

ARTICLE

## Male Voice in Women’s Discourse: The Political Impact of Source Selection in Digital Gender Advocacy

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### ABSTRACT ENGLISH:

This qualitative study explores the formation of gender issues in the Narasi talk show, specifically in the episode “Susahnya Jadi Perempuan” featured on Najwa Shihab’s YouTube account. Several factors, including the choice of male guest speakers with diverse identity backgrounds, influence the formation of these issues. The media discourse established within this context can significantly shape the online audience’s interpretations, or netizens, who engage with the content. This study aims to compare media discourse with audience interpretations and connect these insights to the role of the sources in the discussion. Data for this research were derived from interview transcripts of the guest speakers and netizen comments. The researcher employed Stuart Hall’s reception analysis, alongside Ferdinand de Saussure’s semiotic analysis. To enhance understanding, the researcher examined the findings through the lens of reception theory—a concept developed by Hall—and categorized them into three interpretive stances: the dominant-hegemonic position, the negotiated code, and the oppositional code. The study reveals that the involvement of the guest speakers in this episode reflects their advocacy efforts for gender issues. All participants exhibited a pro-gender equality perspective, which significantly influenced the interpretations of netizens, with most aligning their views with those of the sources. This finding highlights the notion that credible public figures in digital media discourse not only advocate for gender equality but also play a crucial role in shaping public opinion positively. Eventually, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship between media representation, source credibility, and constructing audience meaning in contemporary social issues.

**Keywords:** Digital media and gender; Gender advocacy; Gender representation; Male sources; Reception analysis

### ABSTRACT INDONESIA:

Penelitian kualitatif ini menganalisis bagaimana isu gender dibentuk dalam konten talkshow Narasi di akun Youtube Najwa Shihab episode “Susahnya Jadi Perempuan”. Pembentukan isu tersebut dipengaruhi oleh banyak faktor, termasuk pemilihan narasumber laki-laki dengan latar belakang identitas yang berbeda. Wacana yang dibentuk oleh media dapat memengaruhi pemaknaan khalayak (netizen) yang menonton konten tersebut. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah melakukan komparasi antara wacana media dan pemaknaan khalayak, serta mengaitkannya dengan peran narasumber dalam isu tersebut. Data penelitian ini diperoleh dari transkrip wawancara narasumber dan komentar netizen melalui fitur komentar langsung. Peneliti menganalisis data-data tersebut menggunakan analisis resepsi oleh Stuart Hall dan analisis semiotika Ferdinand de Saussure. Untuk memperluas pemahaman, peneliti membahas temuan dengan menggunakan teori resepsi yang juga dirumuskan oleh Stuart Hall dan mengelompokkannya ke tiga kategori pemaknaan, yakni *the dominant-hegemonic position*, *the negotiated-code or position*, dan *the oppositional code*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keterlibatan narasumber dalam episode ini merupakan cerminan upaya advokasi isu gender. Semua narasumber yang terlibat memiliki perspektif pro kesetaraan gender dan berdampak pada pemaknaan netizen, yang sebagian besar menunjukkan keselarasan dengan pandangan narasumber. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa kehadiran figur publik yang kredibel dalam diskursus media digital tidak hanya merepresentasikan advokasi gender, tetapi juga dapat membentuk opini publik secara positif. Studi ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman tentang relasi antara representasi media, kredibilitas narasumber, dan konstruksi makna audiens dalam konteks isu sosial kontemporer.

**Kata Kunci:** Advokasi gender; Analisis resepsi; Media digital dan gender; Narasumber laki-laki; Representasi gender

## Introduction

The presence of digital media, such as social media, websites, podcasts, and others, has expanded the space to discuss gender issues that were previously limited due to domination by conventional media. Before the digital media era, conventional media such as TV, radio, magazines, and tabloids were mainstream mass media that had the power to portray and display gender issues in various forms of media products such as news, soap operas, films, advertisements, songs, and so on. However, what was displayed by conventional media often intersected with gender-based discrimination practices, especially against women. Television in Indonesia filled airtime with audio-visual products that still depicted women with nuances of conservative gender roles. For example, making female sources and issues objects of ‘audience participation game’ and turning them into media commodities (Wati, 2014), broadcasting advertisements emphasizing women’s domestic roles with motherhood ideology manifested in children’s milk advertisements (Augustine dan Juniarti, 2022), airing popular songs that position women as the “other” (Dewi & Primasti, 2022), and featuring soap operas depicting female characters who always depend on male figures in their storylines (Malayati & Masrurroh, 2022).

