

Internet Memes with Feminist Content as a Communication Media of Philosophical Meaning through Building a Deep Understandings on Women's Positions

IVA ARIANI
FADHILA RACHMADANI
Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This research departs from interest and curiosity about women's issues and positions as represented in internet memes. The purpose of this research is to uncover the hidden philosophical meaning behind internet memes with feminist themes, chosen using a purposive sampling technique. This research thus provides a feminist internet meme analysis using the theoretical framework of critical discourse Sara Mills. This qualitative research is divided into four sections, after opening with an overview of internet memes, their philosophical background, and Sara Mills critical discourse to looking at the issue of women's positions. The first section discusses internet memes with a Western cultural background; the second section the analysis of internet memes with an Eastern cultural background; and the third section argues the analysis of internet memes with a background in Islamic culture. The fourth section will provide a philosophical reflection on feminist as reflected in internet memes from Western, Eastern and Islamic cultures as viewed from critical discourse Sara Mills. The research seeks the philosophical meaning of internet memes with feminist themes by using a Sara Mills critical discourse framework. This approach will offer a deep understanding of women's positions within their cultural backgrounds, as depicted through internet memes to communicate the philosophical meaning of feminist issues.

Keywords: *Internet memes, critical discourse, philosophical meaning, women position.*

INTRODUCTION

Women are special human beings with the gift of beauty. Over the ages, women have always experienced changes in how they dress, how they think, how they gain knowledge, and how they express their voices. The privilege of women today is seen, for example, in the diverse memes with women's themes shared on social media. A variety of memes use female portraits, showing the attractive side of women themselves. Women in memes come with different 'faces', each with varying degrees of beauty and uniqueness, but can also appear with a 'face' of grief over the discrimination and oppression of patriarchal culture. Women's positions as second-class members of their families, as well as the stereotypes attached to women by patriarchal culture, are forms women oppression that is often the topic of internet memes in contemporary society.

This article provides a philosophical study of feminist that refers to the object of women's studies. The research focuses on the feminist content of memes that exist in social media, using Sara Mills critical discourse as a theoretical framework. The purpose of this research is to find a hidden philosophical meaning behind internet memes about women's positions and seeking a feminist message to communicate to the audiences.

Mass media is an inherent part of the public external sector. The feminist of these variants agrees that they are entitled to be treated equally by and in the media. The rights demand also includes equal opportunities for each gender to manage, other than of course

how the media displays it (Abdul Firman Ashaf & Tina Kartika, 2009, p. 30). Social Media and the Internet are often used by the parties not responsible as a place to express their dissatisfaction, which is said to be a space for them to express their opinions. A definite view and comment are not allowed published on print media can now be verbalized online (Wan Amizah & Muhammad Adnan, 2007, p. 413).

A feminist issue on internet meme becomes a contemporary culture that portrays women's positions in three parts of the world namely the West, the East, and Islam. Three female representations in internet memes that refers to the Western, Eastern, and Islamic backgrounds are selected as a category of determining internet memes that are analyzed in this study because each internet memes with Western, Eastern, and Islamic background represents women across the culture by their uniqueness. The representation shown on internet memes as it was pertinent to the views and reality of Western, Eastern, and Islamic women also depicts the cultural situation each according to the issue of feminist experienced by women in the three part of the world, East, West, and Islam.

This article offers an analysis of women's positions in the middle of cultural conditions as represented in internet memes. Women in the contemporary era are depicted in memes with feminist content that show an overview of women's lives, including the various social and cultural conditions underlying their lives. This article takes as its examples several memes collected from social media and adapts them to the direction of this study's analysis. The memes chosen as the objects of this research are divided into three types of memes with feminist themes covering Western, Eastern, and Islamic cultural backgrounds. These three types of memes have been chosen to enable a cultural approach to analyse the roles, tasks, positions, and challenges faced by women, in accordance with this paper's theoretical framework of critical discourse analysis Sara Mills.

Sara Mills works is centered in post-feminist discourse that attempts to dissect and expose sexism and gendered notions in text. She opted for the term "post feminist" as her stance which was part of the second wave of worldwide feminist that centered in Europe of the 1970s. The focus of her works is how women are represented in mass media, including written and visual texts. In her perspective, women are seen as the disadvantaged party when it comes to representation, due to biases that often occur in texts, and are, as a result, either underrepresented or marginalized (Eriyanto, 2001, p. 6-14).

The first and foremost study is by Mills herself (2004), in which she suggests the need for a feminist stance on critical discourse analysis to find depictions of sexism that existed in texts. The text that she analyzed was a British dating agency's advertisement that at first seemed to promote equality for the heterosexual individuals who would want to engage their services, yet upon closer look was sexist in nature; in that, it demanded the women and the men to fulfilled certain stereotyped expectations.

According to Sara Mills model, the most text often positioning the reader as a man. In many novels or lexicon, the reader often associated as a man. When writing, reporters assume that the audiences are male. In consequence, all the character of the readers imagined by the writers as a male. Discursive positioning levels in Sara Mills critical discourse analysis model represents with some questions. Critical discourse in subject-object related to the questions how's the event seen, from whose views has the event been seen. Who is positioned as a storyteller (subject) and who are the objects? Do each actor and social community have a chance to represent themselves, their ideas or their presence, or are their ideas are shown by the other community. Critical discourse in reader position related to the questions how is the reader's position represented by the writer through the

texts and images on internet memes. How is the reader positioned themselves in the text? To which community the readers identified themselves (Eriyanto, 2001, p. 6-14).

