

*Journal Communication Spectrum:  
Capturing New Perspectives in  
Communication*



Vol. 10(1) pp. 24-37, (2020)  
DOI: 10.36782/jcs.v10i1.2003

# The Discourse of (Re)-Motherhood in Online Media: A Critical Study of the Corruption News on Tempo.co

Adek Risma Dedees<sup>1\*</sup> and Ratna Noviani<sup>2</sup>

## ABSTRACT

The news report of Tempo.co about both Ahmad Fathanah and Ratu Atut Chosiyah corruption cases took the discourse of mother and women as the main idea. Mother and women were involved in both cases that tend to be reported exaggeratedly with a huge sensation by using connotation dictions. Media disclosed not only their scandal in corruption but also personal and private life. The motherhood feature of those women become the underlined a major issue in the news. This research focused on three concerns: the discourse formation of (re)motherhood in the news report of both corruption cases, the subject position of mother and women in the news, and the reason why the discourse of mother and women become the main topic in the news report. Critical discourse analysis by Sara Mills was used for showing how media has constructed subject-object and reader positioning on the news. The result showed that the discourse of motherhood was not only reproduced by the nation, but also by the news in online media (Tempo.co). Media has ideological instruments (i.e. wording, grammar, and reader position) to narrate, to evaluate, and more important to define the role of mother and women to fix with the conventional socio-cultural values. They have represented mother and women as independent and modern subject and at the same time, they also circumscribed the definition to make sure that they remain in the ideal type: as the guardian of the family, the companion of the husband, and the guide of the children.

## Keywords

(Re)-motherhood, critical discourse, guardian of the family, companion of the husband, guide of the children

---

## To cite this article (7<sup>th</sup> APA style):

Dedees, A. R. & Noviani, R. (2020). The Discourse of (Re)-motherhood in Online Media: A Critical Study of the Corruption News on Tempo.co. *Journal Communication Spectrum: Capturing New Perspectives in Communication* 10(1), 24-37. <http://dx.doi.org/10.36782/jcs.v10i1.2003>

## INTRODUCTION

The paper examines the discourse of (re) motherhood in reporting corruption cases in online media. The assumption, the media in

general still dominated by discourse and the interests of masculinity. News editors are not static spaces where news is presented 'as is' according to facts obtained from the field, from the production process to distribution to the public. Instead, it is loaded with the contents of various desires, whether it's the economic interests of groups, the interests of ethnicity politics, the interests of certain social classes, and the interests of the flow of trust, and gender

---

<sup>1</sup>Department of Communication Science, Bakrie University, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Graduate School of Media and Cultural Studies, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author: [adek.risma@bakrie.ac.id](mailto:adek.risma@bakrie.ac.id)

biases that are still evident. The goal, of course, is to perpetuate the dominant discourse, the authorities whose interests do not want to be contested let alone be replaced.

The implication is that media coverage often creates various inequalities and injustices for other groups that do not control the editorial room. One form of neglect and discriminatory practices in media reporting is the occurrence of gender-biased reporting to mothers and women. In some cases, news tends to be cornering, unfair, and even misogynistic towards mothers and women.

In reporting Ahmad Fathanah's corruption case (abbreviated AF), many online media tend to highlight the mothers and women who are gifted gifts from AF. Not to forget the media also uncovered who exactly is the woman to the private sphere; family, neighbors, profession, and tend to exaggerate the story about it. Not to mention coupled with visualizations such as photos and their pictures (the latest and earlier) which predominantly work as entertainers in the world of entertainment (singers, actresses, and photo models).

These mothers and women are neither the perpetrators nor the brains behind this case. Meanwhile, the media coverage of Ratu Atut Chosiyah (abbreviated as RAC) involved in the bribery case in the dispute over the Lebak Regional Election, Banten Province, with the Former Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court, Akil Mochtar, is biased towards things that smelled of the governor's lifestyle and personality. For example, the media skinned the style of dressing up, branded shoes, headscarves, sunglasses, and RAC clothing worn.

The news also relates to the governor's official trips abroad which are more spent on sightseeing, dinner at a luxurious place, a pleasure to visit the diamond factory, and shopping at the mall. Like the bribery case by AF, the media (in this case Tempo.co's news report) also gave a hark on this case as an

important case and seized public attention. Reports on the RAC case are also included with photographs and illustrations of the governor as a public official who is also a socialite: the governor is surrounded by luxury goods branded. Starting from Hermes branded tote bags, Louis Vuitton branded headscarves, Le Mercier branded watches, Bvlgari branded perfumes, Hogan branded shoes, and luxury Vanilla Home branded furniture.

