

The Attitude of Women on the Manufacturing of the Indonesian Ulama Council of North Sumatra Regarding the Documentary Video of the Polemic of Polygamy in Indonesia: Sharing Heaven on Vice Indonesia's Youtube Channel

Yogo Pamungkas L Tobing^{1*}, Iskandar Zulkarnain², Nurbani³

Universitas Sumatera Utara

Coessponding Author: Yogo Pamungkas L Tobing tobingyogo@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the cognitive, affective and conative responses of women administrators of the North Sumatra Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) to the documentary video "Polygamy Polemic in Indonesia: Sharing Heaven" on the Vice Indonesia YouTube channel. This research involved non-participatory observation and in-depth interviews. There were six research informants and one triangulation informant. The information received resulted in saturated data. The results showed that the informants negotiated the film's content cognitively and affectively. Although they recognize the legal legitimacy of polygamy, they conatively refuse to engage in polygamous marriages. Apart from that, there are concerns among women administrators of the North Sumatra MUI that this broadcast could create negative stereotypes and position polygamy as an ambiguous law in Islam so that its practice is no longer relevant to carry out

INTRODUCTION

Polygamy, in terminology, refers to the practice of a man having more than one wife, but is limited to a maximum of four wives. According to Islamic teachings, polygamy is considered a permissible or permissible act (Surat an-Nisa verse 3). In the context of Islamic law, the term "mubah" refers to actions that law makers give individuals the freedom to choose between doing or not doing. In this case, someone who chooses to practice polygamy is not considered sinful, nor are those who choose not to do so (Nurhayati, 2018)

Komnas Perempuan report, polygamy has been identified as one of the factors that trigger domestic violence (Tirto.id, 15 December 2018). Based on Komnas Perempuan's annual records in 2018, there were many cases of violence documented by Komnas Perempuan's working partners. Most of these cases occur in the realm of household privacy. Specifically, the majority of cases in the realm of privacy involve physical violence, while sexual, psychological and economic violence is also recorded in significant numbers (Walgito, 2002).

The debate regarding polygamy in Indonesia is not a new issue, but has existed since the era of independence. This can be seen from the history of Indonesia's first President, namely Engineer Soekarno, who was known to have had relationships with several women. The debate about the practice of polygamy cannot be separated from the movement aimed at improving the position and protection of women in the institution of marriage, which began with the Indonesian Women's Congress in 1928. A review presented by Susan at the first Women's Congress, which was discussed in Susan Blackburn's Erie research (2007), there was a debate between Siti Moedjijah, who is a representative of Aisyiyah Yogyakarta, and a number of other women who expressed their rejection of the practice of polygamy. At the end of her speech, Siti Moedjijah emphasized that Islamic law allows a man to have more than one wife. This created anxiety among non-Muslim female members after hearing about the practice of polygamy. However, the debate was quickly resolved, considering the aim of the women's federation as a forum for joint struggle. There are concerns that this debate could interfere with the realization of this goal, especially if we look at the cultural background, religion and conditions of women in Indonesia at that time (Bernie, 2018).

The practice of polygamy has always sparked debates about the pros and cons in Indonesian society, and this debate heated up again when one of the General Chairpersons of political parties, Grace Natalie from the Indonesian Solidarity Party, announced that PSI would not support polygamy in her speech at the East Java Expo at the end of 2018 (Tirto .id, 19 December 2018). In her statement, Grace Natalie explained that this was not related to the religious debate, but more related to its social impact. The practice of polygamy often has a negative impact, especially on women and children, who are often the victims in this context.

Anita Dhewy, who serves as editor-in-chief of the women's journal (Tirto.id, 19 December 2019), has identified the practice of polygamy as a source of discrimination and a potential cause of violence against women. According to him, marriage regulations reflect the state's view of women, depicting them only as producers of offspring. The consequences that women involved in polygamy may face include experiencing psychological, economic and physical violence.

