

Representasi Femininitas Jawa Kontemporer Dalam Konten Tiktok

Rania Yamin @raniaayamin (Studi Semiotika Model John Fiske)

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ABSTRACT

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Femininity is often associated with stereotypes of female behavior, appearance, and gender roles that have been passed down from generation to generation. One interesting phenomenon is how Tiktok is used to build and voice narratives about Javanese femininity in the modern era such as on Rania Maheswari Yamin's Tiktok account @raniaayamin. This study uses John Fiske's theory of representation and semiotic analysis and aims to analyze the representation of Javanese femininity in Rania Yamin's Tiktok content, namely on the @raniaayamin account and reveal how social media such as Tiktok can be an effective platform in exploring the relevance of Javanese femininity amidst the development of modernity. The results of this study are that Rania Yamin shows that she does not simply use her identity as a member of the palace family for personal or branding purposes, but consciously positions herself as an active cultural representation as a cultural agent who bridges between tradition and the younger generation.

INTRODUCTION

In the past, the concept of femininity was often limited by social constructs that required women to conform to certain expectations, such as being gentle, understanding, and always prioritizing the role of caregiver. Many people say that beauty is relative, but some of them are still fixated on beauty standards such as fair skin, a face that fits the golden ratio, a tall body, and so on (Basir et al., 2022).

In the current context, the discourse of femininity has expanded, highlighting how women can find strength in their feminine side without feeling trapped by traditional boundaries. A feminine identity is successfully constructed if other people as observers can recognize a "feminine" body that is associated with "feminine" behavior, such as on the Tiktok account of Rania Yamin @raniaayamin, a noblewoman from Surakarta and also an influencer who actively shares content about self-development, spirituality, and content about women (Damean, 2006). Accounts like this often become a source of inspiration and also a role model for young women,

especially in generation Z, in shaping their perception of what it means to be a woman in the modern era.

Through her videos on the TikTok platform, Rania discusses a variety of topics with a calm style and inspiring delivery where she has attracted a lot of followers, especially from young women of generation Z, who want to find out and are interested in the life of a noble princess in this modern era. Rania's content often contains deep insights into how women can find strength in the gentleness and intuition, grace, and submission to patriarchal norms that are often characteristic of the construction of Javanese femininity. Rania Yamin plays a significant role in shaping her audience's views on the concept of traditional femininity in the digital era.



Pict 1. 1 TikTok Account Rania Yamin

(Source: Tiktok @raniaayamin)

One interesting phenomenon is how TikTok is used to build and voice a narrative about Javanese femininity in the modern era. In the midst of globalization that has contaminated Indonesian culture with Western culture, a number of content creators are trying to raise and spread traditional values that are often considered outdated. A TikTok content creator with the account @raniaayamin, uses this platform to present a unique perspective on contemporary Javanese femininity. Through the content she creates on her TikTok account, Rania not only shares her views on women's values in tradition, but also displays and shows her daily life as a woman born into a noble family with cultural symbols and customs that are still very strong.

Discussions about femininity are often associated with feminine characteristics and everything that is considered to reflect the feminine side, such as gentleness, elegance, and compliance with certain norms. However, it is important to understand that femininity should not be trapped in narrow stereotypes because it will limit women's freedom to define themselves. Women have the right to what they want to do and what they don't (Shabira, 2022). Javanese cultural stereotypes about femininity are often imposed by social and cultural norms that shape society's views on the role of women, both in the family, work, and community life, so it is important to reflect and introspect how this concept is understood and applied amidst the dynamics of modern life today.

This study focuses on describing how a Tiktok account can represent traditional femininity amidst the flow of modernization. On Rania Yamin's Tiktok account @raniaayamin which has 608.2 thousand followers and also 114 videos of content, the

researcher took 12 videos with 40 scene clips related to the representation of contemporary Javanese femininity. The selection of these 12 videos was based on the relevance of their content to the values of Javanese femininity, which are displayed through clothing, gestures, expressions, and use of language. Usually, traits that refer to the softness and beauty that are closely associated with femininity can be visualized from soft colors and non-angular shapes (Eva, 2022). Based on the description of the background above, the researcher is interested in compiling a study entitled "Representation of Traditional Femininity in Rania Yamin's Tiktok Content @raniaayamin".