METHODOLOGY

This article is qualitative research which is referred to John W. Creswell's (2007) *Qualitative and Inquiry Research Design*. This research consists of two stages of analysis towards internet memes with feminist themes. In the first stage, internet memes with feminist themes analysed based on three categories of meme image analysis presented by Limor Shifman (2013) to understand the internet memes with feminist themes. Shifman holds that memes are understood by dividing them into three main elements: content, form, and stance. Content analysis is useful to gain an understanding of message contained in the meme, which can either be sentences or terms that are textually included in in the meme. Form analysis is useful for understanding the form of the meme image and the frame contained in the meme. Meanwhile, stance analysis is useful for achieving an understanding of the stance or background of the meme, which may include political, religious, cultural, or gender background that strongly influences memes. Qualitative research methods in this part, have a function as a method to select internet memes which is relevant to the research themes and become an analysis object.

The second stage of analysis, concern on philosophical analysis towards the feminist issue as represented in internet memes. The selected internet memes analyze through critical discourse by Sara Mills as represented in the text internet memes that consisted of subject-object position. This a qualitative research (Creswell, 2007, p. 73–75) as it refers to memes on social media and internet content that is full of philosophical problems in the field of feminist. Data collection was conducted by identifying memes with feminist themes on social media platforms and elsewhere on the internet, including blogs, websites, and internet reviews.

Memes were selected for analysis following the research theme, examining memes from Western, Eastern, and Islamic backgrounds because each meme from Western, Eastern and Islamic background has the uniqueness which is representing the spirit of women across the world. The selection of internet memes with the theme of feminist that is focused on Western, Eastern, and Islam have a purpose to find a representative internet meme which contains a philosophical meaning of women's positions.

The procedure of this research consisted of several stages. First, the researcher constructed a research paradigm with the theme of feminist. Second, the researcher identified a number of internet memes in accordance with the direction of research. Third, the researcher determined the appropriate feminist theory to be its analytical instrument in analysing social media and internet content. Fourth, the researcher collected memes with the theme of feminist that would become its research object using a particular feminist theory. Fifth, the researcher descriptively presented the definition of memes with feminist themes, specifically memes used on social media. Sixth, the researcher described the feminist theory chosen as the analytical instrument by presenting several views of critical discourse Sara Mills. Seventh, after the research data was collected, the research data was analysed using Sara Mills critical discourse perspective until results were produced. Eighth, make a conclusion while compiling an article in accordance with the guidelines.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Feminist is derived from the Latin word *femina*, which means having the nature of femininity. Generally defined, a feminist is a movement through which women demand and uphold the rights they deserve. Feminist consists of various specific movements, both culturally and historically, through which it has gained public support around the world (Gamble, 2010, p. 297).

Gendered depictions in the media have led to two discriminatory and tendentious discourses. First, women are defined through their bodies, limbs, and physical relationships with other beings. Second, women are presented as passive and agents to be subjected to action. These two discourses have symbolically and historically removed traces of women's participation and achievement in the public sphere (Baliy, 1995, p. 33). Women want to be the "women" they see on television and in print, but when they reach the stage where they have many children, well-established husbands, and beautiful homes they feel they are not alone (Freidan, 1995, p. 48).

The second wave of feminist is said to have ended between 1975 and the late 1980s, feminist experienced divergent development towards a third-wave feminist, which coincided with the rise of post-feminist. Critics of the universalism in second-wave feminist led to a redefinition of the concepts in feminist in the late 1980s. At least three things encouraged the re-articulation of feminist concepts. First, persons within feminist itself began to see their concepts as racist and ethnocentric, representing only middle-class white women and marginalising women from other ethnic and class groups. Second, the second wave of feminist was considered to insufficiently voice the issue of sexual difference. Meanwhile, outside of feminist, postmodern theories such as post-structuralism and post-colonialism developed that later irritated the development of feminist (Brooks, 1997, p. 8).

The term 'discourse' has become common currency in a variety of disciplines: critical theory, sociology, linguistic, philosophy, social psychology and many other fields. It is used widely in analysing literary and non-literary text and it is often employed to signal a certain theoretical sophistication in ways which are vague (Mills, 1997, p. 2). Eriyanto (2001) explain representation subject-object position according to Sara Mills focuses on the injustice that befalls persons or groups, whether it concerns their existence, ideas, et cetera, and in the sense of a situation that they experience. Her analysis concerns on how certain side, group, person, idea or event is represented in a certain strategy that influences the way the public take the meaning of the discourse. To Mill, there is no such thing as a neutral discourse. Rather, some strategies are utilized by dominantly powerful groups to describe the disadvantaged or powerless persons or groups.