In 2024, research conducted by Elyanida (2024) showed that many primetime television programs in Indonesia still maintain traditional stereotypes that restrict certain genders. Nevertheless, this research also observed that television in Indonesia has undergone many positive changes in discussing gender issues. The study also considers it necessary for conventional media practitioners, especially television, to produce inclusive content. In the digital media era, gender issues continue to evolve and experience significant changes. Gender issues are no longer dominated by certain sources, but the combination of technological advances and evolving gender issues circulate in digital spaces and are negotiated by users (Humphreys dan Vered, 2014). This enables digital media users to be both producers and consumers of media broadly.

However, gender discrimination practices in digital spaces can still occur and develop in various forms. Digital media becomes a new space for forms of harassment against women, such as becoming targets of inappropriate content and other forms from fellow internet users (netizens) (Islami, 2021). For instance, in the context of sexual violence news, currently popular online media often make women passive objects wrapped in sensationalism (Setiadi, 2024).

On the other hand, the presence of digital media also serves as a space to liberate women from masculine domination. For example, research conducted by Maryani, Janitra, dan Rahmawan (2018) shows that social media is used as a gender advocacy medium not only by women but also by men through digital activism “New Men’s Alliance” (ALLB) or “Aliansi Pria Baru.” The National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) also utilizes Twitter as a space to convey messages, disseminate information, and advocate for gender in Indonesia. This alliance also conducts advocacy through social media by ensuring their content reaches and remains relevant to both local and global contexts (Fahadi, 2022). This activism is carried out to encourage policies on state protection against

gender-based violence cases, for example, by using the hashtag “#sahkanruupks” (Nurhayati dan Sukmono, 2022).

This relationship between gender issues and the role of technology illustrates cyberfeminism, which examines how women interact with machines and new technologies while working to address representational inequalities in digital environments (Lamartine & Cerqueira, 2023), offering both opportunities for advancing gender equality while simultaneously presenting various challenges in its implementation (Wahyudi dan Kurniasih, 2022). Digital media plays an important role in building perspectives and shaping public opinion on gender issues. This participatory online communication can connect many people to advocate for gender issues in various parts of the world (Sreeja dan Karthika, 2023). Moreover, if digital campaigns through social media are packaged in an attractive way, they can further foster awareness of gender equality (Mawadda dan Sari, 2024).

Narasi content through Najwa Shihab’s YouTube account serves as an example of utilizing social media as a discussion space with gender topics. One of Narasi’s content episodes that was widely watched by netizens is titled “Susahnya Jadi Perempuan” (The Difficulty of Being a Woman). This episode aired on November 8, 2021, and has been viewed 2.1 million times, received 84 thousand likes, and thousands of comments from viewers responding to the content both directly (live chats) and indirectly (post-stream comments). In Indonesia, Najwa Shihab herself is already known to the public as a feminist, journalist, content creator, and activist. Her personal YouTube account is also often used as an extension for publishing content produced by PT. Narasi Media Pracaya, which was pioneered by Najwa Shihab and her colleagues in 2017.



Figure 1. Screenshot of the episode of “Susahnya Jadi Perempuan” (Catatan Najwa)

Another interesting aspect of this episode is that Narasi involved four male sources to discuss women's issues that include Reza Rahadian (actor), Nadiem Makarim (Minister of Education of the Republic of Indonesia 2019-2024), Tompi (artist and plastic surgeon), and Arie Kriting (artist and comedian). The selection and involvement of these sources are important to analyze. Especially amid the polemic of all-male panels in media and non-media discussion spaces, the presence of male communicators in this content is interesting to research and analyze in terms of how discourse is formed and its impact on women's issues themselves. The selection of sources as communicators or involved parties can influence the legitimacy of the message to be conveyed to the audience (Fadilah et al., 2024). Nevertheless, the emergence of male figures in gender issues is not an absolute indicator that they purely voice equality. This was previously researched by Cobb (2015), who revealed that male figures have greater potential to ignore structural and historical issues of gender inequality still faced by women. Additionally, the research also highlights the potential contradictions and impacts of male involvement in feminism, including how their presence can blur the main goals of feminism and even indirectly reinforce patriarchal norms. One study shows that digital content such as podcasts in Indonesia managed by men has intersected with forms of gender injustice, such as stereotypes, verbal harassment, and the use of diction that demeans women (Apreno et al., 2023).



