Construction of Gender Performativity in Mama Lela Series on dika_bj YouTube Channel

Indah Nurul Ainiyah[1], Poppy Febriana[2]

[1,2] Program Studi Ilmu Komunikasi, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, (Sidoarjo, Indonesia)
E-mail korespondensi: poppyfebriana@umsida.ac.id

ABSTRAK

This study aims to examine the construction of gender performativity in the Mama Lela series on the Youtube Channel dika_bj. This comedy drama series tells the story of the daily lives of the people of Pojok Village in East Java and has become a popular entertainment consumption with the unique character appeal of each character. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a netnographic analysis method to explore the pattern of gender construction in the series. The theoretical framework includes the social construction theory by Berger and Luckman, and the gender performativity theory by Judith Butler to analyze the fragmentation of gender identity and challenges to conventional gender roles. The main data is in the form of Mama Lela video uploads, while audience comments and video descriptions are used as supporting data and to enrich the analysis. The results showed that gender construction in the Mama Lela series on Dika_bj's YouTube channel is constructed through various social roles played by male main characters, such as single mother, best friend, neighbor, brother, and sister in law.

Keywords: Gender, Youtube, Konstruksi Sosial

PENDAHULUAN

Digital media has become one of the main spaces for the production and reproduction of gender identity, including on the YouTube platform, which presents a variety of popular culture based content (Sitinjak, 2024). One interesting phenomenon in this realm is the Mama Lela series uploaded on Dika_bj YouTube channel. The series highlights the daily life of people in a corner village in East Java with a comedy drama approach that is thick with local cultural values. The series can be an effective medium for constructing local culture to a wider audience (Raguan et al., 2024). One aspect that stands out in this series is the character of Mama Lela, a woman played by a male actor, including all the cast in the Mama Lela series also played by men.

Febrianto asserts that gender is performative, where individuals normalize gender performance for others and self belief (Febrianto et al., 2023). In addition, gender is reiterative because society collectively and repeatedly performs gendered behaviors (Indriyany et al., 2021). This phenomenon can be analyzed through the perspective of gender performativity as proposed by (Butler, 1990) The concept of gender performativity states that gender identity is not biological or essential, but the result of a series of actions, verbal expressions, and gestures that are constructed and repeated in various social contexts. The concept of gender performativity states that gender identity is not biological or essential, but the result of a series of actions, verbal expressions, and gestures that are constructed and repeated in various social contexts (Butler, 1990).

Mama Lela's character not only shows socially understood feminine expressions, but also illustrates how gender is staged through performative aspects, such as voice intonation, body

language, costume use, and social interactions with other characters in the series. The performativity shown shows how gender construction can be dynamic and contextual according to the audience and the culture that surrounds it (Vigor M. Loematta & Rini Rinawati, 2022).

In the context of entertainment culture, the phenomenon of men playing women is nothing new. This practice can be found in various forms of media, including traditional theater, film, and digital content (Sahrandi, 2017). The various expressions displayed, such as a soft speaking style, more expressive hand movements, and the use of typical female clothing, are part of the socially enacted gender construction. This construction not only serves as a form of entertainment, but also raises discussions about how gender identity is constructed and perceived by society (Sajidah & Rasyid, 2024). In the media, the role of men playing women is also a gender parody that is often used to entertain and question gender identities that are considered stable (Komunikasi et al., 2024).

This research is motivated by the formulation of the problem of how gender construction is displayed in the Mama Lela series which airs on the Dika_bj YouTube channel. Based on the problem formulation, this study aims to explore the form of gender construction in the Mama Lela series, especially through the main character played by men in various social roles such as mother, friend, and neighbor. It also focuses on how elements in the series including narrative, visuals, and dialog contribute to shaping, reinforcing, or even challenging established gender stereotypes in society, as well as how this all takes place in the context of an evolving digital culture.

As one of the most popular series on YouTube, Mama Lela captures people's attention with its strong narrative and unique characterization. Each video airs on Mondays and Fridays at 1 p.m. with an average duration of 27 to 35 minutes. On average, each video reaches up to five million views, and receives appreciation in the form of an average of 150,000 to 170,000 likes and a high level of interaction with 8,000 to 11,000 comments per video.

This reflects that this content has a significant appeal to audiences in terms of the gender constructions presented. The diversity of these constructions indicates that audiences' perceptions of gender in the media are significantly influenced by the social and cultural context in which they live (Junaedi & Mujahidah, 2021). Because media meanings are polysemic, where audiences actively construct diverse meanings according to the differentiation of social backgrounds (Afifah & Febriana, 2024).

Research conducted by Pinasthika examines the meaning of millennial parents towards gender performativity in the film Kucumbu Tubuh Indahku (Pinasthika et al., n.d.). The results of this study show that acceptance of gender diversity is strongly influenced by the social background, culture, and religious values embraced by each individual.