The dominant groups are more strategically enabled to define and refine discourse structures. As texts are negotiation result between sender and receiver, textual production and reception are considered as to be part of the context. Sara Mills argues that this model has some advantages. Consequentially, the reader's position in the text is addressed in the analysis, and the impact of the analysis on the reader as well as how they influence the text in return by interpretations, are also analyzed. As the reader is an active participant, they negotiate meanings instead of simply accept them, and they can either put up resistance or posit questions in connections with previously assigned meanings. In terms of post-feminist discourse, awareness of the intricacy of texts as well as contextual nature of these texts are built by dissecting texts, to discern sexism and gender values in them (Mills, 1998, p. 235-238).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Memes are discourses formed using photographs or other images with certain texts. They are using text or language to generate new meaning. Not many theories explain the meme concept, which takes its name from the Greek word *mimema*, meaning 'something imitated' (Nugraha, 2015, p. 239). The term *meme* was introduced by Richard Dawkins in his 1976 book *The Selfish Gene* (Shifman, 2013, p. 363). Dawkins used the term meme to explain the spread of cultural phenomena, including ideas, theories, practices, habits, songs, dances, and moods. Memes can replicate by themselves (in the form of imitation) and shape culture. Their spread can be said to be similar to the spread of the virus, but in this case, it occurs in the realm of culture (Bauckhage, 2011, p. 42). Memes present information, which may include ideas, ideologies, images, music, videos, wordings, and hashtags, and become popular because they spread quickly and can inhabit people's minds. Memes spread quickly through online media, defined here as a means of online communication and thus including emails, mailing lists, websites, blogs, WhatsApp groups, and social media (Listiorini, 2017, p. 63).

Internet memes portray a phenomenon of community life that become 'viral' or trend in everyday life. Memes with feminist themes, as created and spread through in social media, can communicate a philosophical meaning. Memes with feminist themes can be further categorised based on the styles of a particular culture in representing the spirit of feminist. Analysis of memes with feminist themes from a Western cultural background shows that they represent women as working mothers, with their lives including careers and freedom of choice. Analysis of memes with feminist themes from the Eastern world shows that they are rooted in Eastern traditions that bind women to particular rules and traditions, with specific positions relative to men and in their families. The analysis of the meme with the Western feminist content also shows the situation of the subordination of men to women, so that Western women demonstrate the courage to demand equality with men in various ways as well as shows the activities commonly performed by men in both sports and other fields.

Religious discourses have raised attention in an understanding of how religion becomes part of social and cultural life. Religion is a cultural form that expresses the meaning of life and lived out by social groups. The perspective of cultural studies allows the examination of the dynamic interaction between Islamic belief and practices with social, economic, political, and historical factors. It permits the understanding of the role of Islam in societies by regarding belief and practices as productive phenomena that are regularly shaped by a particular state of affairs (Ghazali, 2019, p. 342). Islam, as a part of social and cultural realities, also demonstrates the phenomenon experienced by Islamic women in the middle of social and cultural realities.

The memes selected for this paper will be analysed using Limor Shifman's meme analysis method, which understands memes based on the three elements of the meme being analysed: content, form, and stance (Shifman, 2013, p. 363). Content includes the ideas and ideologies represented in the text, for example, the conceptualised themes and frames presented in narrative form, including bullying, gender, culture, politics, and campaigns. Form, meanwhile, includes the composition of the messages conveyed through memes, such as professionally and generally delivered messages, and private or public targets. Stance refers to such aspects as the intended target, tone of speech or written phrase, and communication function of the meme. The variety of internet memes with

Western Feminist Content, Eastern Feminist Content, and Islamic Feminist Content which is selected to become a research object has its own character as clearly defined on internet memes in this part. The characteristic of Western, Eastern, and Islamic background of internet memes are described in the next table.

Table 1: The Characteristic of Internet Memes with Western Feminist Content, Eastern Feminist Content, and Islamic Feminist Content

Internet Memes with Western Feminist Content	Internet Memes with Eastern Feminist Content	Internet Memes with Islamic Feminist Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internet memes with Western Feminist Content portrays a subject position of Western women in internet memes through the text and image which is shows the action of woman in internet memes towards patriarchy. - Internet memes with western feminist background drought of the picture that represents the spirit of western women to fighting for gender equality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internet memes with Eastern Feminist Content portray a subject position of Eastern women through the text and image related to women's domestic job or task such as the role as a wife and as a mother that is indivisible from the characteristic of Eastern women. - Internet memes with eastern feminist background demonstrate significant attainment of Eastern women to be married in young age. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internet memes with Islamic Feminist Content describe a subject position of Islamic women through the text and pictures which give expression to the audience regarding their voices, ideas, and feelings towards the reality of Muslim women. - Internet memes with Islamic feminist background represent the strength of Muslim women in the middle of dilemmatic situations of patriarchy.

a. *Internet Memes with Western Feminist Content and Their Philosophical Meaning*



Figure 1: If I had a hammer I'd SMASH Patriarchy I FOUND IT!

Source: <https://me.me/i/if-i-had-a-hammer-id-smash-patriarchy-i-found-15359939>

Western feminist makes equality between men and women in the center of their struggles (Saunders, 2002, p. 6). Figure 1, when analysed using the first stage method—that is, according to the three-dimensional model division of meme analysis of content, form, and stance—can be described as follows. Figure 1 shows an idea of feminist through the text "If I had a hammer... I'd smash Patriarchy". The feminist content of Figure 1 is clearly visible in this phrase, which conveys the notion that if 'I'—'the bearer of the hammer'—had a hammer, then 'I' would remove the patriarchy. The woman carrying the hammer in Figure 1 seems to desire the elimination of patriarchal culture, i.e. culture dominated or regulated by

male power that subordinates women. A woman in Figure 1 portrays a disagreement on patriarchy and wants to get rid of it.