Figure 2. Live audience comments on the broadcast of the episode of “Susahnya Jadi Perempuan”

(Catatan Najwa)

This research examines how the four sources construct meanings surrounding women's issues in the episode “Susahnya Jadi Perempuan” (“The Difficulty of Being a Woman”). Additionally, it investigates how audiences (netizens) interpret the discourse presented by these four sources. Understanding the dynamics between message framing by male sources and subsequent audience interpretations is crucial, as media discourse plays a significant role in shaping perceptions of gender issues. Hall (in Shaw, 2017) argues that media audiences should not be viewed as passive consumers, but rather as active participants who create meaning from the content they engage with. Hall's (1997) encoding-decoding model demonstrates that both media producers and audiences form and interpret content

through the lens of their own backgrounds, experiences, and knowledge. This process reveals an important consequence: media constructions are deliberately produced with specific considerations—whether political, economic, social, or otherwise—that influence how gender issues are framed and understood by the public.

## Method

This qualitative study analyzes conversation transcripts from four male sources alongside netizen live chat comments captured during the broadcast. We systematically categorized these interview transcripts and audience comments according to six primary topics addressed in the sixty-three minutes and fifty-one seconds broadcast: family influence on men's perspectives toward women, women's higher salaries, beauty standards, virginity, sexual violence, and marital rape. To identify the dominant meanings constructed by the media and corresponding audience interpretations, we employed reception analysis—a comparative methodology that examines the relationship between media discourse and audience discourse within specific contextual frameworks (Jensen, 2002). This approach acknowledges that media audiences are active participants rather than passive consumers, who interpret media content through diverse lenses rather than in uniform ways (McQuail, 2010).

For our comparative analysis, we integrated Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic framework to examine how signs and language function as signifiers and signified elements within the discourse (Lagopoulos dan Boklund-Lagopoulou, 2020). After establishing the comparison between media discourse (preferred reading) and audience interpretations, we classified audience responses using Stuart Hall's three interpretive categories: *the dominant-hegemonic position* (where audiences interpret messages in alignment with the media's intended meaning), *the negotiated-code position* (where audiences partially accept but modify aspects of the media message), and *the oppositional code* (where audiences develop interpretations that contradict or resist the media's intended meaning) (Davis, 2004).

## Results

### Dominant meanings of Narasi content

Our reception analysis revealed several significant findings regarding the dominant meanings (preferred readings) constructed by Narasi through the four male sources' perspectives across six key topics: First, regarding family influence on men's perspectives towards women, we found that the content establishes women as occupying pivotal roles within family structures—not merely as complementary figures but as influential powerholders. This meaning emerged clearly through the personal narratives shared by all four sources. Our analysis identified how Nadiem Makarim characterizes his mother and older sister as authoritative figures (*signifier*) who exercise decisive control over household management and decision-making processes (*signified*). The findings show that Tompi reinforces this meaning by emphasizing that female authority in his household does not diminish male dignity. The data indicates these familial experiences serve as foundational references shaping how these men relate to women in broader contexts.

Second, on the topic of women's higher salaries, our investigation discovered that Narasi constructs a progressive stance on income dynamics, framing women's higher earnings as unproblematic, particularly within relationships grounded in equality principles. This meaning was evidenced through Nadiem Makarim's expression of "extra pride" regarding his partner's professional success and financial achievements. The study found that the content acknowledges persistent "insecurity" among some men within contemporary patriarchal structures while simultaneously positioning such insecurity as outdated and unnecessary.

Third, concerning beauty standards, the analysis revealed that the dominant discourse positions contemporary ideals, especially those perpetuated through social media and popular culture, as systems that exacerbate social inequalities, including gender disparities. We observed that the four sources characterize these standards as profoundly unrealistic, reflecting systematic insecurities about body image while negating physical and identity diversity. Our examination showed that the content articulates a dual pressure: individuals deemed "good looking" face pressure to maintain these standards for social acceptance, while those who cannot meet these ideals risk marginalization. The findings indicate beauty is framed as problematic "social capital" that reinforces structural inequality.

Fourth, in addressing virginity testing, we discovered that the program presents this practice in Indonesia as an explicit form of gender-based discrimination. Our analysis found such practices are characterized as invasions of personal autonomy that operate with inherent double standards—notably when institutions implement them as employment prerequisites specifically for women. The research shows that the discourse frames these practices as fundamentally inequitable and ethically indefensible.