The book entitled "Woman, Islam, and Everyday Life," written by Nina Nurmala (2009), also provides concrete evidence regarding the impact of polygamy. This book tells several experiences of women who have been involved in polygamy. One of them is the story of Arsa, who initially accepted her husband's second marriage. However, as time went by, Arsa felt that her privacy with her husband had disappeared, and his second wife often felt jealous. This polygamy not only caused Arsa heartache but also caused significant stress. This book also records other stories, such as those experienced by Tuti. Apart from facing mental pressure because she has to share her husband, Tuti also experiences economic pressure because her husband has to pay for two houses.

The issue of polygamy in Indonesian mainstream media often seems to rarely appear, and if it does, its presence tends to be limited, usually only in the context of feature films shown in cinemas. Polygamy in the media is often discussed in fictional works, which are often adaptations of novels into feature films (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Even though there are some that are inspired by true stories, to become a commercial film that attracts audiences, more dramatic story elements are often needed.

Different from the general approach in films and novels, Vice Indonesia, an online news portal, chose to raise the issue of polygamy in the form of a documentary work. In this documentary video, they dig deeper into meetings called "kopdar" between practitioners and polygamy activists in Bekasi.

Media has a role as a tool to convey messages, both in the form of news (text, photos, videos) and other information (Sobur, 2009; Hall, 1973). However, writing news objectively and in a balanced manner is often difficult for the media to achieve, because various factors such as media ownership and the orientation of journalists influence the content. This can be seen from the news sources used, the issues reported, the placement of news in publications, and so on (Sobur, 2009). The documentary produced by Vice Indonesia was uploaded via their YouTube channel on September 16 2018. The title of this video is "Polemic

Polygamy in Indonesia: Sharing Heaven." This video is available for free and has reached more than 1.7 million viewers as of September 2023. According to a survey conducted by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII) in 2017, internet users in Indonesia, who aged between 19 and 34 years, dominate with a percentage of 49%. Meanwhile, users aged between 35 and 54 years reach 29.55%. In addition, teenage users and older people are in last place.

Through media editorial strategies, Vice Indonesia implicitly reflects its ideology and uses videos as a tool to frame polygamy as an unfair practice towards women. This video encourages viewers to open their eyes to the feminist perspective which rejects the practice of polygamy as a form of injustice against women. Overall, this analytical frame provides an overview of how Vice Indonesia constructs narratives around polygamy, influences audience perceptions, and raises questions about the implications for society's views, especially women (Hutomo, 2019).

As research subjects, female North Sumatra MUI administrators have an important role in society, especially in the context of religion in Indonesia. They are individuals who have in-depth knowledge of religious issues and have the potential to provide valuable insight into their views and perceptions of sensitive social issues such as polygamy. The selection of North Sumatra MUI women as research subjects was based on mature and relevant considerations, for various reasons.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Joseph A. DeVito in his book *The Interpersonal Communication Book*, intrapersonal communication involves self-talk, inner speech, and self-reflection, all of which are important for decision making and self-awareness (DeVito, 2019). The function of intrapersonal communication, as explained by DeVito, includes self-regulation to set goals and plan actions, as well as the formation of attitudes and beliefs through personal reflection. Charles R. Berger in *Interpersonal Communication: Theoretical Perspectives, Future Prospects* also highlights that intrapersonal communication is the basis of interpersonal skills. Individuals who are active in intrapersonal communication tend to be better at understanding other people's perspectives, managing conflict, and building more harmonious relationships (Berger, 2014).

Cognitive dissonance refers to the feeling of imbalance that occurs when an individual's attitudes, thoughts, or behavior are inconsistent. Festinger formulated this theory as a response to feelings of discomfort arising from cognitive imbalance, known as Cognitive Dissonance Theory (CDT). This theory explains how individuals respond when they realize their actions or views are inconsistent with other knowledge or views they hold. (West & Turner, 2007).

From a psychological perspective, research shows that women in polygamous relationships often face emotional and mental challenges. Rina (2014) revealed that women in polygamous relationships can experience stress and anxiety due to feelings of being ignored or less appreciated than other wives. This study also shows that emotional support from husbands and other wives can help reduce these negative impacts. Amir (2017) conducted a study on how women in polygamy try to manage emotional conflicts and interpersonal relationships in households that share a husband. The findings show that the coping strategies implemented by women vary greatly and often depend on social support and individual adaptation.