Meanwhile, research by Khavifah examined the social construction of feminine male stereotypes in Karawang, which found that individuals with feminine gender expression often experience social discrimination because they are considered to deviate from traditional masculinity norms (Khavifah et al., 2022). Examining the social construction of feminine male stereotypes in Karawang, it found that individuals with feminine gender expression often experience social discrimination because they are perceived as deviating from traditional norms of masculinity. Furthermore, research by J. Xue examined male cross-gender performances on TikTok, with the result that male feminine performances in digital content are variously accepted by audiences, depending on their cultural context and social values (Xue & Solihat, 2024).

All three studies show that gender performativity in the media receives varied responses according to the social background, culture, and values of the community. However, this study

has a different focus because it examines the construction of gender performativity in the Mama Lela series on YouTube, which features male characters playing female roles in the context of East Javanese local culture, so it is expected to enrich the study of audience acceptance of gender performativity in local culture-based digital content. This research aims to explore how male characters playing female roles in the Mama Lela series can create a new understanding of gender performativity, as well as its impact on audiences in the context of East Javanese local culture, which is expected to make a significant contribution to the study of gender in digital media (Ndun & Bani, 2021).

This research focuses on the construction of gender performativity in the Mama Lela series on YouTube Dika_bj, by examining how the characters and narrative elements in the series present gender as performative and perceived by the audience. This research places the local cultural context of East Java in a comedy drama format as the setting for gender construction, so that it is expected to be able to fill the gap in the study of gender performativity in local culture-based digital content that still lacks attention, especially on the YouTube platform.

In addition, this research also seeks to reveal how audience interaction in understanding gender is constructed in this series based on netnography analysis. As stated by Khozinets who explained that netnography is an adaptation of ethnographic methods to study behavior, interaction, and construction of meaning in online communities, thus enabling researchers to understand how audiences form meanings of gender construction through participation and discussion in digital spaces (Kozinets, n.d.).

In an effort to achieve this goal, this research will analyze how the construction of gender performativity in the Mama Lela series is displayed through various elements in the show. According to Rakhmaniar, performative elements used in characterization such as body language, voice intonation, facial expressions, and social interactions, become an important part in shaping a broader understanding of gender (Rakhmaniar, 2023).

The research used an approach that refers to Judith Butler's gender performativity theory (1990), which states that gender is the result of social construction through performative actions that are constantly repeated. In addition, this research also uses the social construction theory of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966), which emphasizes that gender identity is formed through social interaction and legitimized as an objective reality in society.

To examine this phenomenon, the research applied the netnography analysis method, an adaptation of ethnography that focuses on the interactions and meanings that audiences construct in digital spaces (Kozinets, 2010). Primary data was obtained from Mama Lela's video uploads on Dika_bj's YouTube channel, while secondary data in the form of public comments and responses were used to understand audience perceptions of gender construction in the context of digital culture.

METODE

This study uses a qualitative method with a netnography approach to understand the construction of gender performativity in the Mama Lela series on the Dika_bj YouTube channel and interpret the audience's response to the gender construction. Netnography is an adaptation of ethnographic methods to observe the behavior and interaction of online communities (Kozinets, 2010). This method is relevant because the research focuses on the audience's meaning in the comment section as a digital interaction space. Netnography is a set of specialized research practices related to data collection, analysis, research ethics, and construction, rooted in participant observation.

Primary data are videos of Mama Lela series, while secondary data include audience comments, number of views, likes, and video descriptions. Data collection is done by observing video uploads, noting performative elements such as body language, costumes, intonation, character traits, and collecting audience comments as a form of reception of gender construction.

The stages of netnography in this research refer to Khozinets who divides the netnography research process into five main stages, namely: The first stage is initiation, where the researcher formulates the focus of the research, namely examining how gender construction is displayed in the Mama Lela series and how audiences respond to it through digital interaction. At the initiation stage, this research begins with the selection of relevant data to reveal the construction of gender performativity in the Mama Lela series. The researcher made a selection based on the level of popularity and audience interaction with the videos uploaded on Dika_bj's YouTube channel. By considering the number of views and comments, three videos were selected that were most watched and received high responses from the audience.

At the initiation stage, we selected three videos with the highest number of views and interactions in January and February 2025 as the focus of the research, namely "Kembar 3 Bersama" with 5.4 million views and 8,296 total comments, "Susi Membela Barok" with 5.6 million views and 8,366 total comments, "Akbar Korban Pemaksaan" with 5 million views and 8,547 total comments.

These videos were chosen because they have a high level of engagement, which reflects audience interest and the relevance of the content in shaping the construction of gender performativity. Data from the comment sections of these three videos were analyzed to explore how audiences interpreted the characters and gender constructions in the Mama Lela series.

The second stage is investigation, where the researcher searches and selects data in the form of audience comments on the previously selected videos. These comments will be categorized based on themes related to gender performativity, local cultural constructions, and perceptions of Mama Lela's character as a man playing a woman.