Fifth, regarding sexual violence, our findings indicate the dominant narrative challenges victim-blaming culture. The data shows Nadiem Makarim drives this discussion by examining sexual violence within Indonesian higher education environments, emphasizing the responsibility of universities to address these issues without compromising survivors' rights, which are often subordinated due to power imbalances. We found that Tompi's assertion that humans are "not animals" and should control their desires reinforces the program's positioning of perpetrator accountability rather than survivor responsibility.

Sixth, on the issue of marital rape, our analysis revealed that Narasi constructs this as a matter requiring destigmatization and ongoing public discourse. The findings show all four sources acknowledge the prevalence of marital rape while recognizing victims' reluctance to report such violations. Our examination identified that the unified perspective presented is that sexual relations within marriage fundamentally require mutual consent, challenging traditional notions that marriage automatically confers sexual access.

This systematic analysis reveals how Narasi, through these four male sources, constructs progressive discourses that challenge traditional gender perspectives across multiple dimensions of women's experiences. The research demonstrates the program's attempt to present enlightened male viewpoints that acknowledge and critique systemic gender inequalities while positioning these men as allies in addressing these issues.

## Audience interpretations

Our analysis of netizen responses revealed distinct patterns of interpretation across Hall's three reception categories, with varying levels of alignment with the program's preferred meanings on each topic. The research found that dominant-hegemonic positions—where audiences fully accept the media's preferred meanings—were prevalent in four of the six topics. Regarding family influence on men's perspectives toward women (the first topic), we identified comments such as one from YouTube user Dimas who reinforced the sources' narratives by describing how his father's respectful treatment of his mother positively influenced all family members' gender attitudes. Our analysis of audience responses to the virginity topic (the fourth topic) found unanimous agreement with the program's framing, with netizens emphasizing that virginity is a private matter that can be affected by non-sexual factors like accidents and should not be used as a professional criterion for women. Similarly, on sexual violence (the fifth topic), we observed widespread audience endorsement of the anti-victim-blaming stance, with netizens acknowledging that sexual violence can affect both women and men. The marital rape discussion (the sixth topic) generated strong alignment with the program's messaging, exemplified by comments from users like Andre E asserting that women are not “slaves” for forced sexual gratification even within marriage, while user Genta H emphasized that marital relationships should be based on equality and consent.

Our findings revealed that negotiated positions—where audiences partially accept but modify aspects of the preferred meaning—appeared primarily in discussions of women's higher salaries (the second topic) and beauty standards (the third topic). We identified comments from YouTube user Rini Dewi who, while acknowledging the progressive stance of men accepting higher-earning partners, noted the social reality that many successful women fear being perceived as “unmarriageable.” User Dwiki similarly qualified acceptance of women's higher earnings by noting men's willingness is often contingent on women still fulfilling traditional family “obligations.” On beauty standards (the third topic), we found negotiated interpretations exemplified by user Gabriella, who acknowledged the unrealistic nature of contemporary beauty standards while simultaneously recognizing their role in enhancing her personal confidence.

The research identified oppositional interpretations—where audiences develop contrary meanings to those preferred by the media—particularly in discussions of women's salaries (the second topic) and beauty standards (the third topic). User Karina A expressed opposition to the program's framing by arguing that discussions of women's higher salaries are unnecessary given societal expectations of men as primary breadwinners. On beauty standards, our analysis found that user Pamela Aprilia directly challenged the male sources' critiques as biased, asserting that beauty remains a practical tool for obtaining “justice” in real-world contexts, implying that despite problematic aspects, meeting evolving beauty standards remains important for women in the digital era. These findings demonstrate how audience reception varies significantly across topics, revealing complex negotiations between the progressive gender perspectives offered by male sources and the lived realities and social contexts informing netizens' interpretations.

## Discussion

Based on the data above, our findings reveal that the dominant meanings constructed by the four male sources consistently align with frameworks promoting gender equality. Similarly, audience interpretations predominantly reinforce these perspectives (*dominant-hegemonic position*). While some netizens modified their interpretations through personal experiences (*negotiated position*) or critically rejected the sources' meanings (*oppositional position*), these findings ultimately demonstrate that digital media can serve as powerful capital for advancing gender equality movements with broad societal impact. This supports (Fagundes-Ausani (2025) research showing how feminist media outlets effectively combine digital and physical strategies to challenge established gender norms and advance equality movements. Within the increasingly democratized landscape of digital knowledge production, Najwa Shihab and Narasi demonstrate a significant role in challenging conventional media gender narratives. This is accomplished through their deliberate selection of male sources who advocate pro-gender equality perspectives—a strategic encoding choice that reflects Narasi and Najwa Shihab's political commitment to gender advocacy. The impact of these communicator selections has potential to transform gender representation in media through the discourses they construct. However, this transformation depends on communicators maintaining gender sensitivity, ethical communication practices, and respect for individual and gender-based group rights (Widarini, Kusuma, dan Antiey 2024).

