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## Humours as a Vehicle for Discussing Women's Sexuality: A Case Study of *Talkpod*

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### ABSTRACT

This research examines the representation of women's sexuality on social media, with a special focus on Indonesian cultural and religious affects. Traditionally, Indonesian women's sexuality has been strongly shaped by social norms that emphasize sexual purity and modesty. But social media has turned into a double-edged sword, allowing people to express themselves while also fostering objectification and. This study uses descriptive qualitative and Sara Mills' Critical Discourse Analysis to examine the sexual objectification of Pamela Safitri, as woman, at the "Talkpod" show. The data came from the conversation between Pamela Safitri and two male hosts. By analyzing interactions between the hosts and Pamela, the study points out the way humour and conversation form and frequently objectify women's sexuality in digital media, especially the reality show that invites women as guest stars. The results of this study explain that sexual objectification of women often uses jokes related to the body both explicitly and implicitly. The findings show that, although social media might empower women, The media is still biased in the discussion of women, especially the sexual objectification of women's bodies through words, sentences, or discourses.

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## INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, women's sexuality in Indonesia has frequently been linked with strong moral and ethical values (Rahmawati & Nurhadi, 2021). Some Indonesian regional cultures expect women to keep their sexual purity and honor themselves and their families. These values are represented in a variety of customs and traditional ceremonies intended to maintain and respect women's sexual purity before marriage (Pranawati et al., 2020). The concept of politeness and decency is also strongly emphasized. Women are taught to act and dress appropriately, without being sexually provocative. In many communities, women's sexuality is considered private and not to be exposed in public. Moon (2021) explain that religion influences the views of society toward women's sexuality. The majority of the Indonesian population is Muslim, and the religion has its own set of beliefs and rules around sexuality and women's roles. Women's sexual purity and honor are highly valued in Islam, and there are some rules on how they should dress and behave (Riyani, 2014). Other religions, which include Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism, offer moral standards that shape the way society views sexuality, emphasizing sexual purity before marriage and women's traditional duties as either wives or mothers.

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Views on women's sexuality in Indonesia have started changing in the modern era, mainly in large part due to the influence of social media (Purwaningtyas & Wibowo, 2022). Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter have become platforms for many women to express themselves, but they are frequently placed in ambiguous positions as objects in society's view. On the one hand, social media empowers women to shape their own narrative and self-representation. On the opposite side, these platforms frequently promote sexual stereotypes and social pressures, portraying women as objects and consumers. According to Khosla (2024), on social media, the women's image is frequently portrayed via a restricted aesthetic lens. These kinds of platforms frequently offer visually appealing content that relates to idealized beauty standards. This builds a situation in which a woman's physical appearance is highly essential. Many women feel required to represent themselves based on these standards for the purpose of being recognised and validated by other users. As an outcome, women are frequently the focus of public attention, with their bodies and attractiveness being publicly judged, compared, and commented on.

Yet, social media offers a platform for women to express their sexuality in whatever way they are interested. This was agreed by Mendes et al. (2018) some women use social media to challenge stereotypes and shape a more inclusive narrative about sexuality. They share personal experiences, discover body and sexuality concerns, and promote self-acceptance and diversity. These virtual communities provide women support and space to express themselves openly without needing to comply with traditional beauty standards. However, this freedom cannot be obtained without consequences (Anggraini & Retnaningdya, 2022). Women who freely express their sexuality on social media can deal with harassment, harsh comments, and threats. This indicates that, while there is an opportunity for self-expression, there are still several obstacles and tasks to overcome. Social stigma and conservative cultural norms persist, and women who dare to confront or redefine their own sexuality frequently face hard societal reactions (Jamshed et al., 2022).