The third stage is interaction, where the researcher will be actively involved in the research process by conducting in-depth observations of audience interaction patterns in the comment section. The aim is to understand how audiences construct meaning towards gender performativity in the series, including how gender stereotypes are maintained or challenged through discussions that arise on digital platforms.

The fourth stage is immersion, where researchers will document key findings based on video uploads and audience comments. At this stage, each performative element in the Mama Lela series, such as voice intonation, body language, costumes, and social interactions between characters, will be analyzed to see how gender is constructed in the context of digital culture. Relevant audience comments will be classified based on the tendency of their opinions towards gender construction in the series.

The last stage is interpretation, in which the researcher elaborates on the findings using Judith Butler's theoretical framework of gender performativity and social construction theory (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). At this stage, the data that has been collected and analyzed will be used to understand how Mama Lela's character becomes a performative form of gender expression, as well as how audiences in digital media interpret and respond to this construction. By applying these five stages of netnography, this research is expected to provide deeper insights into how gender is constructed, performed and negotiated in local culture-based digital content on YouTube.

HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN
Results

The results of this study reveal that gender construction in the Mama Lela series on Dika_bj's YouTube channel is constructed through various social roles played by the main character. The character of Mama Lela, played by a man, consistently displays roles that are traditionally attached to women's identity in the East Javanese cultural context, namely as a single parent, best friend, neighbor, sister, and sister in law. These six roles are not only shown as part of the storyline, but also as a means of expressing complex gender performativity.

The process of data collection and analysis was carried out using the netnography approach, which is divided into five main stages as proposed by Kozinets (2010), and displayed in the form of the following results:

In this stage, the researcher directly observes how Mama Lela's character constructs gender identity through actions, dialog, and social roles displayed in the series. The results of observations in three popular videos, namely Susi Membela Barok, Kembar Tiga Bersama, and Akbar Korban Pemaksaan, show the consistency of Mama Lela's character in portraying various social roles that are culturally attached to feminine identity.

As a single parent, Mama Lela comes across as a strict yet loving mother. In the video entitled "Susi Membela Barok", she scolds Akbar for coming home late at night, but still shows pride when she finds out he has just won a billiards tournament. She says, "You can play as long as you know the time, you're still in school," signaling a typical nurturing mother.

Picture 1

In the video titled "Kembar 3 Bersama", he showed concern by saying, "Bring a raincoat, the weather is uncertain," despite being sick.

Picture 2

She even tries to fix a leaking roof tile, showing the resilience of an independent mother. When her ex-husband, Takim, came and Mama Lela confidently stated, "I can do everything, even fix roof tiles." This statement shows her independence as a woman without dependence on men.

Picture 3

In the video entitled "Akbar Korban Pemaksaan", she loves her son by rejecting Akbar's biological father's action of forcing the egg jamu, and says, "Don't want it if you don't like it".

Picture 4

As a friend, Mama Lela shows emotional closeness to Luluk. In the video entitled "Susi Membela Barok", she helps to apply Luluk's makeup for a wedding.

Picture5

In the video entitled "Kembar Tiga Bersama", they try on twin outfits and compliment each other with happy expressions, signifying the warmth of the relationship between women.

Picture 6

As a neighbor, Mama Lela shows a communicative and solutive character. In the video entitled "Susi Membela Barok", she shares a recipe with Mak Tun, saying "The recipe uses shallots, garlic, and other spices".

Picture 7

In addition, Mama Lela also welcomes new residents by saying "May it be peaceful, mbok, living in this corner village,"

Picture 8

In a video titled "Kembar Tiga Bersama", she mediates a conflict between Susi and Mak Tun over twin shirts, maintaining social harmony between residents.

Picture 9

As an older sister, Mama Lela comes across as a wise and caring adult. In the video entitled "Kembar Tiga Bersama", even though she is sick, she still cooks and leaves an omelette for her younger siblings.

Picture 10

While in the video entitled Akbar Korban Pemaksaan, she fixes Barok's shirt buttons while advising, "Your wife must be advised carefully, she must understand how to be filial,".

Picture 11

As a sister-in-law, Mama Lela is shown as patient and understanding towards Susi. In the video entitled "Susi Membela Barok", she often counsels Susi during an argument with Mak Tun.

Picture 12

In the video entitled "Kembar Tiga Bersama", she continues to set aside food for Susi despite being underestimated. When Susi finally wants to eat an omelette and Mama Lela cannot cook it because she is sick, it shows Mama Lela's unconditional motherhood and sincerity.
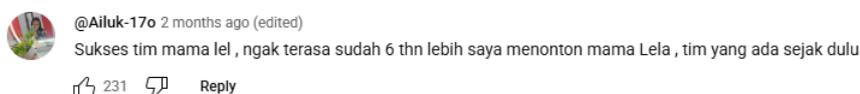
Picture 13

These facts show that Mama Lela's gender construction is strongly built through narratives, expressions, and social relations that are typical of East Javanese women. Her identity as a woman is staged through consistent and real actions, and is widely accepted by audiences in the digital cultural space. This is in line with research by Nurul Hanifah which shows that gender construction in the media often reproduces socially and culturally embedded feminine norms, thus strengthening the image of women in accordance with society's expectations. (Hanifah, 2024).

