

# Patriarch Regression in Social Media

## ABSTRACT

Patriarchal culture continues to grow in modernity. Women's struggles have been applied in various aspects and the digital space has now become a social space to break down the male hegemony. Bourdieu's habitus perspective was applied in this study aiming to see how social media becomes a practice environment for the reaffirmation of women as a class that wants to dispose of the social structures. In this case, virtual ethnographic method was applied from January 2022 to December 2022 to analyze the content of female Instagram users as wives and mothers. Social media has become a field in the habitus process. Field is a social space to produce and distribute meaning from the modern women who have individual, family, and social activities. In habitus process, the production and distribution of meaning is the cultural capital of the social media users. There has been patriarchal regression in social media.

*Keywords: Patriarch, Social Media, Habitus, Modern Women.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Women have been living in a patriarchal culture since the traditional to the current modern society. In such tradition, men from one generation to another generation believe that women are better off if they stay at home or remain silent while in public spaces. The phenomenon of women in society has universal status, in which men have power over women's positions in both the family and public space (Auliani & Rewindinar, 2023).

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The current dominance of men over women can be seen in the Global Gender Gap Report 2022 (Foro Económico Mundial, et al., 2023) which shows that less than 35% of women occupy senior management and leadership positions. Likewise, the policymakers in the politics and business fields are mostly dominated by men. In addition, less than 24% of women sit in parliament.

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Such injustice in the gap between men and women causes various negative effects. There is no place for woman to voice their interests, both in the aspects of financial security to physical and mental safety. In the end, women become a weak and powerless group, both socially and economically (Alpaslan & Burchell, 2022).

In everyday life, women have been doing various practices in order to be able to maintain or have the same position and rights in terms of gender (Herlambang & Rewindinar, 2023). This includes negotiating to convince meeting participants in the office to achieve the desired goals. In addition, participation in religious communities, hobbies, and informal institutions is also an effort to build self-identity in the social world as well as share ownership and insurance to achieve financial independence. Such practice for presenting oneself and maintaining power has become a form of daily struggle for women to be able to speak out and have a safe place in society (Kazmi, 2022).

Furthermore, in terms of classrooms at school, learning and teaching have now left the old tradition that embraces masculinity rational. Teachers have taught a value system of equality in terms of gender, race, class, and sexuality. Discussion and sharing practices in the classroom show the relationships between teachers and students that reject hierarchy. Teachers are no longer the ones who have authority over students, but through listening and learning experiences, students become active participants who can share their opinions. Such application at schools today is a dynamic activity that applies feminist pedagogy, namely a critical education system that constructs equality values (Cerenado & Quimbo, 2022).

Media also represents messages that break down the male hegemony. The Salt movie (dir. Philip Noyce, 2010) illustrates gender reversal, where as a CIA spy agent, Salt shows women's abilities that go beyond the traditional thinking that women are objects of male desire. As characters who have the

capability to navigate men in a world where roles and rules are created by men, women are depicted here as transcending physical obstacles and limitations. Furthermore, *Bird of Prey* (dir. Cathy Yan, 2020) shows a woman who is able to overcome male domination with the courage to make decisions free from the influence of social thinking and then build a new self-identity after she is hurt by a man. Physicality is no longer an obstacle, instead, *Harley Queen* here actually fights her enemies and voices emancipation in the city of "Gotham". Portraits of women with dynamic power in breaking the myth of women in social, cultural, political, and other ways continue to be shown in various films such as *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000), *Enola Holmes* (2020; 2022), *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* (2022), and so forth.

Social spaces such as education, media, and the environment where individuals interact with each other are places where transformation mechanisms occur in society (Costa et al., 2015). Social media has also become a virtual social space. Everyone uses social media and it is increasingly popular for everyday activities. Individuals who connect through the internet interact within its space (Rewindinar, Triputra, Napitupulu, 2020). Furthermore, the ability of social media is also very strong in bringing radical change to society (Yohanna, 2022).

The current study was carried out to see social media as a practice environment for the reaffirmation of women as a class that wants to dispose of social structures, namely gender equality, especially women's rights over men's prerogatives.

Patriarch is a concept based on power over gender that is hierarchical authority where men dominate women (Pierik, 2022). In Greek, the patriarch (father has control over the family) has connotations of power, family relations, and social hierarchy.

The relationship that occurs between gender, which is men and women, is hierarchical. Patriarch occupies a father's authority in the family. This is even beyond the authority of men and women. In other words, a father has authority over the household and family members. So the manifestation is the general dominance of women in society.

