

Indonesian Celebrity Affairs in Online News Portals (Critical Discourse Analysis of Sara Mills Perspective)

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to reveal: (1) The subject-object position in celebrity infidelity news found on online news portals according to Sara Mills discourse analysis, (2) The writer-reader position in celebrity infidelity news found on online news portals according to discourse analysis Sara Mills, (3) Representation of women in news texts about celebrity affairs found on online news portals. This type of research is qualitative research and was carried out using descriptive analysis methods. The results of this research show that the two online news portals, namely kompas.com and detik.com, both position women as subjects and objects present in news about celebrity affairs. Women as subjects are given the opportunity to present or represent themselves, whether women are perpetrators or victims of infidelity. However, women are present as objects of news from the media when women are not present to represent themselves in a news text. The reports from the two online news portals both bring readers into the position of narrator (storyteller) so that readers accept the story constructed by the media as a reality. Readers tend to side with the victim of infidelity, whether male or female. The two news portals also show that the position of women, both as victims and as perpetrators of infidelity, is equally shown to be an inferior gender to men. This can be revealed based on the findings of the representation of women's images contained in news texts from two online news portals. Frame images, pillar images, competition images and social images were found as the result of the construction of social reality built by the media.

Keywords: *Critical Discourse Analysis, Online News Portal*

INTRODUCTION

Infidelity has many different versions, depending on how one interprets it. Starting from a one-night stand, or an affair that involves deep feelings and lasts for a long time. Infidelity will be even more difficult if this forbidden relationship is based on an emotional bond. An affair that involves emotional ties will be more dangerous than just a sexual relationship. Someone who has sexual relations is based solely on biological needs, but if they do it with deeper feelings, of course it will affect other things. They will meet often, then there will be a relationship of mutual need for each other outside of sex, and they will even feel sad if they are separated. This is what causes the affair to last for quite a long time because they have feelings of needing each other.

Divorce is the most fatal problem resulting from infidelity. Based on a report from the Central Statistics Agency (in Hidayah: 2023), in 2022 divorce cases in Indonesia will reach 516,334 cases. This figure has increased by 15% compared to 2021 which reached 447,743 cases. The number of divorce cases that occurred is the highest divorce rate that has occurred in the last six years. Infidelity is one of the factors that most often causes divorce. This proves that the existence of a third party or infidelity which ultimately causes feelings of jealousy and disharmony in the household contributes to someone divorcing.

Not only does it happen to ordinary people, infidelity is also often carried out and experienced by celebrities in the capital. According to data obtained from ini.com, in 2023 there will be 10 cases of celebrities who have been involved in the issue of infidelity. These celebrities include Shyahnaz Sadiqah and Rendy Kjaernett, Arya Saloka and Amanda Manopo, Ari Wibowo, Deddy Mahendra Desta, Virgoun and Inara, Raffi Ahmad, Christian Sugiono, Alshad Ahmad, and Fandy Christian. In fact, quite a few of the news about celebrity affairs have ended in divorce. News of this celebrity affair has finally become a commodity for the Indonesian

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people as viewers. Given the development of the times, news about celebrity affairs can now be accessed using the internet through online news portals.

There are several online news portals that are widely used by the public to access news about celebrity affairs, including detik.com and kompas.com. Even though this online news portal does not only provide news about celebrity affairs, Indonesian people also continue to use online news portals as a trusted source to confirm news about celebrity affairs. In the current digital era, online news portals are a favorite for audiences, especially digital natives who tend to choose to use online media because they have knowledge and interest in news due to high internet consumption and use (Suciska and Gunawibawa: 2020) Online media has the ability to in reaching audiences both as a group, as a movement and individually (McQuail: 2011)

Based on cases of perpetrators and extramarital affairs that occur among celebrities, the intense public attention paid to these cases, as well as the large number of verbal violence and discrimination against women, we can see a real phenomenon, namely gender issues. In reality, gender differences have an impact on differences in status, responsibilities and roles between women and men, and ultimately can lead to injustice in the realm of discrimination and oppression of women. The problem of gender inequality is now increasingly widespread and difficult to solve (Viora, 2018). Discrimination experienced by women can occur in various aspects of life, both in the public environment, in the fields of education, health, economics, politics, and even in family life, including the phenomenon of violent behavior in relationships towards partners in the household. This treatment is due to the power or control they have and can take the form of threats, physical, mental, sexual and emotional intimidation (Putri et al., 2021).