Figure 1 demonstrates a picture of a woman holding a hammer. She is depicted as wearing glasses, dressed in formal and tidy clothes, with earrings in both ears. This presents a picture of a brave and knowledgeable figure, one who recognises the patriarchy. A woman in Figure 1 is portrayed as carrying a hammer in her neat and formal dress, conveying the feminist message that women can aspire to the spirit of feminist, that is, to get rid of patriarchy. The stance of Figure 1 shows that the meme is targeted towards men, especially men who apply patriarchy in their everyday lives. Therefore, it can be seen that this communication is intended for a particular group, broadly defined as men and more narrowly defined as men who apply patriarchal culture to women.

The text of the meme reads, "If I had a hammer I'd SMASH Patriarchy". Philosophically, this means that if women had a 'hammer', in the sense of 'power', they would seek to undermine patriarchy—the tradition of male domination over women. When analysed using a critical discourse perspective, it can be shown that the problem of women being positioned under men showed as an object position through the text.



Figure 2: Could you get a job as a Housewife? Use Old Dutch Cleanser!
Source: <http://www.olddutch.ca/en/history.php>

Social texts, like memes, are important to study because they constitute the raw materials in societal discourses (Milner, 2012, p. 15). Figure 2, which still comes from a Western background, has the content described in the words "Can you get a job as a housewife? Use Old Dutch Cleanser!". This message indicates that the position of a housewife is considered most appropriate for women. Figure 2 depicts a woman as a housewife, holding a floor cleaner, and shows text about housework. This indicates that women are considered second class members of the family, being housewives who clean floors using the Old Dutch brand cleaner. Figure 2 as explained by Sara Mills (1998, p. 235-238), shows that the text could shape the subject and object position between men and women without appearing masculine content on the text.

Figure 2, analysed in terms of its form elements, uses an advertisement for a floor cleaning product as its model. The framing of Figure 2 is not nuanced formal, but rather nuanced daily. Figure 2, analysed in terms of stance, indicates that the message is being

aimed at women, especially married women who become housewives. Therefore, Figure 2 leads to the positioning of women as second-class members of their families, domesticized as housewives who are obliged to do housework, including cleaning.

The next stage of analysis is to use the second method, refers to critical discourse Sara Mills. This can be started by reflecting on the results of the earlier analysis of the memes content, form, and stance. Critical discourse analysis directs focus towards women's positions in society which is can be used to explain how women are positioned as wives and assume the duties of housewives such as cooking, cleaning, and childrearing. Figure 2 presents a portrait of a woman as a housewife, who is charged with cleaning the floor using a certain brand of cleaner identified in the text. Figure 2 explicitly appears to convey a message to housewife women to make their work easier on the floor using "Old Dutch Cleanser". Figure 2 also shows that even in an era following the spirit of feminist, women are strongly identified with housewives, who are traditionally and culturally given duties and responsibilities in the domestic sphere. Figure 2 also portrays the problems experienced by women by looking at women's lives in the household.



Figure 3: The Meme That Reminds Us That There Are Still Sexists Idiots In This World

Source: <https://www.bustle.com/articles/95041-5-insanely-sexist-womens-world-cup-memes-that-still-cant-spoil-the-sweet-sweet-taste-of>

The content element is shown through the texts on the meme: "Women's Sports: Urban dictionary -> Fictional; a myth, a joke, a novelty. If girls played sports, they have to leave the kitchen". The text on Figure 3 contains an idea of feminist represented in the sentence that says that women who exercise must leave the kitchen as if intended to insinuate that women who exercise must leave their "main place", the kitchen. The text on Figure 1.3 also appears to contain strong sentiments about feminist, which is also reflected in the form: two women are fighting over an object, implicitly playing sports.

'A Male Perspective' articulates and simultaneously pokes fun at patriarchal ideologies of women's place to an audience that is presumed to get the joke (Rentschler & Thrift, 2015, p. 11). Figure 3 conveys a message to audiences about women who perform activities outside the home to do outdoor sports activities, women must abandon their main activity in the kitchen. The stance of this meme also presents satire, in that women who do activities outside the home leave the 'kitchen', in the sense that they must abandon their main duties of cooking, cleaning, and childrearing in the home. After analysing Figure 3 using Limor Shifman's model, then analysed from critical discourse Sara Mills's perspective.

The analysis indicated a dilemma: doing activities outside the house means abandoning one's housework. In critical discourse discussion, this dilemma becomes an issue of women's positions in the family, with women often facing external pressure when conducting outdoor activities, as described in Figure 3. The dilemma between domestic and outdoor activities as leading to the perception that women's everyday experiences actually reinforce their role outside the home. Women can perform activities outside the home while still minding household duties, thus realizing the spirit of feminist in their balancing of domestic tasks and positive activities outside the home.