The patriarchal social system distinguishes men and women, where women are a subsystem. Men dominate women by controlling women's rights and freedoms. Meanwhile, the view of the division of tasks based on gender differences which places women in certain positions controlled by men is a tradition. This historically brought understanding has been constructed by society. So there is a gap between genders in all aspects such as legal, social, and cultural as well as in organizational, family, and community contexts.

Feminism develops so that women can have the freedom to determine their rights. Deciding for a family that also limits women in the social space must also be done through mutual agreement and not based on patriarchy which is submission to male domination. The breakthrough that becomes a form of revolution in the social system is the separation and division of roles in social, educational, and work spaces (Kumar Mohajan, 2022).

As an action from women, feminism fights for equality by changing women's subordination (Monica, et al, 2022). Their struggle focuses on women's experiences, and social recognition, as well as ending the subordination and oppression of women. The basis of this struggle is the liberation of the gap between women and men.

The freedom approach is rooted in Marxist critical thinking about social classes that occur in the reality of society. In this case, Marx defines class as the position of people in society. This position is a class division between capital owners as the determining position and the proletariat as the working class or the determined position (Øversveen & Kelly, 2023). The relationship that occurs between the two different classes is a power relationship.

Hence, since the capital owners have power, they can control and determine the groups of workers according to their interests. Practices of domination, exploitation, and oppression occur through these class differences. The system of differences becomes a social problem that impoverishes the lives of groups who do not have power. Therefore, liberation through individual and even social awareness needs to be carried out. Dismantling the ideology of false consciousness, which is a construct in the

social system, is further the key to transformation. In this case, the revolution desired is a society based on freedom and solidarity between fellow citizens.

Bourdieu's cultural studies through habitus thinking are a mechanism of such transformation (2010). However, this mechanism is not a one-way model, but they are intertwined between Habitus, capital that occurs in the field. Habitus is past experience that occurs internally. Meanwhile, capital is a cultural capability that can be built and the field is a social space.

In this transformation system, Bourdieu's thought reveals the relationship between individuals (agents) and structures. His view is centered on both subjectivism and objectivism as a dichotomy. In this case, he assumed that subjectivism represents knowledge about the social world that is based on the experiences and perceptions of individuals, while objectivism represents the social world by bracketing individual experience and subjectivity as well as focusing on objective conditions where structural practices are independent from human consciousness.

Therefore, the field, as part of the system that determines the occurrence of transformation, is a social space where individuals are in a wider environment, where they interact with each other.

However, Bourdieu does not clearly express social media as a social space. Social media has now become a social space that relies on technology and the internet for its daily activities. Every individual who is networked online is involved in the production and distribution of messages (Jenkins, 2006). because social media, which is technology connected to the internet, provides an interactive space for the users (individuals). Such interactive features give access to the audience to participate openly through sharing practices.

There are social logic and cultural practices in the media. Social logic talks about how and why sharing becomes common, while cultural practice is the participatory culture of each user in the media.

Meanwhile, producing content is a distribution of messages through processing content by adapting it to the context and audience network (Lai, 2019). Content is an individual's dispersed experience that is created through various materials and is then distributed for their purposes. In this case, audiences create context with various motivations, including economic, social, and cultural factors that motivate the media users and facilitate the sharing process.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

To answer the research questions, the current study applies online qualitative content analysis methods through virtual ethnography techniques. Qualitative content analysis method is a subjective interpretation of content or data by carrying out a systemic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns (Shava et al., 2021).

The objective of qualitative content analysis is to understand the social reality in depth and this cannot be achieved through quantitative research. It emphasizes the meaning. However, the techniques used are scientific so the conclusions obtained from the content can be replicated and are valid (Roller, 2023).

Various procedures have been carried out to see the meaning of women's struggles on social media. First, as an area of content or data, ten connected women's accounts on Instagram were determined. This connection shows similar interests and friendship so it is assumed that they are in the same category. The category of the female account holders is married and has children, aged thirty to forty, as well as has an organizational or private career. In this category, the women have a family and work so they have great responsibilities in their lives as wives, mothers, and of productive working age.

In addition, the accounts involved are personal accounts, and not public figures or business accounts. They are involved because this research wanted to see women in general so the content is natural. Apart from that, the **Instagram accounts** involved are also those that have more than 1000 followers. With this category, the account owner is considered active on social media and also in the real world, since social media presents daily activity (Agam, 2017).