In the Investigation stage, researchers collected data from the comments section of the videos. The comments were analyzed using thematic categorization techniques to identify various forms of responses to Mama Lela's character, ranging from appreciative comments to forms of resistance to the gender performativity displayed.
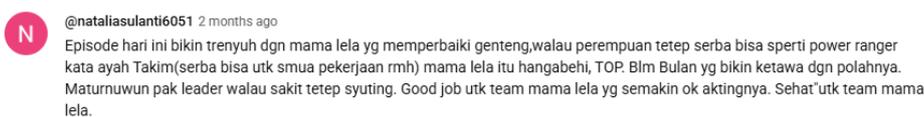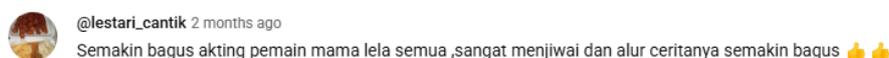
Comments on Video entitled "Kembar Tiga Bersama"

@Ailuk-17o 2 months ago (edited)
Sukses tim mama lel , ngak terasa sudah 6 thn lebih saya menonton mama Lela , tim yang ada sejak dulu

👍 231 👎   Reply

Picture 14

@miftaqomariyah494 2 months ago
Mama Luluk dibikin hamil biar cerita e mkin seru dan menarik ,atau pak RT menikah juga gpp JD mkin seru mama lela cuma saran aj 😊

Picture 15

@nataliasulanti6051 2 months ago
Episode hari ini bikin trenyuh dgn mama lela yg memperbaiki genteng,walau perempuan tetep serba bisa sperti power ranger kata ayah Takim(serba bisa utk smua pekerjaan rmh) mama lela itu hangabehi, TOP. Blm Bulan yg bikin ketawa dgn polahnya. Maturnuwun pak leader walau sakit tetep syuting. Good job utk team mama lela yg semakin ok aktingnya. Sehat"utk team mama lela.

Picture 16

@Tanteheni-xi5vn 2 months ago
Aku klo lagi gk mood nonton mama lela trus mood lagi dehh

Picture 17

@lestari_cantik 2 months ago
Semakin bagus akting pemain mama lela semua ,sangat menjiwai dan alur ceritanya semakin bagus 👍 👍

Picture 18

Comments on Video entitled "Susi Membela Barok"

@ummulmaghfiro6674 2 months ago
Seruu, kereenn,👍👍 bikin ngakak 🤣🤣🤣🤣, konten cerita mama Lela gak pernah gagal untuk menghibur. Goodjob 👍👍, leader & team mama Lela semoga sehat" selalu, terus semangat berkarya, suksess kedepannya.❤️👍✨

Picture 19

@awaliaroseidazevlina9480 2 months ago
WKWKWK SUMPAH IKI LUCUU POLLL SEE 😭 😭 mulai awal sampek akhir jan full ngguyuu kemekel. mantapp mama lela & teamm 😻 😻

Picture 20

@tantyrahayu6614 2 months ago
Mama Lela sekali2 adegannya di tukang sayur donk kan seruu klo ibu2 ngumpul di sana 😁 😁 😁

👍 246   👎   Reply

˄ 9 replies

@dekfa2704 2 months ago
Setujuuuu

👍 7   👎   Reply

@amandasepti5270 2 months ago
Se7

Picture 21

@TrieBudi 2 months ago
Lucuu delok mm lela karo luluk karo wawan
Apik critoe menghibur banget aq guyu dewe delok seneng pol

Picture 22

@Kinar123-wp6uz 2 months ago
Aku telat tapi seru sukses terus mamlel mama lela ❤️ ❤️ 😊 😊

👍 4   👎   Reply

Picture 23

Comments on Video entitled "Akbar Korban Pemaksaan"

@amiiw_22 2 months ago
Pas susi nampar yuni langsung aku pause, kagett bgtt kenceng loh ituuu semoga kedepannya bisa dikurangi perihal main fisiknya 🙏

👍 1.2K   👎   Reply

˅ 127 replies

@velaaa_457 2 months ago
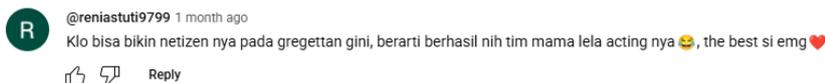Greget mbiii makkk tonn,,yang greget sama makton angkat tangan