The description of the coverage of mothers and women involved in the net of corruption is interesting to be further examined. Because of the model of reporting on corruption cases - which are big cases that harm the people - becomes news that looks like trivial infotainment, rumors about personal life, and interesting but not important because it is not related to the public interest (Carter, 1998: 226). This kind of reporting model, instead of expecting an idealism that is in favor of women, instead tends to plunge it into the discourse of subordination and stereotyping of women through gossiping about the body and lifestyle (Amiruddin, 2012, p. 100). News is no longer focused on corruption cases but instead turns to things that are mere gossip. If so, there will be important things (intentionally) neglected in the news; the people as readers no longer feel disadvantaged by corrupt practices, and -the main thing in this study- the discourse on mothers and women more broadly (read: understanding mothers in the media) will be increasingly massive in the discourse.

The online news portal Tempo.co (formerly called tempointeraktif.com) is one of the online media that unceasingly reported cases of AF and RAC corruption from early 2013 to October 2014. In both cases of corruption, AF was sentenced to 16 years in prison (Tempo .co, 31 March 2014), while the RAC was sentenced to 4 years in prison (Kompas, 28 October 2014). This portal is a pioneer of news portals which since 1995 has been present in Indonesia answering the needs for accurate information, according to their tagline easy to read and can

be trusted. Tempo.co is a form of media convergence from Tempo Media Group which dominates the news of the country, especially in the format of long reports and news magazines.

Google Analytics notes that during 2010 there was an increase in the number of Tempo.co visitors by 190 percent, from an average of 1 million visitors to 3.5 million visitors per month. This is inseparable from the trend of mobile media access that requires the development of applications that can be accessed via cell phones, BlackBerry, iPhone, iPad, and Android tablets (corporat.tempo.co, 31 March 2014). This research then makes Tempo.co as the object of media study to examine and criticize the discourse (re) of mothers in online media.

Based on the background described above, this research is aimed at answering three research questions, namely **(1)** how is the formation of a discourse of (re) motherhood in reporting the corruption cases of Ahmad Fathanah and Ratu Atut Chosiyah on the Tempo.co news portal? **(2)** what is the position of the subject as mother featured in the reporting of corruption cases Ahmad Fathanah and Ratu Atut Chosiyah on the Tempo.co news portal? **(3)** why is the subject position of a mother always raised in the reporting of corruption cases Ahmad Fathanah and Ratu Atut Chosiyah on the Tempo.co news portal?

## **METHOD**

### **Sara Mills' Critical Discourse Analysis Model**

This discourse analysis model emphasizes the micro and macrostructure as the level of analysis that receives great attention in dismantling the ideology of a text (1997). Micro-level analysis, analysis of the text, which is studied mainly the language elements used. Macro-level analysis, analysis of social, economic, political, and cultural structures of the people. This analysis wants to illustrate how the dominant forces that exist in people's lives

determine the discourse that is developed and disseminated to the public.

There are two positioning models, **(1)** the subject-object position with a focus on from who's the event is viewed? Who is positioned as the narrator (subject)? Do every actor and social group have the opportunity to present themselves and their ideas? **(2)** How is the position of the reader displayed? How do readers position themselves in the text? To which groups the readers identify themselves? As for the analysis model, there are three levels, **(1)** Word-level analysis such as the sexist words, words that alienate (banter, ridicule, etc.) someone? **(2)** Analysis of the level of phrases, phrases, or proverbs that become common (common sense) in social life, **(3)** Discourse-level analysis includes objectification, stereotyping, relations with other people, metaphors used, and agency involvement.

## **Research Corps**

The corpus of this research is news texts on the reporting of two corruption cases AF and RAC corruption cases. This study tries to examine, identify, analyze, and formulate the discourse of (re) motherhood in reporting on Maharani, Vitalia Shesya, Ayu Azhari, and Sefti Sanustika as witnesses in AF corruption cases, and discourse of (re) motherhood in reporting on RAC as a suspect in the case corruption. Material data from this study was taken from the Tempo.co news portal. For the AF case of material data, 15 news items were taken from January 2013 to March 2014 following the research topic and emphasized the depth of data. While for the RAC corruption case, material data was taken from 11 news stories in the range of November to December 2013 under the research topic and prioritizing aspects of data depth.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Mother as Objects and Subjects of News**

The media participates in developing alternative discourses and images of women, citizens, and

women as citizens who participate in society. The media also rebuilt the definition of patriarchal gender rules by discussing socio-cultural, economic, political, and other institutions that enable women to access various aspects of the public sphere that they created themselves. When women start to access public space, this is full of contestation and competition. This is because public spaces such as politics and religion are still strongly dominated by patriarchal interests.

In the 2000s, the role of women could not be ignored in the public sphere, for example in the political sphere. The rise of democracy is also a straight-line draw with the rise of women involved in the process of making and decision making, which during the New Order era was very minimal, hardly echoed. That is, the definition of women also experienced a shift along with the roles and responsibilities of women in the public sphere, in the political sphere, and of course also still related to their role in the domestic sphere, as children, wives, mothers, daughters-in-law, aunts, and so on.