Figure 4: Multitasking Mom

Source: <https://www.dreamstime.com/stock-image-multitasking-mom-mother-remarkable-woman-was-able-handle-all-work-all-professions-can-properly-image38915671>



Gambar: clipartpanda.com, dreamstime.com, coffeegrphy.com

Figure 5: Mother cooking clipart: Beautiful silhouette of mother

Source: <http://www.clipartpanda.com/categories/working-mother-clip-art>

The image of Figure 4 and Figure 5, both represents women's positions in the household and in the workplace. Figure 4 is related to Figure 5 through their shared themes. These memes can be analysed using Limor Shifman's meme analysis model through their content, form, and stance. Figure 4 and 5 are not expounded by text, because they contain no text supporting their ideas. However, there are elements of understandable content evident in the situation—or, more specifically, the narrative—that appears in Figure 4 and Figure 5. These show a feminist idea by illustrating the troublesome situation faced by career mothers who must raise their children while doing office work. The form elements in Figure 4 and Figure 5 also support content analysis. Content elements and narrative

patterns are clarified through the form elements of these memes and their depictions of career mothers. When Figure 4 is analysed using form elements, it can be seen that it contains an image of a mother holding a child while cleaning and thinking about things such as office work and unfinished housework.

If a woman works outside the home, she is still expected to fulfil her domestic duties, and so she ends up working twice as hard as a man, and usually for a lot less pay (Lorber, 1997, p. 11). Figure 5, when analysed using according to Limor Shifman's model, gives a similar picture in its depiction of three situations being handled by career mothers who must do office work while minding their children; shop while carrying a child and a briefcase, and completing housework while taking care of children and business work. The stance element in Figure 4 and Figure 5 conveys an understanding of the intended target of the meme—women—and the essence of the message to be conveyed—a satire of the daily challenges faced by career mothers in their housework and childrearing.

b. Internet Memes with Eastern Feminist Content and Their Philosophical Meaning



Figure 6: The Average Asian Aging Process
Source: <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/72761350199543334/>

In the acculturation of feminist values between Asian and Western contexts, and between Asian countries, it is crucial to ask how processes in an Asian context have developed and how such unique process have generated an 'Asian feminist representation' (Fung, 2000, p. 154–155). Figure 6, if analysed using Limor Shifman's meme analysis model, can be understood as depicting the life phases of Asian women from age 18 to 60–70, starting from

their teenage years and continuing until they have children and grandchildren. The ideas conveyed in Figure 6 give the idea that the position of Asian women cannot be separated from marriage, childbirth, and menopause.

The form element of Figure 6 also strengthens the content element analysis. The meme begins with a depiction of a beautiful 18-year-old woman, then proceeds to depict that woman as aging, especially after having children and experiencing menopause. The stance of Figure 6 also conveys a message about Asian women that is inseparable from Asian cultural influences, including their position, their practice of childbirth, and their obligation to take care of children. Figure 6 seems to have the stance that Asian women who do not undergo this cycle are not ideal Asian women.



Figure 7: Feminist

Source: <https://www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/culture/feminist/>

For most women, the home is a site of social relations that are structured by power and inequality. It is the location of unpaid labour, still mainly the responsibility of women, despite rapid increases in women's waged employment in the last decades of the twentieth century (McDowell, 2003, p. 15). If a woman works for her family in the home, she has to be supported, and so she is economically dependent on the "man of the house" (Lorber, 1997, p. 11). Figure 7 is a representation of Eastern feminist related to the women's positions as housewives who are obliged to do household chores and are responsible for caring for children at home.

Figure 7 can be understood through three elements such as content, form, and stance. The content element is shown through an idea about the role of women as second-class members of the household, which is depicted as a unity of meaning related to women's duties as housewives. The form elements of Figure 7 can be understood one by one through the image of the house, a woman who has become a mother and is carrying a child, and the money given by her husband. The form element provides an understanding that the duties of a housewife who also has children are limited to the household and that such women rely on money from their husbands. In Figure 7, women are described as nothing more than housewives who must take care of the house, take care of children, and be subject to the will of their husbands because their lives depend on the money they receive from their husbands. The content and form that contain this idea of feminist also

appear in the stance analysis of Figure 7 that contains the message to be conveyed and communicated to the audience.



Figure 8: Native Women do it Better!

Source: <https://id.pinterest.com/OneidaNationWI/oneida-women-in-history/?lp=true>

Memes often require readers to operationalise on gendered, classed, and raced classificatory knowledge and construct social forms of commonality on this basis (Kanai, 2016). The content on Figure 8 demonstrates through the text "Native women do it better", which means indigenous women do an indeterminate something better. Content analysis shows that the spirit of feminist in this meme is characterised by race issues. The word 'indigenous' in Figure 8 indicates that indigenous women are stronger, and this is supported by the form of Figure 8, which depicts a Native American woman clenching her hands and staring sharply forward. This implies that Native American women, who have historically experienced genocide and slavery in the United States at the hands of the white majority, must show their courage and courage. The stance element of Figure 8 shows that this meme seeks to tell audiences about the realities of the lives of indigenous women in the midst of patriarchal oppression that suppresses their space for existence. Figure 8 seeks to convey the message that indigenous women are strong enough to survive despite facing racial and discriminatory pressures in their daily lives.