Women's sexuality on social media represents the conflict between self-control and objectification. On the one hand, social media allows women to control their narratives and self-representation. On the opposite hand, these platforms frequently strengthen beauty norms and standards, portraying women as objects of public and consumer gaze (Handajani, 2006). While there is an opportunity for expression and empowerment, women on social media continue to confront many obstacles and pressures. Kennedy and Prock (2016) argue women who openly express their sexuality can be negatively stigmatized, such as being considered immoral or violating religious norms. These negative connotations are so often strengthened by media and cultural representations which tend to place women in traditional and conservative roles. It is essential that society remain to support and fight for a more inclusive and secure platform for all women to freely express themselves. The topic of women's sexuality is frequently still considered to be taboo in many communities. Open discussions about sexuality can be considered disrespectful or inappropriate according to social norms. Yet, some movements and communities are trying to change this view, by promoting the rights of women to express themselves and explore their sexuality without worrying about being stigmatized.

*Talkpod* is a talk show which focuses on its innovation in inviting diverse guest speakers who have controversial professional backgrounds. *Talkpod* is frequently in the spotlight because of its unique way of discussing controversial or sensitive topics with a dose of

humour which makes the show interesting and entertaining for a wide range of audiences. This makes the show not just informative, but also entertaining, so that it successfully attracts the attention of audiences from a wide range. *Talkpod* is characterized by its boldness in presenting controversial guest speakers. With a light and humorous approach, they are able to raise topics which are frequently considered taboo or sensitive to be discussed publicly. The humour used is not only for entertainment but also serves to lighten the situation, reduce tension, and open up a more honest and open discussion. One of the episodes that captured the interest of this research was Pamela Safitri as a guest speaker. Pamela is well known as one of the members of *Duo Serigala*, a dangdut music group which is frequently at the center of media attention due to their provocative and controversial style. In this episode, Pamela talks about a variety of topics ranging from her personal life, and career, to the controversies that frequently followed her career path. This is wrapped up in a humorous and relaxed way, making this talk show successful in delving into the stories and views of Pamela Safitri, providing insights which are rarely revealed in other media.

Sara Mills' Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) theory provides a strong framework for analyzing this research topic. This approach emphasizes the interaction between subject and object in the discourse on how Pamela Safitri navigates her role as a woman in the public eye (Istiqomah, 2024). By positioning Pamela as the object and the hosts, Surya and Jegel as the subject. This research investigates how conversations and humour delivered by the hosts as subjects, and Pamela Safitri as object, shape the representation of Pamela's sexuality in the program "Talkpod". Pamela Safitri, a prominent figure in Indonesian entertainment, often leads discussions that link her public personality with society's perception of the representation of sexuality.

Studies using Sara Mill's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) have been used in several studies mainly to look at the framing of women at the syntactic, semantic, and discourse levels in the media. The first study by Asheva and Tasyarasita (2022) states that the media is not always biased in framing women, for example in the object of research used which is more neutral in framing women with neutral personal pronouns such as, she, her, and he. Furthermore, Listyani et al. (2023) revealed that women are victims and objects in the world of beauty in beauty clinic advertisements on Instagram. Furthermore, the beauty standards found according to them focus on the use of words about being young, glowing face, and *halal*. Next, research by Yuniarsih et al. (2023) which explains that there are interesting things in the news of domestic violence that occurred to artists, they found that the news still favoured the male side and marginalised women. Finally, Istiqomah (2024) explained that the media can also be used as a medium to produce meaning and form perceptions to support gender equality and women empowerment. Through one of the Instagram accounts used as the object of research, she found that the use of clear and precise words, meanings, and discourse will help shape public opinion and build good meaning for readers in supporting gender equality and women empowerment. From the research mentioned, my research position focuses on how women in a reality show are still the object of explicit and implicit sexual conversations through jokes or humorous sentences or phrases related to women's bodies. Sara Mills' CDA is used to see how words, phrases, and discourses used by the hosts and the reality show in the discussion of sexuality.