Democracy gives more space for women to hear their voices about policies related to women's living space and interests, especially for marginalized women (remote area) (Blackburn, 2004, p. 227; Susilastuti, 2013, p. 12). However, the good news was not always sweet fruit. The problem of representativeness in the public sphere is still haunting, even though the state has facilitated with positive discrimination, affirmative action quotas of 30 percent of women in the political sphere. Not to mention the issue of representation bias from the interests of bearers (political parties) and men. In other words, listening to the empirical phenomenon, the representatives of women are not necessarily in favor of women's interests. Then, when space is opened, at the same time a strong legal umbrella against it is still weak, especially during the New Order (Blackburn, 2004, p. 227).

What happened later? The women's movement turned into a social movement that

expects coalitions and advocacy everywhere to lobby major actors above the women's movement to take sides with women's interests. So, we are familiar to see altruism (volunteerism) rampant. Germaine Greer calls this self-sacrifice to servants of the species, sacrificing herself to serve many people because it is very difficult to understand why we need someone injured and killed first for us to feel comfortable (1991, p. 169). This seems to be a turning point in how to be a woman and to be a mother -many victims- in the name of love, children, and humanity- are again defined in the context of contemporary democracy in Indonesia.

Women who are told or interpreted in media narratives tend to be in a position below the interpreter, in this case positioning AF as an active subject? Generally, in the media narrative, the party interpreted, the party who becomes the means of marginalization tends to be displayed poorly and unfairly. They are not only portrayed poorly in the events reported, but are also equipped with all the biases and prejudices attached to them.

For example, the use of words rented, quartered, treated, invited to illegal married, and are a series of diction that has a negative connotation. Rent and be homeland tend to be cheap and rude. Likewise, the diction is treated and invited to illegal married as if the party subjected to the act was helpless, cheaper, and did not think long over the consequences of his actions. The form or process of bias and prejudice was constructed through language by the media in the narrative of the reporting in a subtle way and almost naturally. The diction or choice of words is intentionally pinned to the women involved in AF corruption cases which indicate that the women are not good. According to the law, they are involved in AF corruption cases and they must take responsibility for it all.

However, the use of biased and prejudiced diction has far-reaching implications for those outside the main case. With this style

of reporting, it is as if Maharani can be hired at any time, as if to get close to Vitalia is enough to be treated. This assumption does not suddenly come out of nowhere, but there are a series of events in a language that corner, marginalize, and make women solely as sexual objects in media narratives. It is in this position that language plays an important role in the process of forming views or perceptions that are the fulcrum of feminist studies in exposing the injustices and forms of objectivity towards women (Mills, 1995, p. 63).

Meanwhile, the construction of mother and female subjects as bad and dangerous figures in media texts can be read as a form of media ambiguity towards mothers and women. As the concept of gender equality and gender equality grows, the birth of a new femininity that celebrates freedom and individuality, which is supported and disseminated by the media. Behind the considerable support and appreciation of the media, at the same time, the media are also experiencing uncertainty - or a kind of irrelevance when mothers and women become subjects that dominate the discourse. This can be seen when the media also constructs mothers and women as bad, cruel, and insulting figures and subjects.

Through media technology and news texts, the media attracted this support and appreciation by killing and killing the mother and female subjects. The killings took place through the portrayal of frightening mothers and women who later threatened the social fabric of society. This threat posed by mother and woman is nothing but directed to the father, to his men by teasing them - again not by intelligence and intellect but with sexual desires that are considered cheap. This is clear, the media is warning the steps along with the inconsequential actions of mothers and women who cross the line. Poor subject construction of mothers and women is a form of withdrawal of mothers and women to submit to the logic and patriarchal-phallogentrism social order.

In other words, mothers and women are never truly free from ideological confinement that discriminates against them. The mother and women in the media narrative only circulate in a small circle of pseudo freedom which seems as if they are truly outward and free-of-independence. This phallogentrism logic, in media texts, is also used to make judgments against mothers and women who do not conform to the logic (Mills, 1995, pp. 46-47). That mothers and women with titles such as *ayam kampus* (idiom from young student women selling sex), beautiful-sexy-widow, are not merely a label attached to them, however, it is also a form of unilateral judgment from the media which is disseminated to the public, with the hope that the public will interpret the same thing.

The judgment of mothers and women is also not fair and just. Because, the mistakes that have been made by mothers are not merely mistaking that only harm men or women, but mistakes that also harm the wider social order, nation, and state, even the world. Being a mother who errs as if to be a mother as a source of disaster, a source of disaster for the family, the wider community, and the universe. So dangerous is the assumption of the implications when mothers and women do wrong, then the media and the main discourse in any way responsible, desperately aware of mother and women to return to the rail and main path.

The concept of discourse for Michel Foucault in *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1972) stems from his opposition to the language theories of structuralists who understand language as an autonomous self-regulating system. For Foucault, discourse is related to language and practice and refers to the production of knowledge arranged through language that gives meaning to material and social practice (1972, p. 15).

Discourse forms define and produce objects of knowledge in ways that can be understood while at the same time viewing

other ways of reasoning as something that cannot be understood. Foucault tried to identify various historical conditions and rules that determine the formation of an orderly way of discussing objects, namely discursive practices and the formation of discourse. He explores situations in which various statements are combined and arranged to form and define specific fields of knowledge or objects that require certain concepts and which limit the specific regime of truth.