👍 1K   👎   Reply

˅ 30 replies

@rahmanisa-r7b 2 months ago
Pas adegan susi nampar yuni aku ngerasa kasian! Karena itu keras banget 😣 Saran aja buat tim mama lela untuk mengurangi adegan" kekerasan antar sesama karena yg nonton channel ini kemungkinan bukan hanya kalangan orang dewasa melainkan anak" juga ada yg nonton! Sehat selalu team mama lela
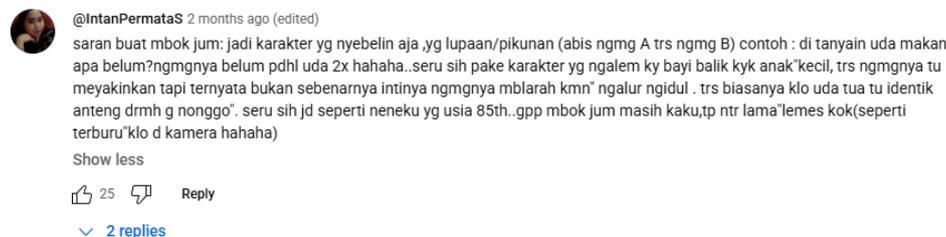
👍 246   👎   Reply

Picture 24

@reniastuti9799 1 month ago
Klo bisa bikin netizen nya pada gregetan gini, berarti berhasil nih tim mama lela acting nya 😂, the best si emg ❤️

👍 👎 Reply

Picture 25

@ummulmaghfiro6674 2 months ago
Cerita mama Lela, makin hari makin super keren 👍, gak pernah bosen ngeliatnya, semangat berkarya, semoga team mama Lela
sehat" selalu,   sukses terus, jaya selamanya. Goodjob 👍 ✨ ❤️

Picture 26

@IntanPermataS 2 months ago (edited)
saran buat mbok jum: jadi karakter yg nyebelin aja ,yg lupaan/pikunan (abis ngmg A trs ngmg B) contoh : di tanyain uda makan
apa belum?ngmgnya belum pdhl uda 2x hahaha..seru sih pake karakter yg ngalem ky bayi balik kyk anak"kecil, trs ngmgnya tu
meyakinkan tapi ternyata bukan sebenarnya intinya ngmgnya mblarah kmn" ngalur ngidul . trs biasanya klo uda tua tu identik
anteng drmh g nonggo". seru sih jd seperti neneku yg usia 85th..gpp mbok jum masih kaku,tp ntr lama"lemes kok(seperti
terburu"klo d kamera hahaha)
Show less

👍 25 👎   Reply

⌄ 2 replies

Picture 27

From the comments collected, it can be seen that the audience showed a high level of acceptance towards the gender construction portrayed by Mama Lela's character. Most of the comments appreciated the role, with many audience members feeling that the character was very relatable to their experiences of mothers, and women in general. Comments that mention that Mama Lela is "like all of our mothers" or "similar to my mother" show that this character is perceived as constructing the ideal female figure in society, which is loving, firm, but also has tenderness. This construction successfully connects the audience with established social norms about women, despite being played by a man.

However, despite widespread acceptance, some comments pointed to minor criticisms that referred to the inappropriateness of a man portraying a female role in a traditional cultural context. Some audience members felt that such gendered constructions could cast doubt on the authenticity of the performance, especially when the role was perceived as too stereotypical or exaggerated. This criticism is more about the authenticity of the construction and whether a man can fully capture the essence of the feminine role in line with societal expectations. However, despite this criticism, there is no sign that the audience as a whole rejects the gender experiment, but rather uncertainty about the social acceptability of this unconventional form of performance.

These facts show that Mama Lela successfully challenges and deconstructs gender stereotypes that have long been institutionalized in society, while still adhering to social expectations of feminine roles through strong narratives, visuals, and dialogue. Mama Lela's character, although played by a man, still internalizes feminine values that conform to societal expectations, such as gentleness, motherhood, and assertiveness.

The series proves that gender construction does not have to be rigid and can be expanded in a more flexible way without losing the essence of the role played. As such, the Mama Lela series illustrates how digital media can play an important role in introducing and discussing more fluid gender norms, as well as opening up space for social experimentation in shaping public perceptions of a more inclusive and dynamic gender identity.

At the interaction stage, researchers observed how the audience responded to and interpreted Mama Lela's character in the comments section. In general, the audience accepted Mama Lela's character and the role she played, considering her an ideal representation of women

even though she was played by a man. Comments such as "Mama Lela is like our mother" or "She is a loving mother," show the audience's acceptance of the construction shown without disputing who plays the character.

Despite many supportive comments, some audience members also gave responses that showed acceptance of the role by noting the quality of the role played, not the gender of the actor. Comments such as "Even though she is a man, Mama Lela can still show her motherly side very strongly" show that the audience not only accepts this character as entertainment, but also appreciates the values presented, such as compassion and assertiveness.

Overall, the comments collected show that the audience accepts the gender roles staged by Mama Lela, considers them appropriate to women's social roles, and considers them a relevant social experiment in the digital space.

In the immersion stage, researchers went deeper into the narrative and visual structures that shape Mama Lela's character. The facial expressions, voice intonation, style of dress, dialogue choices, and social context that appear in each scene were analyzed. At the same time, audience comments were analyzed to see how the audience was able to capture or even internalize the meanings conveyed.