Peter L. Berger and Luckman outlined the concept of social construction of reality in their book "The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge" published in 1966. This theory and approach to social construction explains that social reality is constructed through three processes main social factors, namely externalization, objectivation, and internalization. These three processes occur in interactions between individuals in society (Bungin, 2008).

The literature on women and polygamy shows that this phenomenon has broad and diverse implications for women's lives. From a social and cultural perspective, the impact can vary depending on the context of the community. Psychological and emotional aspects also play an important role, and the legal aspect provides a framework of protection that is often inconsistent. Further research is needed to understand the more complex dynamics and find fairer solutions for women in the context of polygamy.

METHODOLOGY

In this research, researchers adopted a reception analysis approach. The reception analysis method based on Stuart Hall refers to the study of the meaning, production and experience of audiences in their interaction with media texts. In this reception analysis, the theory used is Encoding and Decoding. Stuart Hall describes this theory as a process in which audiences consume and produce meaning from the mass media messages they consume (Ida, 2014). This research uses a reception analysis method where audiences will be grouped based on their response to the messages received after watching the polemic documentary video about polygamy sharing paradise on the Vice Indonesia YouTube channel. After being grouped into these three positions, the results will be analyzed and used as data to draw up the conclusions of this research. The object of this research is the Polygamy Polemic Documentary Video in Indonesia: Sharing Heaven on the Vice Indonesia YouTube Channel. This video is to investigate and analyze the polemic surrounding the practice of polygamy in Indonesia through an in-depth approach to a polygamous community conference in Bekasi, West Java. The main focus of this video is to understand the various perspectives, motivations and impacts of the practice of polygamy in the social and religious context in Indonesia. The subjects of this research involve women who are active as administrators of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) in the North Sumatra region and are familiar with social media, especially the YouTube platform. The selection of research subjects was carried out by considering the position and role of women as MUI administrators, as well as their expertise in using social media as a source of information. Research informants were selected from among women administrators of the North Sumatra MUI who have familiarity and skills in using the YouTube platform. The selection of informants was based on subject criteria, ensuring that they could provide relevant insights regarding the cognitive, affective and conative aspects of the documentary video "Polemic of Polygamy in Indonesia: Sharing Heaven" on YouTube

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

According to perception theory, cognitive aspects include a person's knowledge, beliefs and understanding of certain objects or phenomena. This perception process does not only involve passive sensing but also active interpretation based on the individual's experience, knowledge and context. Jalaluddin Rakhmat (2003) states that perception involves processes from receiving stimulation by the sensory organs to processing and interpretation in the brain. Mulyana (2000) added that perceptions are greatly influenced by cultural background, past experiences and individual expectations. The documentary video on the polygamy polemic in Indonesia *Sharing Heaven* on the Vice Indonesia YouTube Channel has reached more than 1.8 million viewers as of May 2024. This is because the characteristics of new media are that they are interconnected and can be accessed globally. This video is the object of research which has been watched by the informant. Because the video is on YouTube and can be watched for free, it makes it easier for informants to watch it repeatedly. This is a change brought about by new media, namely mobility and network connectivity.

The findings from the six informants who watched provided in-depth insight into their cognitive aspects of the video. The informants' views on the video show that all informants agree that polygamy is a complex issue and must be considered carefully and fairly in accordance with Islamic teachings. Polygamy is not the main solution and is only allowed in certain situations with strict conditions. Informants emphasized the importance of justice and welfare for all parties involved, as well as the need for accurate and in-depth explanations regarding the practice of polygamy to avoid misinterpretation. They also highlighted that the video needed to present a more balanced perspective and be supported by valid empirical evidence to provide a more complete understanding of the issue of polygamy.

Based on intrapersonal communication theory according to Joseph A. DeVito, it can be concluded that individuals' views on the issue of polygamy are influenced by various internal factors such as previous knowledge, personal experience, values and beliefs. Each informant demonstrated a complex intrapersonal communication process in interpreting the message conveyed in the documentary video. They not only receive information passively, but also actively interpret, evaluate and respond to these messages according to their perceptions and knowledge. Thus, their interpretation of the issue of polygamy is not only reflected in the content received, but also in the way they incorporate life experiences and personal values in their intrapersonal communication process.