The selection of specific communicators represents a calculated political decision in media production. Each communicator embodies non-neutral identities and perspectives, with direct implications for how issues are framed and received by audiences. This phenomenon underscores the importance of examining “whose voice is heard” in digital spaces, as this influences which gender ideologies gain dominance (Popa & Gavrilu, 2015). The selection of these sources likely enhances public trust in Narasi and Najwa Shihab, who have established reputations for consistently addressing gender and minority issues. This credibility is reinforced by the sources' backgrounds: Nadiem Makarim's vocal advocacy against sexual violence in higher education, Arie Kriting's incorporation of gender issues in comedy, Tompi's criticism of unrealistic beauty standards, and Reza Rahadian's acting career (though without specific gender advocacy history).

Our research highlights a significant political action by Najwa Shihab, who leveraged her relationship with then-Minister of Education Nadiem Makarim to advocate for gender issues. His inclusion in 2021 likely reflects a mutually beneficial relationship between Narasi and government policy concerning Permendikbudristek Number 30 of 2021 on Preventing Sexual Violence in Higher Education Institutions. The strategic use of media relationships to influence policy aligns with (Poerwandari et al., (2018) findings that effective women's advocacy in Indonesia requires maintaining close connections with policymakers, where “lobbying or the process of influencing policy makers is as important as monitoring” (p. 502) to ensure accommodation of gender-responsive proposals. The expertise of sources on relevant topics proves crucial for effective gender advocacy—a consideration not universally prioritized by digital media producers who may favor controversial, viral content for economic gain.

The selection of exclusively male sources can be interpreted as challenging the misconception that gender equality is solely driven by and for women. These four pro-equality sources demonstrate that contemporary feminist movements include diverse identity agents. This finding reinforces that gender equality paradigms should be evaluated based on source credibility rather than biological sex. Almassi, (2022) emphasizes that men can make valuable and unique contributions to feminist movements by engaging in allyship masculinity, where they participate in dismantling oppressive structures while acknowledging how their experiences and social positions within patriarchal systems shape both their understanding of gender issues and the nature of their contributions to equality efforts.

Nevertheless, this research does not diminish the importance of women's involvement in gender discourse. Rather, it highlights the significance of intersectional perspectives in digital spaces, considering how factors like race, class, and sexuality interact online. Geerts et al., (2022) emphasize that digital environments simultaneously disrupt and reinforce existing social hierarchies, cautioning against overly optimistic views of digital emancipation by highlighting how certain bodies and identities receive preferential accommodation in online spaces. Their research documents increasing patterns of targeted harassment against women and minority groups based on specific identity characteristics including gender, sexuality, age, and racial or ethnic background. While our study does not comprehensively analyze potential biases emerging from male, upper-middle-class perspectives, it highlights how repeated involvement of gender-sensitive communicators can establish their authority and credibility. Nadiem Makarim exemplifies this pattern; his reputation as an equality-minded public official strengthens through continued participation in such digital content. The evolving digital ecosystem presents both challenges and opportunities for gender equality advocacy, reflecting processes of replication, reinforcement, and resilience related to gender norms and power dynamics in digital spaces Wilhelm (2021).

Audience engagement through live comments demonstrates that source selection affects not only production decisions but also ideological frameworks and audience responses. Netizens actively participate in meaning construction through interpretation processes rather than passively absorbing gender representations. Delwiche & Jacobs (2012) identify key characteristics of modern participatory culture including minimal barriers to expression, support for creating and sharing creations, informal mentorship, members' belief in the value of their contributions, and social connections between participants. Their framework helps explain how ordinary users now actively shape media content rather than merely consuming it. This active reception has significant implications for gender representation—when interacting with sources, netizens simultaneously evaluate source credibility while constructing meaning. The predominance of dominant-hegemonic interpretations among netizens reinforces the equality discourse advanced by the four sources. YouTube's live comment feature functions as an open forum where netizens express opinions, emotions, and interpretations about gender issues, serving as a space for digital political participation and idea exchange. Fuchs (2021) examines how digital public spheres facilitate political communication and debates while noting that their democratic potential is often limited by underlying political economy structures and power imbalances that determine effective participation patterns in online environments.