Second, the content collection was carried out in the period of January 2022 to December 2022.

**Table 1. Material Overview**

	Number of Feed and Reels in the Period of January 2022 to December 2022
Account1 @ayuxxxx	21
Account2 @ade_xxxxx	50
Account3@cindyxxx_xx	60
Account4 @litaxxxxxxxxxx	104
Account5 @merly.xxxxxxx.xx	27
Total accounts (analyzed)	262

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Table 1: Material Overview

Instagram is a social media with a sharing characteristic through image posting. It is different from the other social media, where you can only post text. However, through Instagram, the users have to post feeds in the form of visuals, which can be in the form of text, but especially photos.

In the third stage, coding and classification were carried out in order to see patterns. Then, in the final stage, the researcher interprets the pattern into meaning.

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### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Social media has become a presentation of women's activities. Uploading status on the feed on Instagram shows what is being done and what is happening in the real world, so the public know it through the online world.

However, what is shown on social media has built the meaning of women in the modern era. Modern women can carry out activities that show their existence in society. They enter various spaces such as social, career and educational spaces which expand their role in the domestic sector.

#### 3.1. Women in Social Space

Portraits of women in social spaces are widely shared on social media (Rewindinar et al., 2019). They appeared to be with their closest friends, consisting of two or three people to one large group. Through the caption, they explained the meeting as being with old school friends, office colleagues, spiritual colleagues or communities where they are active members.

The activities are also varied, including social gatherings, reunions or other routine and non-routine meetings. Apart from that, the post also shows that they have a meeting only to spend their free time. In the photos, the women also look attractive. At the group meetings, they wear clothes with similar colors or themes that show the group cohesiveness.

Modern women present themselves as a part of the social space. The women, who are also wives and mothers, are active in meetings with their friends. When women spend their time for their group, it indicates that they can manage their other responsibilities in terms of child management and domestic matters, including how to share roles and tasks with their husbands.

The current reality of families, particularly those in urban communities, has experienced a shift. The roles of husband and wife in the modern household are no longer as distinctive as in the traditional household. In traditional times, a mother was only involved in domestic household affairs, while in advanced modern times, women can actively contribute to social activities and can manage home affairs when they are left behind. Therefore, there is an exchange of roles between husband and wife (Onuoha & Ohanyere, 2021).

The existence of women in the social area can also be seen in society by becoming members of communities, associations, and institutions. Women with families in this era of increasingly developing communication technology not only carry out domestic affairs at home but also go outside the house.

Furthermore, tagging, which is the characteristic of Instagram, provides information such as the location of the restaurant or hangout place where they meet. Meanwhile, those presented in the photo were mentioned and there were responses from their friends.

Responses become the interaction of the posts, some give likes, love, and comments. This will further be responded to with symbols or more comments. However, the other group members also did the same thing. They also share the same photo, but different captions and respond to each other on Instagram. The creativity of each individual in giving captions and responses is different. However, the similar behavior of women who own Instagram accounts creates resonance in their image and social interactivity.

### **3.2. Women and Their Existence in Career**

While in the work environment, they also post photos on Instagram. The photo is posted together with colleagues in the office at a meeting or various activities organized by the organization. It also includes achievements in career positions and photos of the leaders of the organization that are further shown through the feed.

Career women also post photos when they are the main figure professional, such as when they become a speaker in the office where they work, including fulfilling invitations to become a resource person in other organizations. In the feed description, they explain their activity and tagging of people involved in the activity.

Through photos shared on social media, women show their position in their careers. This shows themselves as an individual who is part of a team, as a leader, and their activities in the work they do. This also includes the achievements of career women that they show proudly through their posts. By working and having a good career, women are portrayed as individuals who have abilities in the organizational space (Jaiswal & Rao, 2019). As workers, women can have the same skills and expertise as men. Thus emphasizing women as a gender that can be relied on to occupy certain positions in leadership.

Being among other leaders in the work environment, women have the value of diversity. Women and men are both genders in the work field, so it is not just men. The workspace in an organization is a gender dynamic that is not only controlled by one gender. From a traditional perspective, women can now work not only to fulfill economic needs but to exist since they work according to their area of interest.

Therefore, women break away from the traditional perspective that women can only be at home. When women focus on careers, women also show their abilities in managing the household. This is confirmed in other visuals shared on social media, namely the success of children in the scope of formal and non-formal education.