For Foucault, discourse not only regulates what can be said in certain social and cultural conditions but also regulates who can speak, where, and when. That is why many of his works relate to the historical search for power and the production of subjects through that power. Foucault did not formulate power as a central controlling force, however, power is spread at all levels of social formation, power is generative, and that produces social relations and identity.

The practice of discourse is categorized by the process of limiting objects in a field, the process of defining it with a legitimate perspective by knowledgeable parties or agents, and then improving the rules or definitions from the elaboration of concepts and theories (Foucault, 1970, p. 48). The subject is formed by the social order by the discourse of power according to his will.

Foucault also reminded how subjects are directed to focus on themselves, explain, recognize, and acknowledge themselves as subjects of desire. The constructs of femininity and masculinity in the social order explain how mothers and women are directed to be subjects that unique and different from men. Even so with men who are attached characteristics are different from women. Both of them are different discourse, not infrequently described as contradictory, but then discourse as complementing one another. This explains how people acknowledge themselves as subjects for themselves who involved in the practice of self-formation, recognition, and self-reflection.

### **Mother in Many Topics: Body, Love, Consumption Practices, to Public Spaces**

The concept of mother is taken from Madelon Djajadiningrat in her 1987 article entitled *Ibuism and Priyayization: Path to Power? (Motherhood and Aristocracy: Path to Power?)*. She formulated a conceptual framework that sought to examine the specific contexts of Indonesian women. Djajadiningrat linked the concept of capitalism to the process of the aristocracy. Nobility in this context is the elite (Djajadiningrat, 1987, pp. 49-50).

However, Djajadiningrat's approach is functionalistic because his focus on mother and aristocracy is to see how traditional values function for the process of modernization, without questioning what and in whose interests the modernization is carried out. According to Suryakusuma (2011, p. 3), if the military bureaucracy is part of the new aristocracy is the road to power, then it can be said that the mother is a derivative that supports and maintains this process.

Even though Djajadiningrat refers to concepts such as social status, class, and power, in the end, she deals with cultural values. Although she refers to mother as an ideology, it can also be called a cultural value, which has important historical significance because it is a colonial product from mixing Western petty-bourgeois values -in this case, the Netherlands-with Javanese values. Her discussion of the mother with aristocracy and power also contains ambiguity and contradiction.

However, Djajadiningrat's main contribution was when she put forward a historical-cultural model that provided the basis for the development of the social construction of women in Indonesia today. The construction of the New Order state on womanhood is a combination of elements of domestic and mother.

Motherhood is different from housekeeper because it does not rely on biological reductionism, even though the version of the country in Indonesia during the New

Order era is getting there. While there is a great emphasis on biological motherhood, the Indonesian concept of motherhood is more than just that. Even if they do not have children, women who have important and high social standing are respected, rich women, women who have the expertise, or spiritual strength, foreign women, and old women can be called mother.

The study uses the concept of mother by highlighting the media factor as the apparatus that standardize the concept. The author considers the repetition of the concept of the mother when the media preaches mother and women. The role of the state does not necessarily disappear, instead, it is strengthened and modified by the media when preaching about mothers and women.

The concept of the mother was understood when the New Order was not the same concept as of today's mother towards mothers and women. If the concept of capitalism during the New Order era was more emphasized on the faithful companion of the husband, guardian of the family, and serving the country, in the reform era the emphasis was broader considering also taking into consideration the current discourse about becoming a modern, career, and economically independent woman.

These various definitions and standardization of mother and women still intersect and bring the concept of the mother into the media. Therefore, researchers pay attention to the repetition of this concept in the discourse of being a mother and contemporary women who are still overshadowed by the concept of mother in the New Order style.

Meanwhile, the mother's body is often the objects of conversation in media narratives. The mother's body becomes the main object that is highlighted by the camera and clearly and repeatedly spoken by media texts. The mother's body is observed, talked about together, assessed, and then presented to –and surveilled biopolitically by public (Faisal, 2018). Through

the body, the mother is defined either as a mother who is good at dressing up, a mother who is a glamorous, devout mother, or a mother who is obedient to her husband.

The body becomes an instrument which is then used to understand mother with everything that accompanies it. Discussion on this body is not immune to the social construction of mother sexuality which tends to be overburdened for political, social, and religious reasons (Suryakusuma, 2012, p. 167). That the body of the mother is not in a vacuum. The mother body became an arena of battle by many powers who fought over it, controlled it, and wanted to conquer it.

When the media talks about the body and sexuality of mothers, the media is evaluating what is good and what is bad about the mother, what is appropriate and inappropriate for the mother directly or indirectly. Mother sexuality then becomes the basis of existence and the basis of truth where the mother is. To be a good mother depends on how the mother presents her body and how then the media talks about the body of the mother.