c. *Internet Memes with Islam Feminist Content and Their Philosophical Meaning*



Figure 9: Women in Comics Uses Comics to Talk about Intersectional Feminist

Source: <https://thefeministproject.com/entertainment/friday-follow-womenincomics-uses-comics-to-talk-about-intersectional-feminist/>

The content of Figure 9 refers to the text, "Yes, you can be Muslim and be a feminist", while the form element of Figure 9 is its portrait of a veiled a Muslim woman who is clenching her fist, signifying that Muslim women are strong. Furthermore, in its stance, this meme appears to be targeted to a Muslim woman and intended to convince them that they can be both devout a Muslim as well as feminists. The content element of Figure 9—"Yes, you can become a Muslim and become a feminist"—contrasts stereotypes that Muslim women must submit to and obey the teachings of Islam, whereas feminists have the freedom to think and behave "outside of the box" by taking a bold stand on such topics as equality with men.

The general idea of "Islamic Feminist" as a discourse that challenges oppressive narratives such as orientalist and patriarchal perceptions of Muslim womanhood. "Islamic Feminists" found their voice and all of their ideas and practices now navigate in parallel through the social realities in which they, encounter each other, are changed, adapted or repulsed and criticized (Steger, 2017, p. 12-16). The content element of this meme implies an understanding that women are in the position to balance their roles as Muslim as well as feminists, and by implication to balance the ideological opposition between Islam and Western feminist. The challenges that faced by women in such position are depicted in Figure 9, including in the form element, portrays a veiled woman with her fist clenched, signifying that women should eagerly strive to be a Muslim and to be a feminist. From the stance element, it can be seen that Figure 9 is intended to communicate with Muslim women who want to be feminists, indicating that the purpose of the communication is to motivate or encourage a Muslim woman to become feminists.

Feminist has become increasingly widespread, reaching various countries where it previously had no influence. Women in the East and in Islamic countries gradually began influencing Western feminist. Figure 9, which portrays a Muslim woman as a feminist, provides an understanding of the cultural contradictions between the West and Islam's teachings, and culture about women's positions, rights, and obligations in various parts of life. Such conditions indicate that cultural factors that affect the lives of Muslim women tend to be closely related to their lives, their behaviours, and their decisions, such as becoming feminists. Women are always attached to the culture of their place of residence, whence they come, and thus the issues portrayed in Figure 9 illustrate the feminist problem related to women's positions in the middle of cultural influences that pose obstacles and challenges women to realize such desires as equality with men.



Figure 10: Muslim Woman Must Ask Permission of Sharia Court to Divorce
Source: <https://www.scoopnest.com/user/SandraTXAS/838125471237869569>

Figure 10, based on content perspective contains the texts "The moment a Muslim mother is forced to ask the permission of Islamic clerics in a BRITISH Sharia court to divorce her drug dealer husband. A Muslim man only needs to tell their spouse 'I divorce you' 3 times in order to divorce. This is the real war on women". This content provides an understanding of a situation experienced by a Muslim woman, or more specifically a Muslim mother, who is required to seek permission from Islamic religious officials in a British Sharia court to divorce her husband, despite the husband being a drug dealer. This content shows the difficult situation experienced by a Muslim woman, in that they must get permission first if they want to divorce their husbands.

Islamic feminist emerged out of a critique of both patriarchal Islam(ism) as well as of secular feminist. Muslim women activists came to believe that patriarchal laws entrenched within state Sharia law were Islamically unjust. Iranian women began to question the legitimacy of the state's monopoly on interpretation and application of Sharia in public and private spheres of law (Tønnessen, 2014, p. 3). The content of Figure 10 portrays feminist content through its contrast of this situation with the fact that, under different circumstances, a Muslim husband may legally divorce his wife by simply uttering the phrase '*talak*' three times. Figure 10, in its form, shows a veiled woman with glasses making a contemplative and sad expression. The form of this meme seems to be related to the content element, that is represented together in the meme. The stance also provides an explanation of the message communicated to the meme's audience, especially with regard to the reality of a Muslim woman experiencing difficulty when seeking a divorce. Stance analysis shows that Figure 10 intended as a satire or to provide knowledge about the situations experienced by a Muslim woman.



Figure 11: Confused Arab Lady
Source: <https://imgflip.com/i/173e3f>

Figure 11, following Limor Shifman's analytical framework, can be described through three elements. The first is content, which can be understood through the idea of feminist narrated by Figure 11 and its text. Understandable content elements are in the text, "I'm getting a bit tired of being judged by people who do not even know me. I dress modestly because I do not want to share my stunning body with the public. I share all of it with my husband, and he loves every inch of me. So please tell me again how terrible it is to be a Muslim woman". The content element of Figure 11 means that feminist poses a dilemma to

a Muslim woman who must follow religious requirements, such as covering their private parts (*aurat*) and not dressed too tightly or too openly in front of the public.