### **3.3 Part of Harmonious Family**

Many family activities are also shared on social media by women who are married and have children. They are seen together with other family members, including husband and children, at a tourist location or another family-friendly place.

This shows a harmonious family, a conducive condition where the family pays attention to fulfilling emotional needs and provides time to foster a sense of togetherness (Pramono, 2020).

Being together with the family in different places shown from one post to another post shows the time they give to their family. The images in photos on social media show that women have positive relationships with their partners and also with their children.

In the caption, they explain their activities, location, and wedding anniversary celebrations while praising their partner. There are also those who write quotes on family themes such as pride, the meaning of family, and so on to share a message with their followers.

### 3.4 Success Parenting

Women also posts various important moments to remember about the phases of their children's lives in their posts. It includes the stages of a child's growth and development at a certain age. Likewise with women who have children of school age. They demonstrate their children's abilities academically and non-academically at school or in formal environment and in non-formal environments. **Children's achievement in education is a hallmark of successful parenting (Preston & Salim, 2019).**

Women are seen with their partners and other family members at a moment when the children have successfully reached a certain school level. Being at school, which is shown through the location tagging, shows that the woman is working and gives special time to her children. Apart from that, she also gives various expressions through her captions on social media, including their feelings of pride and happiness as well as messages for her children.

### 3.5 Women and their Existence in Educational Improvement

In addition to showing their work and career achievements, working women also show their current activities. Together with their colleagues, they do assignments in class, including with teachers on campus.

Likewise, when they have achieved success at one level of study. They post their graduation day wearing a suit or typical *kebaya* attractively. They took photos together with their friends who graduated, both women and men.

Education is a characteristic of modern women. The image of women has changed when they reach a certain level of education because, through such achievement, women have broken the figure of patriarchal values, namely women who are passive, submissive, and martyrs. Ayushi (2021) through one of his studies, conducted a research on female figures in Bollywood films, revealing that there has been a change in the image of women from 1950 to 2021, where traditional women are depicted as a closed individuals, while modern women have a profile as women who are open to the social world in which they are educated, has a role as a leader, open-minded, and independent.

### 3.6 Creating Meaning as Cultural Capital in Social Media

Social media facilitates each user to produce content that can create meaning. As a modern woman, meaning can be created through an image of women's freedom as an individual. Meanwhile, the household affairs shared on social media is capital for individual women as well as social capital where they are able to enter the social space.

In terms of capital owned by women as individuals, they produce content where the content is also inseparable from the real world. Various ideas are then created in various ways through the use of social media features, where they carry a feminist message.

Archer (2016) explains that persistent ideas are a form of culture. Meanwhile, the process of creating meaning related to the social world is defined by Mosco as communication work, which is then analyzed as cultural work (Sum and Jessop, 2015). Thus, content created by individuals, which can ultimately build meaning in social media, is a cultural product.

Referring to Bourdieu's understanding (Ndu, 2022), culture can become the capital for a transformation process to occur. Bourdieu explains that capital can be complex and come in various forms. In this case, the cultural work carried out by women is the ability of the women to produce feminist content by utilizing technology. Hence, feminist content production becomes women's capital on social media to erode patriarchy.

Furthermore, the distribution of the meaning of modern women on social media becomes social capital that shows its ability to enter the social space since the content is created varied and continuously

distributed on social media. Since social media has become a daily basis for people in this advanced modern era, the meaning of modern women is distributed throughout the world of social media users who are connected and interact online with different audiences across geography and culture.

Social media has become a social space, which is a way to apply feminism in the modern era. Each user can provide comments, symbols, and other features to interact with each other. It is different from traditional media, the interaction carried out breaks down the patriarchal regime and communication is no longer carried out one-way but with the discourse that occurs socially (Willem & Tortajada, 2021).

Furthermore, the distribution of capital on social media can bring objectivity to the social space. Social media has displayed a picture of the activities of modern women who have individual, family, and social lives. Therefore, what appears on social media is a process of internalization and elaboration between reality in their daily lives and technology. Meanwhile, content production is an externalization process as social productivity. Thus, social media has become a social space that Bourdieu mentioned as a field.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Social media has become a display of women, especially those who are married and have children, to carry out the activities they want just like men do. This phenomenon shows that patriarchal regression is occurring on social media.

Social media has become part of the communication system to provide solutions to problems or pathologies that occur in society. Through the increasingly widespread development of communication technology, social media is increasingly popular as a way to transform society.

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