This is in line with Michel Foucault's idea about sexuality as a modern construction that plays an important role in modern power play (1978, p. 9). That it is not only the mother who plays a role and has the power of authority in presenting herself and her body but also other apparatus that has the same legitimacy to display the mother and her body to the public --at least not to evaluate the body of the mother. The regulation and control of mothers and women not only occur in the subjectivity of individuals but also actively work on the subjectivity of their sexuality through their bodies and bodies in the media.

Family is everything for the mother. Husband and children occupy the main position in their lives. Hard work, sacrifice for the sacrifice of a mother always for the family. After singing again, she works for his children and family. Ayu also receives hundreds of transfers from AF, she works for her children. Vitalia was

photographed with a challenging pose, she worked for her children. RAC leads Banten Province, she works for his extended family. The media barely highlights the achievements of Sefti, Ayu, Vitalia, and RAC as singers, entertainers, leaders, professional photographers because in the ideology of mothers which is still biased towards traditional nobility values in Indonesia.

Mothers are not allowed to expect compensation for the work they are for families. Mother's work is volunteer work, sincere work. Although these mothers are present in the context of Indonesia which is quite modern today, the ideology of the New Order style of mothers is still attached. In the absence of appreciation and fair rewards for their work, because it is always associated with aspects of the family, it means that the ideology of the media still views the work of the mother as patriarchal biases, part of the hierarchy of men's orders (paternalistic) (Suryakusuma, 2012, p. 181; Wieringa, 2010, p. 33).

Besides, the romance of a mother with her husband is also an object of news that is not spared by the media. The romance experience is a beautiful, extraordinary, and certainly unforgettable experience for a mother. This experience later became binding on the stronger relationship with her husband and family. That husbands and men are superior subjects who can create and control extraordinary experiences. Indirectly the narrative of this story places mother as the sexual object of her husband and man.

This discourse is constructed as if it is inherent and in the life of the mother. To describe a Sefti, Ayu, and RAC the media needs to juxtapose them with another man: husband, ex-husband, and son. The position of men becomes central. As if without the presence of men, their identity and status cannot be recognized. Without men, Sefti, Ayu, and RAC are empty and zero subjects.

The presence of men who accompany them in the media narrative is more than just

completing their identity and status, but also shows the relationship of power between them and the man. Recognition of Sefti, Ayu, and RAC is not due to being independent and skillful, but always related to someone or something, in this case, the husband, ex-husband, and son.

In the dominant discourse on the social construction of women in Indonesia, mothers are required to be obedient and must get the blessing of their husbands about whatever decisions or actions they will take. The position of husband and father in the household is still dominant and hegemonic. He is a protector, leader, and determinant, as an authoritarian patron of the family collectivity in Indonesia (Suryakusuma, 2011, p. 6).

The process of recognizing the bias of men's interests is part of the definition as well as justification for every action taken by the mother or wife (Suryakusuma, 2012, p. 179). This ideology works for Sefti, Ayu, and RAC based on the transformation of traditional values where their presence in the public space is not far away for their interests and relationships in the family.

The effort that always connects mother when in public space with family is a process of domestication of mother and wife. Marriage ties with the husband, family ties with children who are always carried everywhere, placing the mother are always in the domestic realm, the realm of the family. The family as an ideological institution, in this case, produces and reproduces the prototype of the ideal of a mother and wife. As Althusser explained, the family as a private institution is one of the most functional and effective apparatus in producing, reproducing, and affirming certain ideologies (1971, p. 152).

The family then turns into two sides of the same sharp blade: one side as a determinant of the identity of the mother status, the other side as a taming tool for the mother. As a determinant of identity and status, the mother can not be separated from her husband and children. Meanwhile, as a taming tool, the family



seems to be a spy that regulates and determines how mothers should and women are in public spaces. Mother and wife need to be arranged in public spaces as if they are lost-control as if they are wild if no men are watching. And, the realm of the family is the space and place the best place for mother and wife on earth.

This domestication agenda is also related to submission, broken spirit, and even depoliticization of mother and wife. Sefti continued to sing, Ayu continued her business, Vitalia continued to appear in magazines, and RAC was still a leader despite being imprisoned, all of which was read within the framework of emancipation and gender equality.

However, the process of breaking the spirit indirectly happened to them. As if singing again because her husband was involved in a corruption case, Ayu and Vitalia were women who had been closed to AF, while RAC was the leader of Banten people who had to be tamed through prisons. This submission process takes place in the details of the media narrative. The media presents them as mother and wife, as subjects who may work but remain bound and family first.

The mother's narrative in corruption cases as a mother who looks fashionable and hedonistic does not only occur in AF and ARC cases. Previously, several mothers from the upper-middle class and educated and held strategic positions also experienced the same thing. Just mention names like Miranda Swaray Goeltom, Nunun Nurbaiti, Angelina Sondakh, and Melinda Dee. They are the object of media storytelling ranging from the way they dress up, clothing brands, the price of bags, to the excessive highlighting of the body parts, the breast of Melinda Dee.