All women, whether or not they are living in religious societies exist in patriarchal realities. Patriarchy comes in various shapes and affects women as they grow up in varying degrees in every context (Ah-med-Ghosh, 2008, p. 100). The content of Figure 11 represents a protest of a Muslim woman who wants to follow religious requirements but faces the 'scorn' of those around her, who distrust her way of dress. The form element of Figure 11 portrays a picture of a veiled woman who is raising one hand and giving a look of confusion to people who view veiling and modest clothing, including women not showing their curves to the public, with suspicion. The stance of Figure 11 also shows that the meme seems to convey a message of resentment, a protest against the 'scorn' shown against women who dress according to Islamic teachings. The veiled a Muslim woman in Figure 11 seems to want to communicate to the public that there is nothing wrong with dressing modestly and covering the private parts according to Islamic teachings, as Muslim women are only allowed to show their bodies to their husbands.

d. Internet Memes with Feminist Content: A Reflection towards Women's Positions

This research has several results related to Sara Mills critical discourse analysis of internet memes with the theme of feminist. First, internet memes basically contain deep meaning that is expressed through the images and represented through written content. The profound significance embodied in internet memes with feminist themes can be understood through Limor Shifman's meme analysis model, which explores the content, form, and stance in memes, leading to philosophical analysis with Sara Mills critical discourse framework that sees women's basic issues based on their experiences. Second, internet memes with feminist themes can serve as communication media and convey nuanced cross-cultural feminist themes, thus providing an understanding based on a cultural approach. The messages contained in memes can be useful for communicating the philosophical meaning to audiences, including the positions, challenges, dilemmas, and issues experienced by women in the middle of their social and cultural situations.

According to critical discourse Sara Mills (1992) one's representation and subjectification is ideally boundless and to represent the world in her or his own opinion. However, what happened is that not everyone has the same opportunity because of some reasons. As a consequence, there are groups or sides that are only able to be the object. These groups can not retell themselves in a text as their appearances are represented by other actors. Analysis of the way these positions are widely represented is able to reveal how dominant ideology or belief works in a text. It is generally believed in feminist discourse that most texts represent women as the object rather than the subject. Therefore, a woman's self is not clearly defined in texts in other ways rather than as objects, and even so they still cannot stand on their own and be represented independently. The strong patriarchal notions in-text bereave women of their own identities outside of their relationships with men and with their expected roles.

Communication is a multimodal phenomenon of excellence. In the space of communicative phenomena, people use resources such as images, gestures, postures, and texts. Texts and images on internet memes enhance an understanding of the role and the functions of images in representation and communication (Jewwit, 2014, p. 15). As it has been shown in Internet memes analysis using Limor Shifman's analysis theory which later

results are reviewed through a critical discourse perspective of Sara Mills. It can be found that internet memes with feminist content are reviewed in this study, contains elements of the text that portrays women's issues. The text elements that are seen to describe women are shown in the sentences or words describing the image of internet memes related to the situation that is experienced by Western, Eastern, and Islamic women. The issue of feminist is increasingly strong when text and images on internet memes are trusted by the wider community who read the content in the media.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this article can be divided into several parts. First, internet memes have essential meaning, the message contained behind their pictures, text, and stances. Taking examples of internet memes from Western, Eastern, and Islamic backgrounds, textual message may be conveyed and communicated to both broad and narrow audiences, i.e. only to certain groups of people. Second, once the content elements and forms of internet memes are identified, the hidden philosophy behind them can be ascertained. The hidden philosophy of the memes discussed in this article can be understood through subject and object position as a feature of critical discourse by Sara Mills. By analysing internet memes using the perspective of critical discourse Sara Mills, it has been shown that internet memes are a form of communication that has a target on the digital society. Third, the forms of internet memes with feminist themes also convey messages about the various problems faced by women in their everyday lives. Internet memes, as communication media related to women's positions, roles, tasks, and challenges, cannot be separated from the problems faced by women in their life experiences. Sara Mills critical discourse as the theoretical framework in this paper views women's issues that represented in internet memes based on each region's cultural approaches by providing a deep understanding of women's positions that reflects upon the issues of Western, Eastern, and Islamic feminist in the middle of patriarchal culture. Each cultural approaches and its representation on internet memes also gives an understanding related to women's positions as an object through the text and pictures that reflected through the media.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

We wish to confirm that there are no known conflicts of interest associated with this publication.

BIODATA

Iva Ariani is a lecturer at the Faculty of Philosophy, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Email: iva.ariani@ugm.ac.id

Fadhila Rachmadani is a doctoral candidate at the Faculty of Philosophy, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Email: fadhila.rachmadani@mail.ugm.ac.id