At the interpretation stage, the researcher collects the data that has been obtained, analyzes the forms of gender construction displayed and the tendency of audience response. Mama Lela appears as a complex feminine construction, not only through gestures and visuals, but also in the social relations built with other characters. The findings show that audiences not only accept this role as entertainment, but also as an ideal and relatable form of female construction, even though it is played by a man.

This phenomenon of declining comments suggests a fluctuating dynamic in audience participation in the content. The decline could reflect a number of possibilities, such as a decline in the emotional appeal of the narrative, a saturation or diminishing intention of the audience to comment on videos they have previously watched, or simply a temporary change in audience interests and trends. In this context, fluctuations in the number of comments reflect spontaneous and varied responses from the audience that are not always linear with the number of views. This data is therefore important for understanding how digital engagement with video content is dynamic and influenced by various social and technical factors.

The findings illustrate that in the digital space, audience participation is not only determined by the quantity of views, but also by the relevance of the content, the emotional connection, and the social momentum that accompanies the viewing. Thus, this result is an initial basis for further reading how the construction of gender in the Mama Lela series is interpreted by the public actively in a constantly moving and negotiating interaction space.

Discussion
The Construction of Gender Displayed in Mama Lela Series

The Mama Lela series shows that gender is not something that is fixed, but is formed through social actions that are constantly performed. This is in line with Judith Butler's gender performativity theory (1990), which states that gender is not an inherent identity from birth, but is formed through repeated social practices. The character Mama Lela, a man who plays a woman, performs various social roles such as single mother, neighbor, and friend by utilizing gestures, speaking styles, and clothing that reflect feminine expressions. These representations are

accepted by the audience as natural, reflecting that forms of gender expression that were once considered deviant are now beginning to normalize in the context of digital space.

The audience's positive response in the comments section shows that this gender performativity has entered a wider area of social acceptance. Comments such as "Mama Lela is like our mother" or "the character relates to our daily lives" reflect how experimental gender expression in the series has been normalized by the public. This signifies a process of naturalizing diversity, where identities that were once considered unconventional are now recognized as part of the legitimate gender spectrum in digital media.

However, this process cannot be separated from entrenched social constructions. As explained by Berger & Luckmann (1966), social reality is formed through institutionalization and internalization of recurring values. In this case, gender in the Mama Lela series is shaped through a combination of local cultural values and public expectations of the ideal female role.

Mama Lela's character still operates within the confines of patriarchal norms that place women as the guardians of domestic harmony, even though it is performed by male actors. Thus, on the one hand, the series opens up space for gender flexibility. But on the other hand, it still maintains the structure of institutionalized traditional roles.

In addition, it is important to note that the digital interactions that appear on the surface are not entirely organic. The reduction in the number of comments on some videos indicates the possibility of moderation, either through manual deletion by creators or YouTube's algorithmic system that automatically filters out certain comments. This suggests that audience interaction in digital spaces is not entirely free, but rather managed and curated as part of image and content control strategies. Thus, what appears as public acceptance of gender performativity is also the result of technological interventions that influence the direction of digital communication.

Visual Language, Dialogue and Narrative: Negotiating Gender Stereotypes

The narrative, visual and dialogue elements in the series play an important role in shaping public perceptions of gender construction. For example, the use of emotional dialogue, visualization of soft facial expressions, as well as social scenarios such as household conflicts or solidarity between neighbors all reinforce the feminine image associated with Mama Lela's character. In this context, the media is not just a mirror of reality, but also an active tool that constructs social stereotypes through the repetition of images and symbols.

However, this stereotype formation is not passive. Viewers participate in the process of deconstructing stereotypes through comments that support the diversity of gender expression. It is important to note that the construction of gender in today's digital media is increasingly interactive and collective: not only shaped by content creators, but also by the active response of the audience.

Mama Lela's content, which was originally intended as entertainment, has triggered a discourse on the acceptance of fluid gender identities. In the comments section, many audiences did not question who played the characters, but rather focused on the quality of the values displayed such as compassion, assertiveness, and empathy. This construction helped reshape the way the public understood gender roles through more reflective and participatory interactions.

When Construction Becomes Commodity: Digital Capitalism and Meaning Distribution Strategies

This phenomenon can be understood more deeply through the perspective of digital capitalism, where content is created not solely for education, but also to fulfill market logic and platform algorithms. In the context of Mama Lela's series, the five principles of digital capitalism include:

Profit-Driven Models, Mama Lela series continues to produce content that invites high engagement in order to maintain traffic flow and monetization potential. Characters and conflicts are made interesting to encourage engagement. In the context of profit-driven models in digital capitalism, Mama Lela, played by men, illustrates a strategy to increase engagement in order to gain financial benefits. Based on Fuchs' (2014) theory of digital capitalism, platforms like YouTube prioritize content that triggers high interaction, such as comments and shares. The choice of a male character playing a female character in the series attracts the attention of the audience and encourages more interaction, which in turn increases profits.