The portrayal and image of the crazy mother who is crazy for shopping and living in a media spree are built to seem to be related (cause-effect) to the corruption case that befell them. For mothers and women, public officials involved in corruption cases become vulnerable when associated with lifestyle, socialite,

celebrity, and fashion (Amiruddin, 2012, p. 105). This discourse was built unilaterally in a media narrative that corners mothers and women.

This shopping madness is also associated with the position of mother and women as victims of advanced consumerism culture. RAC in the media narrative is described as a woman who has shopaholics disease and is even more acute, namely oniomania (an abnormal impulse to buy things). They buy and continue to buy, regardless of whether the item is needed or not. Although they must continue to owe, still they must continue to buy (Mies, 2005, p. 305).

On the contrary, this does not happen to men when they are involved in corruption cases. If calculated, the number of corruptors and the nominal amount of public money looted by male corruptors far exceeds female corruptors. They also have flashy items such as luxury cars, Rolex watches, mansions, big motorbikes, outdoor gadgets, and so on. Even though they have gray hair and wrinkles, their lifestyle is also high-class: like to take trips abroad, carry a small Prada bag, take care of your chest and hair, and have stash here and there, and so on. But this has never been reported by the media, let alone overestimated and hyperbolic. Behind the media alibi to attract readers, excessive reporting about the lifestyle and appearance of mothers and women is a form of sexism and misogynistic practices towards mothers and women in reporting corruption cases that are still very obvious (Amiruddin, 2012, p. 105).

In the reporting of these two cases, when a mother is caught shopping outside the limits of reasonableness, wasteful, then mother along with her groceries become the main discussion, definition, and considered inappropriate. A mother who shops to meet the needs of the family is a mother who already should, but mothers who shop only to meet their own needs and personal desires are only mothers who are bad and selfish.

The media portrayal of RACs that tend to dissipate, spending tens, hundreds, even billions of rupiah to dress up and buy luxury bags is a

form of protest from the media, on behalf of the public, to the RAC as a mother and as the mother of the people, Banten (public mother) is guilty. RAC violates nature as a mother who should, so he deserves punishment as a mother and diseased, obsessive, and at the same time disregarding family and people.

The condemnation of RAC as a mother occurs because the mother as an understanding has been pre-standardized in the socio-cultural context of the community - in other words, the institutionalization of the mother. When a mother has been preached, everything related to the mother will become social control (Suryakusuma, 2012, p. 171-172).

Social control is important if the process of institutionalization and internalization of the mother is not going well. Punishment (social control) is given to anyone (mother) who does not meet the target according to her natural nature (Hardiyanta, 1997, p. 95-96). Institutions will be mother regulated not only through repression but the power of text in the media to provide definitions and regulations in the discourse that is expressed repeatedly.

For example, the definitions of normal and abnormal are social definitions like homosexuals, people labeled naughty, sinful, crazy, communist, liberal, pathological and even natures, womanhood, virility which all can be regulated and punished according to prevailing social norms, according to who is in power at a certain time.

This framework is sourced from beliefs, its relationship to reality is regulated through various discourses, unity of beliefs, concepts, and ideas adopted. It is not only centered on the regulation of others (mother) but also on oneself (the way we see mother) in everyday life. Institutions will be mothers formed by the social order in the discourse of power following the will of those in power (Foucault, 1972, p. 94).

In the era of democracy, public spaces in Indonesia are quite friendly for mothers and women. In certain conditions, the public sphere

also reforms itself by attending to the public more inclusive, equitable, and tends to open up. Both of these corruption cases tell a lot about mothers and women who are active-participatory in the public sphere: from the socio-cultural to the bureaucratic-political sphere.

However, behind these amazing achievements, the mother's image in the media narrative is turned upside down to be so bad and as if immoral. Mothers caught in corruption cases are described as dangerous and terrible mothers. The raiding of mothers with a negative image not only destroys the mentality of the mother but also destabilizes the mental building of the wider community about the mother's figure. The public seemed to be traumatized by the mother.

Mothers in the dominant discourse are known as protectors, protectors, and compassion in a haphazard reversal in the media narrative of being a low-moral-abusive mother. Mother as the foundation of national development turns into terror for other women, men, socio-cultural life, to the country. Notice how Ayu and Vitalia are told as mothers with the past and their work in figurative language has a negative connotation.

The media aggressively pinned the work label to mothers where it might not have anything to do with corruption cases. Mothers in public spaces are attacked by various forces from various angles. Also, pay attention when the media introduces RAC to the wider Indonesian public as mothers who are not only greedy but also iron-handed who tend to work in thuggish ways.

He was feared that the security forces would have to put extra power on the RAC. RAC is described as a masculine mother, which is also a nightmare for many people. She is not an ideal masculine: guarding and protecting based on sound logic. She is a bad masculine, absolute, and full of revenge.