REFERENCES

- Ahmed-Ghosh, H. (2008). Dilemmas of Islamic and secular feminists and feminisms. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 9(3), 99-116. Retrieved from www.vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol9/iss3/7
- Ashaf, A. F., & Kartika, T. (2019). Victim or actors: The typology of Indonesian woman journalists. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 35(1), 29-40.
- Baliley, G. (1995). Body politics and missing themes of women in American News. *Media Development*, 1, 33.
- Bauchhage, C. (2011). Insight into internet memes. *Proceedings of the Fifth International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media*. Retrieved from <http://www.aaai.org/ocs/index.php/ICWSM/ICWSM11/paper/viewFile/2757/3304>
- Brooks, A. (1997). *Postfeminists: Feminist, cultural theory and cultural forms*. New York, USA: Taylor and Francis.
- Could you get a job as a housewife? Use old Dutch cleanser* (picture). Retrieved from <http://www.olddutch.ca/en/history.php>
- Cresswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative and inquiry research design: Choosing among five approaches*. London, England: Sage Publications.
- Eriyanto. (2001). *Analytical discourse: An introduction to the text media analysis*. Yogyakarta: LkiS.
- Feminist*. (2018). Retrieved from www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/culture/feminist
- Freidan, B. (1995). *The feminine mystique*. London, England: Vintage.
- Fung, A. (2000). Feminist philosophy and cultural representation in the Asian context. *International Communication Gazette*, 62(2), 153-156. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0016549200062002005>
- Gamble, S. (2010). An introduction for understanding *feminist and postfeminist*. Yogyakarta, Indonesia: Jalasutra.
- If I had a hammer I'd smash patriarchy. I found it* (picture). (2017, June). Retrieved from <https://me.me/i/if-i-had-a-hammer-id-smash-patriarchy-i-found-15359939>
- Jewwit, C. (Ed.) (2014). *The Routledge handbook of multimodal analysis*. London: Routledge.
- Kanai, A. (2016). Sociality and classification: Reading gender, race and class in a humorous Meme. *Journal of Social Media and Society*, (October-December), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305116672884>
- Listiorini, A. (2017). Humor discourse on meme in the online media as potrait of life for some Indonesian community. *Jurnal LITERA*, 16(1), 1-14. Retrieved from <https://journal.uny.ac.id/index.php/litera/article/view/14251/pdf>
- Lorber, J. (1997). *The variety of feminisms and their contributions to gender equality*. Germany: Der University Oldenburg.
- McDowell, L. (2003). *Place and space. A concise companion to feminist theory*. Oxford, England: Blackwell Publishing.
- Mills, S. (1992). *Knowing your place: A marxist feminist stylistic analysis*. London: Routledge.
- Mills, S. (1997). *Discourse*. London: Routledge.
- Mills, S. (1998). *Post-feminist text analysis. Language and literature*, 7(3), 235-252.
- Mills, S. (2004). *Discourse: The new critical idiom*. London: Routledge.
- Milner, R. M. (2012). *The world made meme: Discourse and identity in participatory media* (PhD Thesis, Communications Studies, University of Kansas, USA).

- Multitasking mom* (picture). Retrieved from <https://www.dreamstime.com/stock-image-multitasking-mom-mother-remarkable-woman-was-able-to-handle-all-work-all-professions-can-properly-image38915671>
- Muslim woman must ask permission of Sharia court to divorce* (picture). (2017). Retrieved from <https://www.scoopnest.com/user/SandraTXAS/838125471237869569>
- Mother cooking clipart: Beautiful silhouette of mother* (picture). (2017). Retrieved from http://www.clipartpanda.com/clipart_images/beautiful-silhouette-of-mother-33409407
- Native women do it better!* (picture). (2017). Retrieved from <https://id.pinterest.com/OneidaNationWI/oneida-women-in-history/?lp=true>
- Nugraha, A. (2015). Meme phenomenon on social media: Ethnographic study of virtual meme posts on instagram social media users. *Sosioteknologi*, 14(3), 237–245. Retrieved from <http://journals.itb.ac.id/index.php/sostek/article/view/1558/1069>
- Patupaiarehe. Confused Arab lady. (2016, June). Retrieved from <https://imgflip.com/i/173e3f>
- Rentschler, C. A., & Thrift, S. C. (2015). Doing feminism in the network: Networked laughter and the ‘binders full of women’ meme. *Feminist Theory Journal*, 1–31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700115604136>
- Saunders, K. (2002). *Feminist post-development thought: Rethinking modernity, post colonialism and representation*. London: Zed Books.
- Shifman, L. (2013). *Memes in digital culture*. Massachusetts, USA: MIT Press.
- Smoudianis, L. Women in comics uses comics to talk about intersectional feminist. (2015, November). Retrieved from <https://thefeministproject.com/entertainment/friday-follow-womenincomics-uses-comics-to-talk-about-intersectional-feminist/>
- Steger, A. K. (2017). ‘Islamic Feminism’ in Lebanon: portraying a counter-discourse. Retrieved from www.lb.boell.org/en/2017/06/15/islamic-feminism-portraying-counter-discourse
- The average Asian aging process* (picture). Retrieved from <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/72761350199543334/>
- Tønnessen, L. (2014). Islamic feminist, public lecture by Ahfad University for women, Sudan (CMI Sudan Working Paper SW 2014, 1, pp.14) Norway: CMI. Retrieved from <https://www.cmi.no/publications/5289-islamicfeminist-a-public-lecture-by>
- Wan Amizah Wan Mahmud, & Muhammad Adnan Pitchan. (2017). Media baharu dan institusi raja di Malaysia: Kes penghinaan raja-raja di media sosial. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 33(1), 406-422.
- Wan Norshira Wan Mohd Ghazali. (2019). Islam as the state ideology: Exploring from Gramsci’s notion of power, culture and ideology. *Jurnal Komunikasi: Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 35(1), 338-352.
- Weaver, H. (2015, July). The meme that reminds us that there are still sexists idiots in this world. (2015, July). Retrieved from <https://www.bustle.com/articles/95041-5-insanely-sexist-womens-world-cup-memes-that-still-cant-spoil-the-sweet-sweet-taste-of>