For effective gender advocacy, communicators' word choices and presentation styles remain crucial instruments (Sharma & Verbeke, 2024). Language usage shapes and influences gender perceptions (Azmy et al., 2024). Applying Hall's encoding-decoding framework, we observe that media producers encode messages through selecting sources who convey gender equality perspectives using specific codes, while decoding manifests in diverse audience interpretations influenced by personal backgrounds and experiences with gender issues (Shaw, 2017). This interpretive diversity underscores the importance of representative content that acknowledges varied perspectives.

The diverse backgrounds of the four sources significantly shape netizen interpretations of gender issues. The episode functions as both interactive content and a circulation space for various perspectives. This source diversity helps prevent information distortion by providing netizens with opportunities to express opinions. Research by Kitchens et al. (2020) shows that exposure to diverse information sources is crucial to overcoming the limitations of echo chambers and filter bubbles, which can otherwise constrain users' exposure to varied viewpoints. The varied backgrounds enrich gender perspectives, encourage critical thinking among netizens, and enhance digital gender discourse quality.

Digital media platforms have transformed gatekeeping mechanisms and communicator selection toward greater inclusivity. However, content success intersects with algorithmic systems that determine audience reach. As Wallace (2018) points out, algorithm-based gatekeepers have become powerful agents in digital information flows, selecting and shaping content according to programmable criteria that may either broaden information diversity or create filter bubbles depending on their governing organization's interests. Social media algorithms influence what content appears on user timelines, affecting advocacy reach (Coudry, 2012). Najwa Shihab's social media accounts presumably have extensive audience reach, maximizing gender advocacy potential. With social media's viral nature, content can be reproduced as short clips across different platforms. While Indonesia still faces significant gaps between women and technology utilization due to limited knowledge in accessing and producing technology-based information (Suwana, 2017), female content creators like Najwa Shihab play crucial roles in presenting authentic women's perspectives. Digital activist content creators can effectively engage their followers to critique outdated gender models while starting calls for action on better policies, as demonstrated by social media campaigns that mobilize followers around specific gender equality issues (D'Amelio, 2024).

## Conclusion

The selection of sources in digital products reflects deliberate policies and political actions with specific purposes. The transformation of this selection process represents an important step toward fairer gender representation and acceptance in the digital media environment. As media continues to evolve toward becoming more interactive and participatory, the co-creation of gender narratives through communicator selection remains a crucial site for negotiation and potential transformation. Our research reinforces that audiences have the potential to adopt and strengthen the perspectives of sources through dominant-hegemonic positions. This is evidenced by how netizens predominantly reinforced the gender equality frameworks advanced by the four male sources in our study. Conversely, if digital content is

not built on principles of gender equality, it similarly has the potential to be adopted and strengthened by audiences. The predominance of supportive interpretations among netizens demonstrates how carefully selected sources can effectively advance gender equality discourse in digital spaces.

Additionally, our findings help understand how to anticipate oppositional interpretations through strategic digital content creation, particularly through selective source identification. The credibility established by sources like Nadiem Makarim, Arie Kriting, Tompi, and Reza Rahadian highlights how personal backgrounds and professional expertise contribute to audience acceptance of gender equality perspectives. This illustrates the importance of strategic communicator selection in effectively encoding gender equality messages. Comparative research on media discourse and audience interpretation becomes essential to understand the communication process for more widespread gender advocacy that reaches diverse audiences. Digital activists like Najwa Shihab demonstrate how leveraging relationships with policymakers and selecting credible male advocates can challenge the misconception that gender equality is solely driven by and for women.

Nevertheless, this research has limitations that it does not comprehensively analyze the underlying factors influencing netizens' interpretations of gender issues presented in digital media. While we identified interpretive positions (dominant-hegemonic, negotiated, and oppositional), we did not comprehensively explore how intersectional factors like race, class, and sexuality might affect these interpretations. The algorithmic systems that determine content reach and the potential echo chambers identified in our discussion also warrant further investigation. Therefore, we recommend future research analyze the specific factors that influence netizen support and reinforcement of media discourse, particularly examining how digital environments simultaneously disrupt and reinforce existing social hierarchies in gender representation.

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