Based on this phenomenon, it can be seen that the media plays a very important role in building up or bringing down women. The appearance of women in the media can be seen from the meaning contained intrinsically in the content of information that demeans women, namely making women objects of those in power. The beauty of women is made into a very profitable object for media actors, by discrediting women in pursuit of the highest ratings and competing with worldly pursuits that are blind to the principles of capitalism. Therefore, admiration for women sometimes without realizing it seems very discriminatory when women are only used as symbols in commercial art, which is shown through creative works of art such as advertisements. This becomes public consumption in various mass media and positions women as potential commodities to be exploited. The image formed by the media will influence the audience in perceiving a person's view of other people. Like the view of women. If the media constructs good things about women, then society will view these women as good and vice versa (Thadi: 2014).

This research aims to reveal the subject-object and author-reader positions in news about celebrity affairs presented in online news portals, by applying Sara-Mills discourse analysis. Apart from that, the research objectives also include revealing the representation of women in news texts about celebrity affairs contained in online news portals. It is hoped that the research results can make a significant contribution to the field of communication, especially in the media context. The benefits of this research can be divided into two, namely theoretical benefits and practical benefits. Theoretically, this research is expected to expand understanding in communication science and become a reference for critical discourse analysis based on the Sara Mills model. In addition, it is hoped that this research can strengthen the implementation of the Sara Mills model and increase understanding of the representation of women in online news portal news, so that it can become the basis for further research with a different object focus. Practically, this research can be a reference for future researchers in applying critical discourse analysis using the Sara Mills model to explore the representation of women in online news portal news.

METHOD

This research is qualitative research that uses descriptive analysis methods to describe the position of the subject, object and reader in the news text about celebrity affairs on the online news portals detik.com and kompas.com, as well as to describe the representation of women in the text. The researcher acts as the main instrument with the help of a data recording format, using Sara Mills' perspective to understand and identify the positions of the subject, object, author and reader. The research was conducted starting September 2023 in

Makassar City, South Sulawesi, with a focus on news of celebrity infidelities published during 2023. The data collected were news texts from the two portals, which were then analyzed using the Sara Mills model of critical discourse analysis. The research stages include reading the news, identifying, analyzing and interpreting data, and concluding the research results in approximately one month. The validity checking process was carried out using the data crosscheck technique against Sara Mills' perspective discourse analysis framework.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Subject-Object Position in Celebrity Infidelity News

Researchers began this research by carrying out the first stage, namely reading carefully the news about celebrity infidelity cases contained in online news portals. This is done to gain an overall understanding of what is being reported. After focusing the research data sources into two sources, namely detik.com and kompas.com, researchers obtained several news of celebrity infidelities for the January - August 2023 period.

Researchers then carried out data reduction and limited it to celebrity couples who were confirmed to be having an affair. Researchers obtained data on several celebrity couples who were having affairs from two news portals, namely detik.com and kompas.com. Some of the cheating couples were: (1) Syahnaz Sadiqah and Jeje Govinda, (2) Lady Nayoan and Rendy Kjarnaett, and (3) Inara Rusli and Virgoun. These three couples have been validated as having had extramarital affairs.

Sara Mills' critical discourse analysis model is used to reveal the subject-object position in celebrity reporting. Analysis of the subject-object position level is carried out first by analyzing how the event is seen. After conducting the analysis, it was discovered that in the detik.com and kompas.com reports incidents of celebrity infidelity were revealed based on confessions from the victim and also the perpetrator of the affair. The affair between the three celebrity couples is seen from the point of view of both men and women.