The intrapersonal communication theory explained by Joseph A. DeVito highlights the communication processes that occur within the individual's mind, including how the individual understands and interprets the information received. In this case, six informants provided their perspectives on the practice of polygamy in Islam, reflecting their own intrapersonal communication processes regarding the content they witnessed.

First of all, DeVito emphasizes the importance of the individual's perception of the message received. Each informant showed how their perception of the practice of polygamy was influenced by their background, knowledge and personal values. For example, RUS interpreted the main message of the video as the complexity of the issue of polygamy in Islam, emphasizing the importance of a deep understanding of religious teachings in interpreting the arguments presented in the video.

Second, this theory also highlights the importance of the influence of previous experience and knowledge on individual interpretations of messages. Informants such as NAP take a more holistic approach by exploring various perspectives and experiences related to polygamy, illustrating its complexity as conveyed in the video.

Third, intrapersonal communication theory also considers the process of evaluating and adapting to the information received. An example is how FAS evaluated the narrative in the video which tended to lead viewers to reject polygamy, while RHP noted the imbalance in representation of various points of view in the discussion.

Fourth, this theory highlights that individual perceptions of messages are also influenced by the values and beliefs that individuals have. For example, EAS emphasized that the practice of polygamy must be carried out with due regard for the ethical and justice values embedded in Islamic teachings, showing how these values influenced his view of the arguments in the video.

In addition, an individual's cultural background and experiences also influence their cognitive aspects. All informants have an understanding of Islamic law, which makes informants tend to be more critical in assessing the arguments in the video and emphasize the importance of justice in the practice of polygamy. This is evident from Rusmini's statement which said that a lack of knowledge or shallow understanding of the conditions for polygamy can lead to inaccurate or biased interpretations.

The findings from six informants regarding documentary videos of polygamy polemics in Indonesia offer valuable insights when analyzed through the lens of cognitive dissonance theory. The cognitive dissonance theory proposed that individuals experience psychological discomfort when there is inconsistency between their beliefs, attitudes, or behavior. This dissonance encourages individuals to reduce this discomfort through various means ways, such as changing beliefs or attitudes, rejecting conflicting information, or seeking information that supports their beliefs. In this research, cognitive dissonance is explained as a feeling of psychological imbalance that arises when individuals experience inconsistencies between their cognitive elements.

One of the findings revealed that the informants felt that the arguments used in the video to justify polygamy were unclear and inconsistent with their understanding of Islamic teachings. This ambiguity creates cognitive dissonance because it conflicts with their belief that polygamy must be based on strong and clear arguments. The informants experienced psychological discomfort because these inconsistencies challenged their understanding. To overcome this discomfort, some informants sought clearer and more valid propositions from other sources, indicating their efforts to achieve consonance by seeking information that matched their beliefs.

Apart from that, the Vice Indonesia reporter's statement in the video stating his willingness to undergo polyandry is contrary to the informant's belief that he firmly adheres to Islamic values, where polyandry is not permitted. Informants feel psychological discomfort because these statements challenge their understanding and beliefs. Cognitive dissonance arises from the difference between their beliefs about marital relationships and the information conveyed by the reporter. To overcome this dissonance, the informant rejects the reporter's statement and increases the consonance by affirming it that polyandry is an illegal practice in any religion and culture, except in cases of deviation.

The statement by Islamic academic, Nina Nurmila, that polygamy is haram contradicts the informant's understanding of polygamy as a practice that is permitted in Islam with certain conditions. Informants experience cognitive dissonance because these statements challenge their existing beliefs. Psychological discomfort arises because of the difference between their beliefs about the legality of polygamy and the statements made by the academic. Triangulation informants try to find arguments and propositions that support the view that polygamy is permitted in the right context and with the right conditions.

The findings from this research show how cognitive dissonance arises when the information conveyed in a documentary video conflicts with the informant's beliefs and attitudes. Informants feel psychological discomfort that drives them to seek consistency through various means, such as modifying conflicting information, seeking information that supports their beliefs, or trying to understand the broader context.