This analysis focuses on understanding the discursive strategies used by the host and Pamela Safitri to construct and negotiate meanings related to women's sexuality in the context of digital talk shows. Specifically, this research explores how the choice of language,

humour, and interaction between the host and Pamela contribute to framing the context of sexuality. Through Sara Mills' Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, this research provides a critical examination of the discursive practices that shape Pamela Safitri's sexual representation in digital media discourse. By uncovering these complexities, this research contributes to a broader discussion on the representation of women in the entertainment industry media that creates sexualized images of women.

## METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the purpose of observing and analyzing conversations and humour delivered by the host in the "Talkpod" program featuring Pamela Safitri. The data source for this research comes from a video titled "PAMELA SAFITRI NGAKU PERNAH NYOBAIN SATU GENG - Talkpod" which was published on the YouTube channel 'Talkpod'. This video records Pamela's statement as a guest speaker with presenters Surya and Jegel in a talk show format which is used as data in this research. The Talkpod program is known for its honest and often provocative approach to discussing various topics filled with humour, including those related to personal experiences and things that are considered taboo in society. The first step of this research is to collect and record transcripts of relevant conversations. The transcripts are analyzed in depth using the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method developed by Sara Mills. This CDA approach allows researchers to explore how Pamela's sexual identity is involved in the discourse displayed in the program.

In applying the CDA method, the researcher identifies and determines the roles of subjects, objects, and readers of this YouTube content. In this research, the talk show hosts Surya and Jegel are positioned as subjects. Pamela Safitri is positioned as the object of analysis, where her role in the conversation and the humour directed at her become the main focus. On the other hand, the viewers of the program are positioned as readers or audiences who receive and respond to the content presented (Mills, 2006).

The application of Mills' CDA to analyze the representation of Pamela Safitri in the "Talkpod" program involves examining how Pamela navigates discussions about her sexuality. The first step is pay particular attention to how humor, in term of word, phrases, and discourse, is used and its effects on the representation of Pamela's sexuality. Then, examine how the discourse might empower or objectify women. Conclude by discussing the broader implications of your findings for women's representation in Indonesian media. This analysis aims to gain an understanding of the discursive strategies used by the host and Pamela Safitri to construct and negotiate meanings related to women's sexuality in the context of digital talk shows.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

In the conversation from the hosts on the Talkpod episode "PAMELA SAFITRI NGAKU PERNAH NYOBAIN SATU GENG", it shows that the subject's role is dominant in the interaction with Pamela Safitri. When associated with Sara Mills' theory, the subject position usually focuses on directing a conversation or framing the topic of a conversation. In this case, the hosts used sexual humour to make the situation more relaxed, but in a way that objectified Pamela. In short, the focus of this research is to see how humour through words,



phrases, and discourse through the interaction between the subject and object form sexual objectification in Pamela Safitri.

### Subject and Object Position

#### Data 1

In the Talkpod show, it can be seen that both hosts use elements of sexual humor that refer to one of Pamela's body parts. The humor is spoken implicitly. For example, the hosts here use humour to refer to Pamela's breasts.

*Narasumber: "Aku titip dong, titip hati aku di kamu, kalau titip ini kan berat (sambil memegang payudara)". (5:23)*

*Hosts: "Pamela boleh berdiri ga? eh aku bisa lihat sepatu aku dong?" (melihat ke arah sepatu) (5:40)*

*Narasumber: "Masa ( dan melihat ke arah sepatu)" (5:43) Hosts: "Kalau Pamela ga bisa hahahaha" (5:45) Narasumber: "Bener, bener ga bisa (sambil tertawa)" (5:48)*

*Hosts: "Bisa nonton tv tuh (sambil tiduran di bawah)... yah pamela ga bisa" (6:00)*

*Narasumber: "Kalau aku lihat gunung kak (sambil tertawa)" (6:06)*

In this analysis, the researcher places the hosts as subjects. A subject is a figure whose position is dominant or has power in a particular context or narrative. They tend to be the center of the narrative or representation, often having control over the language and the way it is represented. In this case, the hosts act as subjects because they direct the flow of the conversation and have control over the interactions that occur. For example, in the sentence, "*Pamela boleh berdiri ga?*" In this sentence, the hosts ask Pamela to stand up, which shows that they have the authority to direct Pamela's actions.