The analysis of the subject-object position level is then continued by analyzing from whose perspective the event is seen. After conducting the analysis, it was discovered in the detik.com and kompas.com reports that the events and impacts of the affair were told from a woman's perspective. However, women are given little space to represent themselves in the text. Apart from that, women are also discriminated against and portrayed as weak. Especially in the news about the second and third celebrity couples, namely Rendy-Lady and Virgoun-Inara. In the news about the first couple, the incident of infidelity is seen from the perspective of both of them, but it is more dominantly seen from the man's perspective. This is because in the case of the first celebrity couple, the victim of the affair was a man.

Next, the analysis of the subject-object position level continues by analyzing who is the storyteller (subject) and who is the object being told. After conducting the analysis, it was discovered that the news on detik.com and kompas.com both featured women as subjects and objects of storytelling. In the news about the first celebrity couple's affair, the woman was the object of the story because the perpetrator of the affair was a woman. However, in reporting on second and third celebrity affairs, women act as storytellers or subjects.

Finally, the analysis of the subject-object position level continues by analyzing whether each actor and social group has the opportunity to present themselves, their ideas or presence, and whether their ideas are displayed by other groups or people. After conducting the analysis, it was discovered that the news on detik.com and kompas.com both showed male and female dominance. In the news about the first celebrity couple's infidelity, the news was dominated by men, while in the news about the second and third celebrity couples the news was dominated by women. Based on the critical discourse analysis model by Sara Mills, in determining the position of the subject and object it can be seen that both detik.com and kompas.com make the victim of infidelity the subject and the perpetrator of the affair as the object of the story. If the victim of infidelity is a man, then the subject of the report will be a man. Vice versa, if the perpetrator of the affair is a woman, then the object of the news will be the woman.

Writer-Reader Position in Celebrity Infidelity News

Next, Sara Mills' critical discourse analysis model is used to reveal the position of the writer-reader in reporting on the celebrity. First, researchers analyze how the reader's position is displayed in the text. Based on the results of the analysis, both *kompas.com* and *detik.com* both position readers in a position that discriminates against women. This can be clearly seen in the news about the first celebrity couple. Apart from that, in reporting on the second and third celebrity couples, even though readers are positioned as those who defend women, this position is not entirely because the woman is the right party, but rather because the woman is the weak and powerless party. This shows that women are inferior creatures and men are superior. This is in accordance with the opinion of Sara Mills who says that there is gender inequality and discrimination in the discourse presented in the text.

Then, in analyzing the writer-reader position, the researcher analyzes how the reader positions himself in the text displayed. Based on the results of the analysis, readers position themselves as ideological subjects, namely a subject shaped by how media reports use and disseminate their views regarding the portrait of women represented in the text. The reader is brought into the position of the storyteller, so that the reader accepts it as reality. The reader positions himself on the side that supports women, but this support comes not entirely because men are clearly at fault, but rather because they feel sorry for women. This is in accordance with the opinion of Sara Mills who says that there is gender inequality and discrimination in the discourse presented in the text.

Finally, in analyzing the writer-reader position, the researcher analyzes which group the reader identifies himself with. Based on the results of the analysis, the reader identifies himself with the party he considers correct. In the first celebrity couple's affair news, readers identified themselves to the man as the victim. However, in the news of infidelity between the second and third celebrity couples, readers identified themselves with the woman because the victim was a woman. Even though society tends to identify itself as the victim, the construction of reality regarding gender inequality, women's powerlessness, and various images of women are still built by the media.

Women Representation in Celebrity Infidelity News

The image of women constructed in the news about celebrity Syahnaz Sadiqah and Jeje Govinda's affair can be seen from the following quotes.

“Meski begitu, ia mengatakan akan selalu menjaga martabat keluarga kecilnya. Termasuk menjaga nama baik istrinya, Syahnaz Sadiqah.”

“Menurut Jeje, di kehidupannya Syahnaz tetaplah wanita mulia yang telah melahirkan anak-anak nya.”

