van Dijk dalam Pidato “Being a Modern Royal Javanese Princess” Oleh Gusti Kanjeng Ratu Hayu dan “Post Feminisme Minangkabau” Oleh Ka’Bati). *Undergraduate thesis*, Universitas Pembangunan Jaya.
- Elomäki, A., & Ylöstalo, H. (2021). From promoting gender equality to managing gender equality policy. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 23(5), 741-762. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616742.2021.1880289>
- Freedon, M. (2013). The morphological analysis of ideology. *The Oxford handbook of political ideologies*, 115-137.

- Gittins, D. (2017). *The family in question: Changing households and familiar ideologies*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Harjoni, H. (2021). Power dalam Kekerasan Seksual:(Kajian Teori Michel Foucoult dan Johan Galtung). *Saree: Research in Gender Studies*, 3(2), 205-218. <https://doi.org/10.47766/saree.v3i2.535>
- Irshad, S. (2023). Analyzing The Influence of Language in Devising Stereotypes, Linguistic Inclinations and Social Inequalities: The Social's Perspectives. *Journal of Arts and Linguistics Studies*, 1(4), 745-760. <https://jals.miard.org/index.php/jals/article/view/57>
- Iversen, T., Rosenbluth, F. M., & Rosenbluth, F. (2010). *Women, work, and politics: The political economy of gender inequality*. Yale University Press. <https://isps.yale.edu/research/publications/isps11-028>
- Jayanti, K. D., & Pribadi, F. (2024). Wacana Berpendapat Rocky Gerung dalam Program Perempuan Bicara TvOne: Analisis Wacana Kritis Teun A Van Dijk. *Paradigma*, 13(1), 81-90. <https://ejournal.unesa.ac.id/index.php/paradigma/article/view/59643>
- Karim, D. A., Pattiruhu, C. M., & Chin, J. (2024). The Role of Education in Promoting Gender Equality in Modern Society. *MSJ: Majority Science Journal*, 2(4), 94-102. <https://doi.org/10.61942/msj.v2i4.254>
- Lakoff, R. (2003). Language, gender, and politics: Putting “women” and “power” in the same sentence. *The handbook of language and gender*, 78, 161-78.
- Lamphere, L. (2024). The domestic sphere of women and the public world of men: The strengths and limitations of an anthropological dichotomy. *Gender in cross-cultural perspective*, 280-291.
- Lavee, E. (2016, May). Exchanging sex for material resources: Reinforcement of gender and oppressive survival strategy. In *Women's Studies International Forum* (Vol. 56, pp. 83-91). Pergamon.
- Mose, E. G. (2022). Gender Prejudices in Ekegusii Language: A Case of Proverbs/Wise Sayings. *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 5(1), 41-47. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajass.5.1.596>
- Nadirra, T., & Nadilla, T. (2023). Examining Gender Roles and Professional Realities: Stereotypes Against Women in Islamic Societies. *Saree: Research in Gender Studies*, 5(2), 173-186. <https://doi.org/10.47766/saree.v5i2.2448>
- Nagoshi, J. L., Nagoshi, C. T., & Brzuzy, S. (2014). Gender and sexual identity. *Springer*, 10, 978-1. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-8966-5\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-8966-5_1)

- Qiu, R. (2023). Traditional gender roles and patriarchal values: Critical personal narratives of a woman from the Chaoshan region in China. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 180, 51-63. <https://colab.ws/articles/10.1002%2Face.20511>
- Rahman, F., Zanzibar, Z., Yuzar, E., & Sari, D. D. (2024). Gendered Power Struggles: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Restrictive Practice in Contemporary Journalism Under Taliban Regime. *Tribakti: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman*, 35(1), 23-36. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33367/tribakti.v35i1.4418>
- Rothman, B. K. (2016). Beyond mothers and fathers: Ideology in a patriarchal society. In *Mothering* (pp. 139-157). Routledge.
- Sakka, S. B., Nurhadi, N., & Sari, E. S. (2023). Analisis Wacana Kritis Model Teun A. Van Dijk Pada Pidato Presiden Di Ktt Ke-42 Asean. *CENDEKIA: Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan*, 3(2), 93-102. <https://doi.org/10.51878/cendekia.v3i2.2237>
- Sullivan, O. (2019). Gender inequality in work-family balance. *Nature human behaviour*, 3(3), 201-203. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-019-0536-3>
- Tufuor, T., Sato, C., & Niehof, A. (2016). Gender, households and reintegration: everyday lives of returned migrant women in rural northern Ghana. *Gender, place & culture*, 23(10), 1480-1495. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2016.1204999>
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2005). Discourse analysis as ideology analysis. In C. Schäffner & A. L. Wenden (Eds.), *Language and peace* (pp. 17-33). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203984994-7>
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2013). *Ideology and discourse*. The Oxford handbook of political ideologies, 175-196.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2015). Critical Discourse Analysis. In D. Tannen, H.E. Hamilton, & D. Schiffrin (Eds.), *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (pp. 466-485). Wiley-Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118584194.ch22>
- Vincent, A. (2023). *Modern political ideologies*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Widiyanti, D., & Firdaus, M. (2023). Interpreting Women's Emancipation in the Context of Islamic Multiperspectivism: An Analytical Approach. *Saree: Research in Gender Studies*, 5(1), 19-36. <https://doi.org/10.47766/saree.v5i1.1003>
- Yuzar, E., Rahman, F., Sari, D. D., & Zanzibar, Z. (2023). Unmasking Gendered Language Patterns in Social Media Discourse. *Saree: Research in Gender Studies*, 5(2), 103-118. <https://doi.org/10.47766/saree.v5i2.1822>
- Zurriyati, Z., Rahman, F., & Alaqad, M. H. (2023). Language and Power: How News Media Construct a Biased Structure of Information in Public Discourse during the Presidential Election. *Malikussaleh Social and Political Reviews*, 4(1), 12-18. <https://doi.org/10.29103/mspr.v4i1.11031>