In the conversation, the hosts used language implicitly to refer to Pamela's body part, which are breasts, without mentioning it explicitly. They rely on sentences that have connotations or hidden meanings that cannot be directly understood by the listener. For instance, when the guest speaker said, "*Aku titip dong, titip hati aku di kamu, kalau titip ini kan berat,*" while touching the breast, she did not directly mention the breast but hinted at it through context and gesture. The hosts then continued with, "*Pamela boleh berdiri ga? Eh aku bisa lihat sepatu aku dong?*" which refers to how Pamela cannot look down as it is blocked by her breasts. The joke is made using wordplay and intonation that creates humour without having to explicitly state the body part.

Apart from linguistics, hosts also have power and ideologies that are used to indicate their control over the conversation. For instance, the hosts in this show are in full control of the situation and the direction of the conversation. They have the power as hosts to ask Pamela to do something, such as stand up, which is then used as part of their joke. This control shows that they not only determine the flow of the conversation but also use their position to put Pamela in a situation where she is the center of attention and the source of humour. Thus, the hosts' power is clearly shown in the way they direct the conversation and take advantage of the situation to produce humour that makes Pamela an object. The sexual humour used by the hosts reflects and reinforces the ideology of objectification of the women's body. By making jokes directed at Pamela's body parts, they show the view that women's bodies, especially parts that are considered sexual, can be used as objects of jokes. This is a form of objectification that often occurs in various media and popular culture contexts, where women's bodies are reduced to objects of the male gaze and the source of humour. This ideology reinforces social norms that deem it normal to sexualize women's bodies, which in turn affects how women are treated and perceived in society.

**Data 2**

Hosts: *kalau kamu punya pacar, kamu yang kerja?* (10:36)

Narasumber: *"Ah aku kerja keras, enggak (sambil tertawa), maksudnya kita sama-sama lah seimbang"* (10:40)

Hosts: *"Gantian ya kadang-kadang pacarnya kerja, kadang-kadang kamu yang kerja"* (10:44)

Narasumber: *"Kalau bisa dia yang di atas aku"* (10:48)

Hosts: *"OOOHH.... maksudnya secara penghasilan pak"* (dengan aksi menutup mata) (10:59)

Narasumber: *"Iyaa" (sambil tertawa)* (10:59)

In this conversation, the hosts once again act as the subjects who direct and control the flow of the conversation. The guest speaker, although actively participating, becomes the object of the conversation and the humour created by the hosts. In the conversation, in terms of linguistics, the dominant use of ambiguity in language. The guest speaker uses the sentence, *"Kalau bisa dia yang di atas aku,"* which contextually refers to the economic level and occupation. However, this phrase can also be interpreted in a sexual way. The hosts were quick to pick up on this ambiguity and chose to interpret the guest speaker's statement in the context of sexuality. They used words like, *"OOOHH.... maksudnya secara penghasilan pak,"* with the action of closing their eyes, which explicitly changes the direction of the conversation to sexual humour. This strategy utilizes the ambiguity of language to create a humorous effect that directs the conversation in the direction wanted by the hosts.

In these conversations, the power lies with the hosts who control the direction of the conversation and the interpretation of the guest speaker's meaning. They actively choose to change the original meaning of the guest speaker's statement about economic status in relationships into a sexual joke. This shows that the hosts have the power to manipulate the discourse according to their own desires, changing the focus of the conversation from a serious topic to objectifying humour. The ideology reflected in this conversation is one that trivializes and devalues conversations about women's relationships and economy. The hosts quickly directed the conversation in a sexual direction, reducing the guest speakers to objects of sexual humour used for entertainment and positive reactions from the audience. This reflects the common view in society that women are often seen or positioned in a sexualized or objectified context in everyday conversations, even when the topic is actually serious or deals with complex personal life dynamics such as relationships and economics. As such, these conversations not only create entertainment but also reproduce and reinforce social norms that manage the way we understand and talk about gender, power, and interpersonal relationships in everyday life.