“Bagi gue di dunia ini ada wanita mulia, dia adalah ibu gue yang sudah melahirkan gue dan istri yang sudah melahirkan anak-anak gue. Sampai kapan pun gue sebagai kepala keluarga dan sebagai imam dalam keluarga harus menjaga nama baik istri gue,” terangnya lagi.

Source: *Detik.com* and *kompas.com*

Based on the news excerpt, the image of women constructed in the first celebrity affair news is the frame image and the pillar image. The image of the frame can be seen from the sentence "Menurut Jeje, di kehidupannya Syahnaz tetaplah wanita mulia yang telah melahirkan anak-anaknya." Jeje Govinda uses the word "mulia" to describe his perfect wife. According to the KBBI, the word "mulia" itself means high, noble, high quality and valuable. The use of the word "mulia" in the news text of the first affair constructs the image of a woman as a perfect creature. This is in accordance with what Tomogala (1998) said that women are depicted as perfect figures with ideal body shapes.

Apart from the image of a frame, there is also an image of a pillar where women are depicted as supporting the integrity and organizer of the household. This can be seen from the sentence "...istri yang sudah melahirkan anak-anak gue". Based on this sentence, women are represented only as people who give birth to children from men. Moreover, with the use of the word "mulia", a woman is only considered high, noble and valuable because

she has given birth to a man's children. Women are represented as someone whose only job is to give birth and raise children. In fact, children should be raised and educated by both men and women. This is in accordance with what Tomogala (1998) said that women are often portrayed as supporting the integrity and managing the household.

The image of women constructed in the news of the celebrity affair between Lady Nayoan and Rendy Kjaernett can be seen from the following quotes

“Salah satu alasan Lady Nayoan tidak melaporkan dugaan perzinahan itu ke polisi, karena memikirkan anak-anak mereka. Rendy diketahui masih dekat dengan anak-anaknya.”

“Ini semua terjadi karena Lady merasa lelah dan sedang berusaha untuk menyelamatkan pernikahannya.”

Source: detik.com and Kompas.com

Based on the news excerpt, the image of women constructed in the second celebrity affair news is the pillar image and the social image. The image of the pillar can be seen from the news excerpt where Lady Nayoan, aka the woman, did not report the alleged adultery to the police, because she was thinking about their children. Plus the quote "...Lady merasa lelah dan sedang berusaha untuk menyelamatkan pernikahannya." The image of women as weak and helpless is clearly established. Women are considered to support the integrity of the household. Even though they are tired because their partner is having an affair, women still try to maintain the integrity of their household. The media has succeeded in constructing the image of women as weak and supporting the integrity of the household. This is in accordance with what Tomogala (1998) said that women are imaged as supporting the integrity and managing the household.

Apart from the pillar image, a social image was also found where women were portrayed as people who lacked confidence in socializing. This can be seen from the following news excerpt:

“Istri dari aktor Rendy Kjaernett, Lady Nayoan, membantah bahwa dugaan perselingkuhan suaminya dengan Syahnaz Sadiqah hanya untuk menambah kepopulerannya. Ia menegaskan tak berniat untuk panjat sosial atau pansos ke Syahnaz Sadiqah.”

Source: detik.com

Based on the news excerpt, it was stated that Lady Nayoan was suspected that her husband's affair was being carried out to increase his popularity. Moreover, Lady Nayoan, as the woman, was accused of social assistance or social climbing. Social assistance according to the KBBI means efforts made to portray oneself as a person with high social status, carried out by uploading photos, writings, and so on on social media. The media portrayed Lady Nayoan as someone who was not easy to get along with, and even the disclosure of her husband's infidelity was accused of being a way for the woman to increase her prestige. This is in accordance with the opinion of Tomogala (1998) who states that women are portrayed as people who lack self-confidence in social interactions.

The image of women constructed in the news of celebrity Inara Rusli and Virgoun's affair can be seen from the following quotes.

“Dalam surat pernyataan itu tertulis juga sumpah Virgoun apabila terbukti berselingkuh lagi. Dia bersumpah siap menjalani hukuman tentang perzinahan dan menceraikan istrinya. Tercantum juga soal nafkah yang akan dia berikan ke istri setiap bulan apabila nanti resmi bercerai. Selain itu, dalam surat keterangan juga tercantum tiga nama anak mereka. Hak asuh ketiga anak tersebut akan diberikan kepada sang istri.”