### **Selling Mother: Ideology of Media Coverage in Corruption Cases**

Althusser introduced an ideological affirmation through two concepts, namely, through the Repressive State Apparatus (RSA) and the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs). Repressive State Apparatus consists of institutions formed by the state, such as the police, military apparatus, prisons, courts, and self-government. The influence of this apparatus is more emphasized in public areas and tends to be practiced through violence.

Meanwhile, the Ideological State Apparatus consists of several specialized institutions such as: through religious institutions with a different mosque or church system, through educational institutions with different public and private school systems, through family institutions, through legal institutions, through political institutions such as diverse political parties, through trade institutions, through communication institutions (such as the press, radio, television, internet), through cultural institutions such as literature, sports, art, and others.

The influence of this apparatus is more emphasized in the private and individual spheres and is practiced tends to be more on certain ideologies. However, what is interesting about these two concepts is not the practice of the public-private or ideological-violence domain, but rather how these institutions function (Althusser, 1971, p. 152).

Ideology the news is believed not as a result of direct intervention by the owner or even a conscious manipulation effort by journalists, but rather a result of the routine attitude and work practices of the staff. News reporters give conventions and codes about how to do, producing ideology as common sense. Media dependency on authoritative sources results in the reproduction of the primary definition of the media, which assesses the appropriateness of the news.

In translating the primary definition of news, a media –as a secondary definition-

reproduces an ideology associated with the authorities, supporting the dominant ideology. The media is a site to produce, reproduce, and even transform ideologies. What is displayed or happens in the media -which we witness together- is a representation of the present social reality that can be used as a mouthpiece to understand the reality that is currently happening.

The practice of mothers, as a biological mother, can be observed in the media coverage of these two corruption cases against mothers and women. That the media with all its ideological apparatus is building the image of a noble and noblewoman and woman both in the realm of the family and when they are and related in the public sphere. Sefti Sanustika is always portrayed as a mother who loves and protects her children and family so much. When left in prison by her husband AF, Sefti had to go back to work, sing, and be a guest star in entertainment shows. All that she did to connect her life and the future of her daughter. She loved his only child. Sefti's love for her children shown with great responsibility and everything that Sefti did solely to meet the needs of child's life.

The same depiction of things also happened to Vitalia and Ayu Azhari. These two mothers were single parent and have expertise in the entertainment world. As single parents, they described as mothers who work hard to meet the needs of their children, whether living expenses, school fees, or pocket money. The plural was found in our society to be a mother with the status of a widow (a single mother) must bear two roles at the same time: as a mother and as a father, one side must be gentle (read: the stereotyped nature of the mother) and on the other hand must be firm (read: properties stereotyped over the father).

These two things are demanded in line with what children should be able to find in character education, character, and so on in their daily lives. In addition to working hard with their main skills, whether singing, playing movies,

or as photo models, they also have side businesses, such as Ayu, opening a food business. With the growth and development of their children, the needs and demands of life, of course, were also increasing.

The mother also demanded to work harder and harder - apart from being supported by her ex-husband or having inheritance from parent. The role of a great mother like this was often considered and valued as a form of the mother's glory and devotion to life.

Amid the still familiar negative stigma over the title of a widow for mothers and women, it should be that the glory and respect for the mother are also still given - even if it is not directly given by the public. For example, although the widows of their children still go to school; although no longer have a father her children were not addicted to drugs and other similar things. Respect for Sefti, Vitalia, and Ayu were even greater when they survive with all the abilities of a mother and wife left by her husband during a life that was quite heavy.

Meanwhile, mother as public mother in the concept of the mother can be observed in the positioning of RAC when involved in corruption cases. RAC was known not only as a mother to her biological children, not only as a mother-in-law of her daughter-in-law, and as a mother to her extended family. But it also considers the strategic RAC position, as governor, the number one person in Banten. Under these conditions, the RAC bears the two roles of mothers at the same time: biological mothers and public mothers. As a biological mother, her great love for her children manifested in the form of RAC's emotional closeness with her sons and daughters.

In this context, the children of RAC who have grown up were strengthening their souls which were being plagued by various problems. It may be that this is a kind of reflection that a mother must be strong and tough, not solely for herself but for the strength and obstinacy of her children as well. RAC was always visited by his sons and daughters in KPK custody. She was

brought food and replacement clothes. When her husband passed away, RAC was shown so sad and miserable on the lap of his son. RAC children in the media narrative portrayed as supporting, protecting, and sharing love and affection with their mother. Besides, as a mother, RAC also demanded to be responsible for every wholeness in her extended family.

In some parts of the media describing the RAC as a failed mother, an incompetent mother in carrying out her role as guardian of her family dynasty in Banten. The loss or weakening of the political power of the RAC family in Banten was a form of failure or non-functioning of the role of the mother of the RAC towards their families. On the other hand, RAC as a public mother was also responsible for spreading the maternal side to the people of Banten. As a leader who was dealing with the law, she exhibits cooperative qualities, not evasive, and ready to take responsibility for her actions.

In another case, she is also responsible for the character of children, Banten's young generation. She gave and opened a discussion room and social assistance to young Banten children in the campus environment and outside campus, in the country and abroad (Egypt). Of course, this was not merely seen as the generous qualities of a leader, but can also be seen as a form of love from a mother who considered to have greater empathy when compared to fathers.