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Representation

Representation is the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged through language, signs, and images. Representation is not only about depicting or reflecting reality, but also about constructing reality itself (Hall, 1997). Hall explains that representation plays a role in mediating how the social world is understood through language, visual images, and other symbolic systems. Hall (1997) through his theory of representation also offers an understanding of how media, both traditional and digital, construct social meanings and values in society. In Indonesia, this can be seen in how social media such as TikTok and Instagram form cultural representations that often play a role in reinforcing certain stereotypes, such as gender and ethnic stereotypes.

Representation involves the use of certain images, language, signs or symbols to express meaning (Fatmawati & An Nur, 2023). This representation is important for everyday life because we will understand how our environment relates to each other. This is because understanding can be produced through a complex combination of interests, education, concerns, tendencies and motivated by understanding that is manifested through principles and trust in the representation process (Hall, 1997). There are two representation processes:

1. Mental representation, mental representation is a concept of something in our minds and is still in abstract form

2. Language representation, language representation is intended to describe the construction of the meaning of a sign. Language plays an important

role in conveying meaning. In order to associate concepts and ideas about something with one or more specific symbols, we need to translate the abstract concept in our minds into the same language (Hall, 1997).

Representation functions like photography which uses the light sensitivity of images to communicate a photographic meaning about a particular person in a scene. Other objects such as exhibitions and displays in museums will be considered to produce a certain language and meaning in the object. Music can also communicate a feeling and idea, even abstraction that refers to anything clearly in the real world (The Open University, 2003).

2.2 Femininity

Femininity is a set of attributes, behaviors, and roles traditionally associated with women in a particular society. Femininity is a construct created based on social and biological factors (Biasini, 2019). Women are part of a society that is very closely related to the issue of public welfare (Tamami, 2019). Representation of beauty and the beauty of women's body shape as physical attractiveness (Surahman, 2015). Femininity is a part of the dominant ideology that plays a role in defining women's lives (McRobbie, 1991).

Physical attractiveness shows how these elements (beauty and body shape) are considered attractive by others, and are used as criteria to attract attention or gain social recognition. The inability to meet the standards of beauty in society causes women's self-confidence and body image to be low so that they decide to do activities that they feel can make them beautiful and improve their body image (Nafi Ibdiyana Musyarrifani, 2022).

Feminist theory develops a system of ideas about social life that positions women as objects and subjects, as actors, and knowers (Ritzer, 2005). In the context of femininity, it is often socially constructed, making women objects in beauty standards, gender roles, and social expectations. However, on the other hand, women also have a role as subjects who can negotiate and redefine the meaning of femininity according to the experiences and social changes that occur. Women can be subjects involved in positive activities in society, and can also redefine or eliminate their roles as wives, mothers, or working women (Putriana, 2017).

Femininity is currently practiced by women's bodies and recorded or repeatedly displayed through media, advertisements, films, and novels (Taylor, 2003). In this context, women's bodies, as the main medium, become a space for the expression of femininity that is shaped and directed by social norms that continue to develop. In other words, femininity is not only an identity that is owned, but also something that is manifested and played in various aspects of life, especially through the influence of media that reinforces certain images of how women "should" behave and appear in public.

2.3 Javanese Femininity and Types of Categorization

Femininity in Javanese culture is a social construct that places women in certain roles that are in accordance with the customary values and moral teachings that are upheld in Javanese society. They play a role in preserving traditions, respecting social norms, teaching traditional languages and knowledge, and maintaining social balance and harmony in society (Abidin et al., 2023).

The character of Javanese femininity is very identical to Javanese culture, such as speaking softly, being calm, quiet or calm, not liking conflict, prioritizing harmony, upholding family values, being able to understand and comprehend others, being polite, having high self-control or being controlled, having high endurance to suffer, playing an economic role, and being loyal or having high loyalty (Fitriani et al., 2019).