**Data 3**

Analysing the object position using Sara Mills Critical Discourse Analysis, Pamela Safitri (N) is placed as an object position. The object position here places the actor as the party receiving the action of the subject.

Host: *"Breast care tuh gimana?"* (25:28) Narasumber: *"Skin care untuk payudara"* (25:30) Host: *"Ini gua ngga tahu. Ini hal baru nih"* (25:35)

Narasumber: "Iya jadi kan biasanya kalau cuci muka lihat dongg (sambil mengarahkan tangannya ke dadanya) kan kalau cuci muka kan mukanya kalau itu yang dicuci tuh payudaranya juga ada" (25:37)

Host: "Jadi kalau cuci muka kan kasih sabunnya ke muka. Kalau breast care tuh kasih sabunnya terus diuleni gitu?" (sambil tertawa) (26:00)

The data shows Pamela Safitri as an object as seen in her sentence in the conversation with the host who often uses sexual humour on Pamela's physical appearance, such as her breasts. In the conversation fragment between Pamela and the Host "H: *Jadi kalau cuci muka kan kasih sabunnya ke muka. Kalau breast care tuh kasih sabunnya terus diuleni gitu?*" This sentence shows the host as the subject because it shows the host making humour based on the context of the conversation which refers to Pamela's physical appearance as an object.

In the given conversation, the host and Pamela Safitri engage in a discussion about breast care that leads to sexual humour and objectification. The conversation begins with a question by the host, "*Breast care tuh gimana?*" This is a straightforward question about a potentially sensitive and sexually-referential topic. Pamela's response, "*Skin care untuk payudara*" is an answer to normalise the topic by equating it with general skin care practices.

The language used in this conversation shows how sexualised matters are used as a joke with Pamela's physical attributes. Sexual humour in the context of this conversation refers to the use of jokes and comments that draw attention to the intimate sexual aspects of a person's body in a humorous way. In the question posed by the host "*Breast care tuh gimana?*" the host acted as if he didn't know, making the conversation into a joke. Pamela's response, which was meant to explain the concept clearly, was responded with a funny and sexually suggestive comment by the host. By saying, "*terus diuleni gitu?*" While laughing, the host turned the discussion into a sexual joke. The word "*uleni*" has tactile and intimate connotations that contribute to sexual humour.

#### Data 4

In the conversation between the host and Pamela Safitri, Sara Mills' object position theory helps explain how Pamela is objectified and objectified in sexual humour. The host's question as the subject regarding the size of Pamela's body parts placed Pamela as the object of conversation. Host: "*Eh Pam.... ini boleh diomongin nggak sih? Banyak yang meragukan kalau kamu ini ukurannya katanya nggak asli. Tapi beneran?*" (18:30) Narasumber: "*Asli....asli. Mau coba?*" (sambil tertawa) (18:42) In the conversation, the host and Pamela Safitri have a conversation about the authenticity of Pamela's body parts which eventually leads to sexual humour. The conversation starts with a question from the host, "*Banyak yang meragukan kalau kamu ini ukurannya katanya nggak asli. Tapi beneran?*" Although hesitantly, this question contains sexual innuendo and invites verification of her physical authenticity in public in a humorous way. Pamela's response, "*Asli....asli. Mau coba?*" adds a sexualised narrative to the conversation. Although she participates in the humour, her position remains an object to be evaluated and the butt of jokes. This interaction underlines the power imbalance in which the host controls the conversation and directs attention to Pamela's body rather than her talents or opinions.

The term "*ukuran*" (size) used in the conversation specifically refers to the size of Pamela's body parts, particularly her breasts. The host's question, "*Banyak yang meragukan kalau kamu ini ukurannya katanya nggak asli. Tapi beneran?*" ("Many doubt whether your size is real. Is it true?"), subtly implies a focus on Pamela's body in a way that invites verification and scrutiny, albeit in a humorous manner. This question carries sexual innuendo by addressing



the authenticity of Pamela's physical features in a public setting. Pamela's response, "*Asli.... asli. Mau coba?*" ("It is real... it is real. Do you want to try?"), adds to the sexualized narrative of the conversation. While participating in the humour, her response maintains her position as the object of evaluation and the subject of jokes regarding her physical attributes.