When compared to other series such as Salma Jatuh Cinta by Abiel Atan or Keluarga Mak Beti by Arif Muhammad, Mama Lela offers something fresher. While the content from Abiel Atan and Mak Beti is also popular, they rely more on humor and more conventional daily life themes. Audiences may feel bored with the same formula, while Mama Lela's unusual gender experimentation triggers greater attention.

By choosing a man to play a female character, Mama Lela manages to offer an evocative social experiment that triggers more discussion and interaction. This is in line with digital capitalism, where more provocative and creative content can increase engagement and profits for creators and platforms.

Engagement Algorithms YouTube algorithms tend to prioritize content that is able to trigger emotional reactions such as laughter, sympathy, or even controversy, as seen in gender parodies. These contents more often get a wider reach as the platform's algorithms prioritize watch duration and high interaction rates, which in turn increases audience visibility and engagement.

Sensational Content Wins, Gender construction in a dramatic and humorous performative form is an effective strategy to get clicks and comments. This content, despite containing stereotypes, goes viral faster than balanced reflective content. According to Judith Butler (1990: 140), gender is an identity that is temporally shaped and confirmed through the repetition of certain actions in social space. Gender identity emerges through the formation of body styles, movements, and other physical expressions that, on a daily basis, create the impression of a consistent and fixed gender identity.

Meanwhile, the Women's Studies Encyclopedia (Tierney, 1999) explains that gender is a cultural construction that aims to distinguish roles, behaviors, ways of thinking, and emotional characteristics between men and women that develop in society. In the perspective of Hillary M. Lips, as stated in his book Sex & Gender: an Introduction (Tiurmaida et al., 2024), gender is understood as a set of social and cultural expectations directed at individuals based on their gender, both male and female.

This view is in line with the thinking of feminists such as Linda L. Lindsey (Lindsey, 2015), , who asserts that all forms of social arrangements regarding how someone is seen as male or female are part of the study of gender, namely how masculinity and femininity are socially and culturally determined.

Economic Barriers, Educational or progressive content on gender issues tends to struggle to gain high visibility compared to content like Mama Lela, which utilizes sensational strategies by highlighting unconventional gender roles and attention-grabbing conflicts. This is due to the business model of digital platforms that prioritizes content that can generate more interaction and longer viewing duration, which is often found in entertaining or controversial content. As a result, while educational content has high social value, it often loses out in terms of reach and exposure.

Reinforced Biases, The algorithmic systems of digital platforms indirectly reinforce types of content that feature caricatured or parodied gender constructs, as seen in some forms of stereotype-based entertainment. This happens because algorithms favor content that generates high engagement, which is often found in constructs that are entertaining but not profound. Content that presents gender in a more complex and inclusive way, offering a diversity of authentic gender identities, is often marginalized or receives less attention. As such, algorithms reinforce existing social biases, reducing the opportunity for more diverse and in-depth constructions of gender to gain a wider audience.

Thus, digital capitalism not only influences the form and content of gender constructions in the media, but also affects the way content is consumed and responded to by the public. The Mama Lela series is a concrete example of how gender construction can be produced, circulated and interpreted within the framework of a digital system controlled by economic logic and technological algorithms. This discussion shows that in contemporary digital culture, gender construction is not only a discourse of identity, but also part of the strategy of capital and the distribution of meaning that is continuously negotiated between creators, platforms, and audiences.

KESIMPULAN

To answer the formulation of the problem, this study shows that gender construction in the Mama Lela series is displayed through the social roles taken by the main character, who although played by a man, manages to perform various feminine roles such as single mother, best friend, neighbor, sister, and sister in law. Mama Lela's character illustrates dynamic gender performativity, where gender is not considered a fixed identity, but rather something that is shaped through repeated social actions and expressions, in accordance with Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity. In addition, visual and narrative elements such as dialog, facial expressions, costumes, as well as social interactions with other characters play a role in shaping gender construction that leads to social acceptance by the audience. The series also influences existing gender stereotypes in society by introducing more flexible constructions and opening up space for discussion on gender diversity in digital media. While there were some critical responses regarding the genre's incongruity with traditional social roles, overall, audiences accepted the constructions presented as part of a relevant social experiment in the digital space. Through this analysis, it can be seen how digital media, particularly YouTube, plays an important role in shaping, introducing and discussing more flexible and dynamic gender norms in local culture.

DAFTAR PUSTAKA

Afifah, A., & Febriana, P. (2024). Analisis Semiotika Stereotip Gender dalam Film 'Hanum dan Rangga.' *Indonesian Culture and Religion Issues*, *1*(1), 10. https://doi.org/10.47134/diksima.v1i1.21

Butler, J. (1990). Performativity, Precarity a. *Aibr*, *4*(3), 13.

Febrianto, E., Bagus, G. P., Arjawa, S., Punia, N., Ayu, N., & Pramestisari, S. (2023). *Performativitas Gender Selebriti Instagram (Selebgram) Queer Pada Masyarakat Jakarta Selatan*. 1–14.