In the process of anchoring at least that mental linearity in the representation of modernity among Javanese women is a journey of *dadi wong* or *dadi modern* (Permanadeli, 2015). In relation to Javanese femininity, this concept can be explained through how Javanese women display their feminine identity in everyday life, including in behaving, dressing, speaking, and interacting with the social environment. Javanese femininity is not only derived from traditional values such as politeness, refinement, and obedience, but is also continuously negotiated in the context of modernity. In Javanese culture, the image, role and status as women have been created by culture (Putri & Nurhajati, 2020). In Javanese culture, women and beauty are likened to a coin with two sides that are close together because expressions and symbols regarding women's beauty always refer to things that are feminine and motherly. Women are considered a

symbol of beauty that contains the meaning of refinement, elegance, gentleness, and others (Ariani, 2023). Women are bound by cultural values inherent in traditional society (Javanese cultural values) (Budiati, 2010).

2.4 Semiotika John Fiske

Semiotics is a social science model in understanding the world as a system of relationships that has a basic unit called a "sign" (Hasbullah, 2020). Semiotics comes from the Greek word, *semeion* which means sign. The sign itself is defined as something that can represent something else based on social convention. These signs will appear in human communication through language, both oral and sign. Briefly, semiotic analysis is a way or method to analyze and give meaning to the symbols contained in a package of message symbols or texts. The text referred to in this relationship is all forms and systems of symbols (signs) both in the mass media (such as various television broadcast packages, print media caricatures, films, radio dramas, and various forms of advertising) and outside the mass media.

So, semiotics is the science of signs. This science assumes that social phenomena or society and its culture are signs. This means that semiotics studies the systems, the rules, that allow these signs to have meaning. In other words, semiotics studies the relationship between the components of signs, as well as the relationship between these components and the community that uses them.

The semiotic approach is often used in text analysis, both in language, media, films, and popular culture. Semiotic analysis focuses on how signs are used to create meaning in various contexts, including social and cultural contexts. In the context of visual analysis, semiotics functions as a tool to understand the representation of images, symbols, and colors in the media. Semiology or better known as semiotics, which is defined as a study of signs that aims to reveal the meaning of related symbols (Shofa & Astri Utami, 2017). In this study, the researcher used John Fiske's semiotic theory, in semiotics (the science of signs) there are two main concerns, namely the relationship between signs and their meanings, and how a sign is combined into a code (Fiske, J., Hartley, J. 2003). Text is the main focus of attention in semiotics. Text in this case can be interpreted broadly, not just written text. Anything that has a communication sign system, such as that found in written text, can be considered text,

for example films, soap operas, soap opera dramas, quizzes, advertisements, photography, and even football broadcasts (Fiske, J. 2007).

Fiske analyzes television programs as "texts" to examine the various socio-cultural layers of meaning and content. Fiske disagrees with the theory that mass audiences consume the products offered to them without thinking. Fiske rejects the idea of "audiences" that assume an uncritical mass. He suggests "audiences" with different backgrounds and social identities that allow them to receive different texts. According to John Fiske, semiotics is the study of the signifiers and meanings of sign systems; the science of media; or the study of how signs of any kind in society communicate meaning.

John Fiske argues that there are three main areas of study in semiotics, namely:

a. The sign itself. This consists of the study of different signs, how they relate to the people who use them. Signs are human constructions and can only be understood in terms of the people who use them.

b. Codes or systems of organizing signs. This study includes how codes are developed to meet the needs of a society or culture to exploit the communication channels available to transmit them.

c. The culture in which codes and signs operate. This in turn depends on the use of those codes and signs for its own existence and form.

John Fiske's semiotics offers a comprehensive approach to analyzing how signs in media create and represent meaning. By dividing the analysis into three levels – reality, representation, and ideology, Fiske provides a useful framework for understanding how media reflect and shape culture.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a semiotic analysis method. This approach was chosen because it is appropriate for studying the representation of meaning in social media, especially in TikTok content that displays representations of contemporary Javanese femininity. The qualitative approach was chosen because it focuses on an in-depth understanding of subjective experiences and the meanings given by individuals to social phenomena. This qualitative research is only descriptive and describes findings in the field without requiring a hypothesis. This method also raises facts, circumstances, variables, and phenomena that occur when the research is taking place and presents them as

they are. In this study, the author will collect data, population and sampling techniques, and end it with conclusions based on data analysis.