The position of this public mother is considered far nobler, more honorable because she deals with many issues, influences and brings great benefits, and inspires many people. That way, the demands of being a public mother are much higher along with the desired responsibilities greater. In public mothers, we find heroism, all the efforts of a mother who fights for the interests of many people beyond the interests of herself and her family. It is in this position that high honor and respect should also be given to the mother figure.

## CONCLUSION

This paper shows how significant the role of the media is in rebuilding discourse on mother and women, in this case through the reporting of corruption cases. Media interference with the reproduction of understanding (re) motherhood is impossible without the interests and ideology behind it. The media is like an equally sharp two-edged knife.

One side of the media presents the discourse of independent and modern mothers and women while encouraging them to become figures of powerful and independent subjects as citizens (first-class) who are heterogeneous and fragmented. While on the other hand, the media is also aggressively reproducing role models into mother and women who tend to be single and homogeneous who do not defect from the conventional values exalted by this country.

The tugging and ambivalence of the media when discussing mother and women seem to be part of the unpreparedness of the media -often on behalf of the public- when dealing with several issues. This unpreparedness is part of the dominance of patriarchal dominance in the media editorial rooms which smoothly manifests in the news texts. Under these conditions, the media comes to the public with all its paradoxical appearance, with all its illusions on the discourse on mothers and women.

## References

- Althusser, L. (1971). *Ideology and Ideology State Apparatuses*. In Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays. Monthly Review Press.
- Amiruddin, M. (2012). *From Melinda Dee's Breasts, Miranda Goeltom's Purple Hair, to the 'Hermes' Bag and the Veil 'Louis Vuitton' Nunun in Women against Corruption*. Jurnal Perempuan Edition 78. Yayasan Jurnal Perempuan.
- Blackburn, S. (2004). *Women and the State in Modern Indonesia*. Cambridge University Press.
- Carter, C. (1998). *When the 'Extraordinary' Becomes 'Ordinary': Everyday News of Sexual Violence*. In Cynthia Carter, Gill Branston, and Stuart Allan (eds.), *News, Gender, and Power*. Routledge.
- Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis, M. (1987). *Ibuisism and Priyayization: Path to Power*. In Scholten, Elsbeth Lochers and Anke Niehof (eds.), *Indonesian Women in Focus Past and Present Notion*. Foris Publications.
- Faisal, A. (2018). *Biopolitik dan Gerakan Literasi Komunikatif Kaum Muda [Biopolitics and the Youth's Movement of Communicative Literacy]*. *Journal Communication Spectrum*, 8(1), 72-93. <http://dx.doi.org/10.36782/jcs.v8i1.1813>
- Foucault, M. (1970). *The Order of Discourse*. In *Text, Discourse, Ideology*. Inaugural Lecture at the College de France. December 2, 1970.
- Foucault, M. (1972). *The Archeology of Knowledge*. Tavistock Publications Limited.
- Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality. Volume I: An Introduction*. Robert Hurley (Penj). Pantheon Books.
- Greer, G. (1971; 1970; 1991). *The Female Eunuch*. Harper-Collins Publishers
- Hardiyanta, S P. (1997). *Michel Foucault: Discipline of the Workshop Body of Modern Individuals*. LKiS.
- Mies, M. (2005). *Liberating Consumers*. In Shiva, Vandana, and Mies, Maria (Eds.), *Ecofeminism: Perspectives of the Women's & Environmental Movement*. IRE Press.
- Mills, S. (1995). *Stylistic Feminist*. Routledge.
- Mills, S. (1997). *Discourse*. Routledge.
- Susilastuti, D. H. (2013). *Women's Leadership: A Paradigm Change from Idea Politics to Political Presence in Elections and Representation*. *Journal of Women*, 18(4)
- Suryakusuma, J. (2011). *The First Lady of State: The Social Construction of the New Order Womanhood*. Komunitas Bambu.
- Suryakusuma, J. (2012). *Religion, Sex, and Power*. Komunitas Bambu.
- Wieringa, S. E. (2010). *Destruction of the Women's Movement: Sexual Politics in Indonesia after the PKI's fall*. Galangpress.

### **Notes on Authors**

**Adek Risma Dedees** is a lecturer and researcher at the Department of Communication Science, Bakrie University Jakarta, Indonesia. She pursued her master of arts in Media and Cultural Studies from Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Her main interests include gender communication, media studies, cultural studies, feminism, and discourse studies. **E-mail: [adedees@gmail.com](mailto:adedees@gmail.com)**

**Ratna Noviani** is a senior lecturer and researcher at the Graduate School of Media and Cultural Studies, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. She pursued her PhD in Media Studies from Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany. Her main interests include gender studies, consumption and lifestyle, media studies, and the politics of representation. **E-mail: [ratna.noviani@yahoo.com](mailto:ratna.noviani@yahoo.com)**