Hanifah, N. (2024). *Menentang Stereotip Gender dalam Iklan SKINTIFIC x Fimela – International Women's Day 2024*. *5*(4).

Indriyany, I. A., Hikmawan, M. D., & Utami, W. K. (2021). Gender dan Pendidikan Tinggi: Studi tentang Urgensitas Kampus Berperspektif Gender. *JIIP: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pemerintahan*,

6(1), 55–72. https://doi.org/10.14710/jiip.v6i1.9376

Junaedi, F., & Mujahidah, N. H. (2021). Penerimaan Penonton Mengenai Peran Gender Pada Karakter Perempuan Dalam Film Bumi Manusia. *Bricolage : Jurnal Magister Ilmu Komunikasi*, *7*(1), 095. https://doi.org/10.30813/bricolage.v7i1.2084

Khavifah, N., Lubis, F. O., Oxcygentri, O., Singaperbangsa, U., & Abstract, K. (2022). Konstruksi Sosial Stereotip Laki-Laki Feminin (Studi Kasus Pada Laki-laki Feminin di Kabupaten Karawang). *Jurnal Ilmiah Wahana Pendidikan*, *8*(22), 510–518. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7356981

Komunikasi, M. I., Ilmu, F., Politik, I., & Mada, U. G. (2024). *Representasi Stereotip Laki-Laki pada Media Perempuan : Analisis Semiotik pada Media Cosmopolitan . co . id Representation of Male Stereotypes in Women ' s Media : A Semiotic Analysis of Cosmopolitan . co . id Media*. *26*(1), 35–52.

Kozinets. (n.d.). *Netnography*.

Kozinets, R. V. (2010). *NETNOGRAPHY :* 0–22.

Lindsey, L. L. (2015). *Gender Roles: A Sociological Perspective*. https://books.google.co.id/books/about/Gender_Roles.html?id=qjjbCgAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y

Luckmann, P. L. B. and T. (1966). The Social Construction of Reality. In *Great Britain by Allen Lane*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315775357

Ndun, R. M., & Bani, O. D. (2021). *Makna dan Nilai Tuturan Sasaok Pada Masyarakat Rote*. *16*(4), 368–382.

Pinasthika, E. E., Hasfi, N., & Manalu, R. (n.d.). *PEMAKNAAN KHALAYAK TERHADAP PERFORMATIVITAS GENDER DALAM FILM KUCUMBU TUBUH INDAHKU*.

Raguan, S., Supiarza, H., & Nafsika, S. S. (2024). Representasi Nilai Lokalitas Pada Tayangan TV CNN Indonesia Program Inside Jawa Barat. *Ganaya : Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Humaniora*, *7*(2), 316–330. https://doi.org/10.37329/ganaya.v7i2.3278

Rakhmaniar, A. (2023). Peran Bahasa Tubuh Dalam Membangun Kepercayaan Pada Interaksi Pertama (Studi Etnometodologi Pada Remaja Kota Bandung). *WISSEN : Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Humaniora*, *1*(4), 84–99. https://doi.org/.v1i4.242

Sahrandi, A. (2017). Tradisi Akademis Mahasiswa (Implimentasi Iklim Kultur Akademik Mahasiswa). *Journal of Chemical Information and Modeling*, *53*(9), 1689–1699. file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/fvm939e.pdf

Sajidah, H., & Rasyid, A. (2024). *Resistensi dan negosiasi identitas gender non-biner di tiktok : studi kritis tentang representasi dan konstruksi identitas di Indonesia*. *9*(1), 52–61.

Sitinjak, Y. (2024). Pembentukan Identitas Individu Dalam Budaya Digital (Studi Kualitatif Tentang Identitas Gender di Media Sosial). *Innovative: Journal Of Social Science Research*, *4*(1), 1461–1467. https://j-innovative.org/index.php/Innovative/article/view/8020

Tierney, H. (1999). *Women's Studies Encyclopedia*. https://books.google.co.id/books/about/Women_s_Studies_Encyclopedia.html?id=DkPFL6XcKeQC&redir_esc=y

Tiurmaida, P., Vitryanov, N., & Tasya, P. (2024). Analisis Konten Strategi Marketing Mix Beauty Influencer dalam Mempromosikan Brand The Originote: Studi Kasus Akun Tiktok @Laurasiburian. *Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin*, *3*(6), 70–76.

Vigor M. Loematta, & Rini Rinawati. (2022). Konstruksi Gender dalam Film Kucumbu Tubuh Indahku. *Jurnal Riset Manajemen Komunikasi*, *1*(2), 94–101.

https://doi.org/10.29313/jrmk.v1i2.466

Xue, J., & Solihat, A. (2024). Construction of Femininity in Media Spectacle: the Phenomenon of Indonesian Tiktoker Cross Gender Performances. *International Review of Humanities Studies*, *9*(1). https://doi.org/10.7454/irhs.v9i1.1272