Qualitative research aims to explore and understand the meaning given by individuals or groups to a phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). This study uses a qualitative approach that aims to understand the meaning, representation, and ideology contained in social media content. Qualitative methods were chosen because they are able to explore phenomena in depth through data interpretation, especially in cultural and social contexts. The data collected were in the form of videos, texts, and visual symbols from TikTok content, which were then analyzed to reveal the meaning behind the representations displayed. This study emphasizes an in-depth exploration of the social and cultural contexts that underlie the content.

RESULT

Based on the results of data analysis related to Rania Yamin's Tiktok content videos that are relevant to the representation of contemporary Javanese femininity that has been studied, the researcher has concluded 3 levels of John Fiske's analysis, namely:

1. Reality Level

- Simplicity and Modesty



Pict 2.2 Rania Yamin Fashion

Visually, modesty is evident from the way Rania dresses. She always wears traditional clothing such as kebaya kutubaru, batik cloth, or closed slippers, all of which reflect the values of Javanese women's dress etiquette. Not only covered and modest, the clothes she wears are also often combined with soft or classic colors such as black, light brown, and pastel, which strengthen the impression of elegance and not being flashy.

In addition, Rania rarely wears excessive make-up on her face even at big events, such as the use of light powder, thin blush on, and nude pink lipstick which also supports a soft, simple, but still elegant impression. She displays the figure of a Javanese woman who is calculating in maintaining her appearance, but remains loyal to the norms of politeness that are not vulgar or demonstrative.

- Softness

This gentleness is apparent from various aspects, both visual, vocal, gestural, and the atmosphere that he creates in the narrative of his content.

- Visual



Pict 2.3 Rania Yamin Fashion

Rania always chooses clothes with colors that tend to be soft such as white, peach, nude pink, to light brown. Even when wearing a black or dark kebaya, floral motifs and fine brocade details still give an elegant and not harsh impression.

- Gesture



Pict 2.3 Rania Yamin Gesture

the way she walks slowly, sits on her knees, bows politely, or stands with her arms crossed. She never shows any rude, hasty, or aggressive movements. Even when speaking in the video, her soft intonation and coherent narration create a calm and

gentle nuance. In terms of narration and speaking style, Rania always conveys information with gentle and respectful words, both to her ancestors, culture, and audience. She does not use a sarcastic style of speaking, harsh humor, or offensive comments, but instead shows an attitude full of empathy, warmth, and respect for tradition.

2. Interpretation Level

- Shooting Technique

1. Long Shot

Rania often uses long shots to show the atmosphere and context of the place as a whole, especially when in the palace environment, ancestral graves, or during traditional ceremonies. This technique is used to show the integrity of the cultural and architectural background, and to give the audience space to understand who is involved in the traditional activities being carried out.

2. Medium Shot

This technique is often used by Rania because she wants to display clothing or interact narratively with the audience. This technique shows the details of the kebaya, makeup, and body gesture.

DISCUSSION

Of the 12 contents studied, it was found that the level of ideology that was consistently formed and represented was the idea of modern Javanese femininity, namely the image of Javanese women who still uphold traditional values such as politeness, gentleness, courtesy and obedience but are not trapped in rigid or conservative traditional narratives. However, this representation is not intended to form a narrative that Javanese women will only be considered ideal if they continue to wear kebaya or submit to old cultural rules. On the contrary, Rania constructs the image of contemporary Javanese women who choose to wear kebaya as a form of cultural expression, not as a form of forced identity or demands of norms. The statement that Rania Yamin is not just a symbol of conservative Javanese women, but rather a young woman who is culturally aware, sovereign over her body and appearance, and actively chooses moments

to display her traditional side, reflects an interesting ideological transposition within the framework of cultural semiotics. In the context of the representation of contemporary Javanese femininity on platforms such as TikTok, Rania not only displays kebaya and classic makeup as symbols of obedience to tradition, but she actually embeds a new, more complex meaning that being a Javanese woman does not have to be identical to being confined by patriarchal values or absolute attachment to tradition.