The language used by the host and the subsequent responses contribute to the sexualization of the conversation. The host directs attention to Pamela's body rather than her talents or opinions, highlighting a power imbalance where Pamela is objectified primarily for her physical appearance. This use of language and humour underscores how intimate and sexual aspects of a person's body can be used for comedic effect, often at the expense of the individual's agency and dignity.

## Discussion

### Sexual Humorous Language for The Objectification of Women in the Media

The use of language in *Talkpod* significantly influences the sexualised image that Pamela Safitri represents. Questions and comments that focussed on physical attributes, particularly Pamela's breasts, were particularly evident in interactions with the hosts. For example, when the hosts asked about the size and authenticity of Pamela's breasts, these conversations reduced her identity to a purely physical measure, ignoring other aspects of her personality or achievements. In addition, the sexual humour used by the hosts demonstrated their control over the direction of the conversation, effectively reducing the guest speaker's agency. Although Pamela participated in the humour, the main control remained with the hosts, thus limiting her agency in the conversation.

The language used also consistently objectifies Pamela, making her the object of jokes and sexual comments. This reinforces a disadvantaged stereotype, where women are valued primarily based on their physical attractiveness. For example, when the host asked Pamela to stand up for the humorous purpose of referring to her breasts, it shows how the conversation often directs the focus on Pamela's body, reducing her to a mere object of entertainment. Humour and questions that constantly focus on women's bodies reinforce the stereotype that women must be physically attractive to be valued or noticed, which not only limits the way they are viewed in a media context but also has a wider impact on how women are treated in society in general.

When Pamela is represented primarily as an object of sexual humour, this limits her ability to be seen as a whole individual with agency. The use of language that objectifies and reduces women negatively impacts public perception and the treatment of women in the media and society. In conversations on *Talkpod*, the hosts often take full control of the direction and tone of the conversation, making Pamela appear passive or merely the recipient of jokes. This limits the space for Pamela to show her personality, opinions or achievements, thus reinforcing the view that their agency is limited in public and media spaces. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the way language is used in the media to ensure more fair representations and honour women as whole individuals. Understanding and changing this use of language can help create a more inclusive and equal media environment.

The results of this study have important implications in understanding how the use of language in the media can strengthen stereotypes and objectification of women. The findings suggest that the language used in *Talkpod* contributes to the formation of Pamela Safitri's sexualised image and limits her representation as a whole person. This has a wider impact

on public perceptions of women in the media and society. Understanding how language can be used to limit women's agency and reduce their identities to sexualised objects is an important step in creating a more inclusive and equal media environment. These implications emphasise the importance of awareness and change in the use of language in the media to ensure fairer representations and value women as whole individuals.

This study examines the use of language in *Talkpod* and its impact on the representation of Pamela Safitri. However, it has limitations, including focusing on a single episode or several episodes, not capturing audience interpretation or influence, and not considering motivations or non-verbal elements.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the representation of Pamela Safitri in the *Talkpod* show, as examined using Sara Mills' Critical Discourse Analysis theory, reveals the complex relationship between subject and object positions in media discourse. The hosts often utilize sexual jokes to objectify Pamela, strengthening gender roles and social norms which emphasize women's looks over their abilities or views. This not just limits Pamela's freedom, yet it also contributes to a larger cultural narrative in which women's bodies are viewed as objects of public attention and joke.

Furthermore, while digital platforms allow women to express themselves, they also strengthen existing standards of beauty and social pressures, affecting women to be judged by public and objectification. Public reactions show that such media depictions normalize sexual jokes and objectification, putting to the stigmatization of women who freely express their sexuality.

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