"Saya sudah capek karena sudah berkali-kali saya kasih kesempatan, saya hanya dimanipulasi," tegas Inara Rusli. Sayangnya Inara Rusli tidak bisa langsung memutuskan untuk pisah dari suaminya. Ada beberapa alasan yang menurutnya harus dipertimbangkan sebelum memutuskan untuk bercerai."

Source: detik.com and kompas.com

Based on the news excerpt, the image of women constructed in the third celebrity affair news is the image of a pillar where women are depicted as supporting integrity and managing the household. This can be seen from the first news quote, where the media uses the sentence "Hak asuh ketiga anak tersebut akan diberikan kepada sang istri." The reality constructed by the media is that even though the husband and wife relationship has ended in divorce, the wife or woman still has to take care of the child. Moreover, in the second news quote, the media uses the word "manipulated". According to the KBBI, manipulation is an attempt by a group or individual to influence the behavior, attitudes and opinions of another person without that person realizing it. The use of the word "manipulated" constructs a reality where women are figures who are stupid and easily deceived. In addition, even though men have manipulated them, women still have to bear and care for the children of the marriage. This is in accordance with what was conveyed by Tomogala (1998) who stated that women are imaged as supporting the integrity and managing the household.

Apart from the image of the pillar, there was also an image of a competition where women were depicted as sexual objects. This can be seen from the following news excerpt:

"Sebelumnya, Inara menyebut Virgoun bisa diam berhari-hari hanya agar membujuk Inara menyetujui keputusannya berpoligami. 'Kemudian dia kasih silent treatment lagi berhari-hari tiap saya menunjukkan penolakan terhadap keinginannya untuk poligami dengan wanita yang sudah sengaja dari awal dia libatkan sebagai orang ketiga dalam rumah tangga kami,' tulis Inara."

Based on the news excerpt, it was stated that Virgoun, aka the man, always tried to persuade his wife to agree to his decision to have polygamy. After not being given permission by the woman, the man underwent silent treatment for days. According to the KBBI, polygamy is a marriage system that allows a person to have more than one wife or husband. This is permitted based on law and religion, but must obtain consent from the woman. However, the problem is that men express their desire to have polygamy with a third person or another woman who has already been discovered to be the man's mistress. The reality constructed by the role of the media here is that women, whether their wives or their mistresses, become sexual objects to fulfill their husband's desires. The man who had previously been caught cheating and even committing adultery, instead asked his wife for permission to have polygamy with his mistress. If permission is not given, men even manipulate women by carrying out silent treatment. This shows gender inequality and the inferiority of women to men. This is in accordance with the opinion of Tomogala (1998) who states that women are imaged as sexual objects.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the two online news portals, namely kompas.com and detik.com, both position women as subjects and objects present in news about celebrity affairs. Women as subjects are given the opportunity to present or represent themselves, whether women are perpetrators or victims of infidelity. However, women are present as objects of news from the media when women are not present to represent themselves in a news text. The reports from the two online news portals both bring readers into the position of narrator (storyteller) so that readers accept the story constructed by the media as a reality. Readers tend to side with the victim of infidelity, whether male or female. Readers position themselves as subjects of ideology constructed by the media through text. The media spreads their views regarding the portraits of women represented in the text. There is also the absence of women in news texts which results in the limited position of readers in the text to support women. The position of women, both as victims and as perpetrators of infidelity, is equally shown to be an inferior gender to men. This can be revealed based on the findings of the representation of women's images contained in news texts from the online news portals detik.com and

kompas.com. Frame images were found, where women were depicted as perfect figures with ideal body shapes. Then, the pillar image was found where women were depicted as supporting integrity and managing the household. Furthermore, contests were found where women were portrayed as sexual objects. Finally, a social image was also found where women were portrayed as people who lacked confidence in socializing.

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