Rania's content shows an inclusive ideology where a value accepts the diversity of ways of being a Javanese woman in the digital era. This ideology rejects the essentialization or simplification of culture and gender that boxes women into a single form, such as "Javanese women must always be gentle, must always wear kebaya, must always be passive and obedient." Instead, Rania shows that Javanese femininity can be expressed in flexible and even aesthetic ways, without eliminating the spiritual and historical meaning behind each cultural symbol she wears. She can wear a kebaya at the Mangkunegaran palace, but she is also free to wear contemporary clothing, style her hair modernly, or dress up according to her personal taste.

Rania Yamin shows that she does not merely use her identity as a member of the royal family for personal or branding purposes, but consciously positions herself as an active cultural representation as a cultural agent that bridges tradition and the younger generation. This shows that the ideology offered by Rania in her content is both educational and performative. She is not "selling" the exoticism of Javanese culture in the sense of shallow commodification, but rather actively building a new understanding that culture is not a rigid heritage, but something that can be lived and communicated in a way that is in accordance with the times. She presents herself as a "living heritage" that not only shows clothing or traditions, but also shows daily life and values such as politeness, gentleness, and obedience in a form that is relevant to the lives of today's women.

The ideological level in Rania Yamin's TikTok content can be understood in depth through Clifford Geertz's framework of Javanese culture. According to Geertz, Javanese culture teaches that women have an important role in maintaining harmony and politeness in society. This can be seen from the attitude of humility, surrender, and self-control that is always upheld by Javanese women. This

culture also places women in a social system that is orderly and full of symbolic meaning. In this context, the ideology of traditional Javanese femininity is shaped by social and cultural values that make women a representation of gentleness in the structure of society.

Rania continues to present herself as a woman who obeys the customs and norms of the palace, namely by wearing kebaya, speaking softly, and being active in cultural rituals, and she also appears as a young woman who is active on social media, speaking in a personal narrative style, and using kebaya as a form of free and creative expression of identity.

In Clifford Geertz's framework, Javanese culture is very thick with symbolism and deeply rooted social order, including in shaping women's identities and roles. According to Geertz, the ideology of Javanese femininity is not only seen from external aspects such as clothing or gestures, but also as a form of expression of deep cultural values such as *andhap asor* (humble), *laku sabar*, *laku pasrah* (surrender), and high self-control. These values do not stand alone, but are part of a social system that directs how women should behave in order to maintain harmony in society. In the context of Rania Yamin's TikTok content, this ideology of Javanese femininity is represented in a contemporary way. Rania not only displays symbolic values such as kebaya, *konde*, and polite body language, but also actively voices the values of Javanese women in a modern form. She shows that being a Javanese woman today does not mean being confined to a domestic role alone, but can be an active, educated, and vocal cultural actor.

CONCLUSION

Through John Fiske's semiotic analysis, it can be concluded that Rania Maheswari Yamin through the content she uploaded on her personal Tiktok account, @raniaayamin, significantly represents contemporary Javanese femininity. Based on observations of 12 videos consisting of a total of scenes, a strong trend was identified in the way Rania presents herself and her environment, namely through a careful and harmonious combination of traditional elements inherent in the identity of the Mangkunegaran Palace with Rania's personal style that reflects modernity. Through Fiske's three-level analysis approach, namely the level of reality, the level of representation, and the level of ideology, it can be

seen that each layer of Rania Yamin's content contains complex, symbolic cultural meanings, and is full of negotiations between traditional values and contemporary expressions.

Rania Yamin's content displays concrete and everyday visual elements that are closely related to Javanese culture. For example, the use of *kutubaru kebaya*, buns, batik, and closed slippers; subtle gestures such as sitting on one's knees, walking slowly, folding one's arms during ceremonies; to natural facial makeup dominated by nude and pastel colors. All of these elements reflect the values of traditional Javanese femininity put forward by Clifford Geertz, such as *andhap asor* (humility), *laku pasrah* (surrender), and high self-control. Thus, from a Geertzian perspective, Rania's content reaffirms the role of women as guardians of social harmony and symbols of politeness in the Javanese cultural order.

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