In addition, Berger's social construction theory suggests that social reality is not objective or independent, but is socially constructed through human interaction. Vice Indonesia as a producer plays an important role in shaping the social construction of the issue of polygamy. Berger and Luckmann emphasize that mass media, such as YouTube, have power to influence people's perceptions and understanding of social and religious issues.

Berger and Luckmann also stated that mass media not only reflects reality, but is also active in creating reality by selecting and controlling the information presented to the audience. In the case of this documentary video, the emphasis on the complexity and controversy of polygamy can be seen as Vice Indonesia's attempt to form a social construction that polygamy is a practice that is no longer relevant or needs to be reconsidered.

More specifically, this theory explains how information from mass media, including YouTube content, can influence the way individuals understand and respond to issues such as polygamy. Informants responded that Vice Indonesia tends to present polygamy from a non-neutral perspective, exploring the challenges and controversies related to this practice. This illustrates the mass media's efforts to build social constructions that can influence people's views about the practice of polygamy.

In addition, social construction theory also highlights that mass media not only influences perceptions, but also shapes social norms and values that are widely accepted. It can be seen from the informants' reactions to the video that it can be seen as a reflection of how they accept or reject the social construction conveyed by Vice Indonesia regarding polygamy.

Overall, analyzing informants' responses about polygamy documentary videos using Social Construction Theory provides insight into how social media such as YouTube plays a role in shaping social reality about controversial issues. The concepts of this theory strengthen the understanding that perceptions and responses to mass media content do not solely come from personal experience or previous knowledge, but are also influenced by social construction processes that occur through interactions with mass media.

In this research, there is also an important integration between the findings from the documentary video "Berbagi Surga" on YouTube Vice Indonesia and the analysis from the CEDAW perspective on the practice of polygamy in Indonesia by Putri Jannatur Rahmah. The video shows the cognitive views of women on the North Sumatra MUI Board, which emphasizes the complexity of the issue of polygamy and the importance of justice and welfare for all parties involved. This research also shows that perceptions and interpretations of polygamy are greatly influenced by an individual's cultural background, knowledge and values.

In contrast, the article on the CEDAW perspective highlights the incompatibility between the practice of polygamy in Indonesia and international standards regarding women's rights. The findings of the article show that women in polygamous marriages often do not receive adequate legal protection, which has the potential to violate the principle of gender equality. This analysis emphasizes that the practice of polygamy can harm women if there is no proper protection and supervision.

Combining these two findings, it appears that there is an urgent need to improve education and information conveyed through the media about polygamy. Information that is balanced and supported by empirical evidence is very important to avoid misinterpretation and ensure that the rights of women in polygamous marriages are protected. In addition, the emphasis on justice and welfare, in accordance with Islamic teachings, must be maintained while also ensuring that such practices do not conflict with international standards regarding women's rights. In this case, new media plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions about polygamy (Hasan, 2009). The media must present a holistic and balanced perspective to provide a more comprehensive understanding of this issue.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

Informants assessed the videos by considering their knowledge of Islamic teachings, but also paying attention to cultural context and past experiences. They organized information from the videos based on their understanding of Islamic law and values of justice, and sought in-depth explanations to avoid misinterpretation. Individuals' cultural backgrounds and experiences play an important role in shaping their understanding of the polygamous practice presented in the video. Personal experiences and values influenced how they interpreted the arguments in the video. Informants' complex feelings included doubts, concerns, and discomfort with polygamy. They felt personally unprepared and uncomfortable with the emphasis on negative perspectives in the video. These feelings were influenced by cultural values, personal experiences, and a thorough evaluation of the information presented. Informants personally expressed unpreparedness to engage in the practice. They emphasized the importance of balance, justice, and women's well-being in relationships, and expressed uncertainty and awareness of individual limitations in dealing with polygamy. Despite acknowledging the legitimacy of polygamy in Islam, informants personally expressed unpreparedness to engage in the practice. They emphasized the importance of balance, justice, and women's well-being in relationships, and expressed uncertainty and awareness of individual limitations in dealing with polygamy.

Recommendation

Research can continue by analyzing more deeply how mass media, online media, represent polygamy. This can include analyzing texts, images, and audio-visual messages to understand how the media shapes people's perceptions of polygamy.

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