

# Sexism and Gender Bias Against Men in TikTok Comment Sections: A Comparative Study of the “Kampus Cantik” and “Kampus Ganteng” Trends

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the forms of discourse, the ways in which society interprets and normalizes them, and the factors contributing to gender bias within the “Kampus Cantik” and “Kampus Ganteng” trends on social media platforms. This qualitative study employed a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach to uncover the power relations, ideologies, and social representations embedded in users’ commentaries on both trends. Data collection techniques included virtual observation through the examination of user activities and interactions, as well as digital documentation by gathering screenshots of comments, videos, and upload descriptions that served as the objects of analysis. The findings reveal distinct patterns of responses between the “Kampus Cantik” and “Kampus Ganteng” trends. Comments on the “Kampus Cantik” trend were predominantly characterized by appreciation and expressions of female solidarity, whereas the “Kampus Ganteng” trend was largely dominated by teasing and sexually suggestive humor. These differences are influenced by several factors, including social constructions of masculinity, unequal moral interpretations, and media representation. This situation highlights the urgency of gender-sensitive digital literacy to raise public awareness that harassment can be experienced by anyone, regardless of gender. Therefore, digital spaces are expected to evolve into environments that are safer, more equitable, and free from discrimination for all individuals.

**Keywords:** *discourse analysis, sexism and the normalization of gender bias, men, comment sections, TikTok.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The era of globalization has witnessed rapid advancements in technology and information, which have had a significant impact on the formation of societal values, norms, and behaviors. Digital innovations not only simplify human activities but also expand access to information and create spaces for expressing opinions on



issues of public concern (Yusneli, 2023). Technology is utilized as a means of communication between individuals and groups, which has subsequently given rise to various social media platforms as an integral part of modern society (Suhendra & Pratiwi, 2024). Social media has introduced new phenomena that influence communication patterns and bring about social, political, and cultural impacts. In addition to serving as a source of information, social media has also become a space for entertainment, self-expression, and the exchange of views. These conditions have made it deeply ingrained in the lives of Indonesian society. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and X have evolved into spaces for public interaction and arenas for opinion formation (Syapriani et al., 2025). One such platform is TikTok, which not only provides entertainment through short videos but also serves as a space where ideologies, stereotypes, and perspectives on social issues—including gender—are formed and widely discussed in the comments section.

Furthermore, social media platforms can also trigger the emergence of gender bias. Gender bias refers to the condition where unfair differences in treatment occur between women and men, involving inequality in rights, opportunities, protection, and obligations across various aspects of life (Wahyuni & Lestatika, 2024). In the digital context, men often find themselves in a dilemma where they are expected to maintain decorum and respect women, yet when they become the targets of vulgar comments or harassment, their experiences are frequently dismissed and deemed trivial. This social pressure shapes a construction of masculinity that requires men to appear strong, rational, and unflappable, yet simultaneously demands they be cautious not to be labeled as perpetrators of toxic masculinity. This phenomenon is evident in the public response to two similar TikTok trends featuring different genders: “Kampus Cantik” and “Kampus Ganteng.” Although both highlight students’ physical appearances, comments on the “Kampus Cantik” trend are viewed as moral judgments, physical objectification, and sexually charged remarks directed at women. Conversely, vulgar comments and flirtations directed at men in the “Kampus Ganteng” trend are instead viewed as humor and expressions of admiration. This contrast in attitudes indicates the persistence of deep-rooted gender



bias, where women are seen as the party that needs protection, while men are considered incapable of being victims of harassment.

This phenomenon demonstrates that sexism on social media is not only experienced by women but can also be directed at men in more subtle forms that are often normalized. This discourse reflects how patriarchal ideology and social constructions of masculinity continue to shape public perceptions of gender behavior and expression in the digital sphere. Previous research, such as *Examining Gender Differences in Social Media Language* (Aydin, 2025) and *Deconstruction of Gender Stereotypes Through Humor: A Qualitative Study on Accounts @Fakboiberkelas8* (Faizin & Febriana, 2025), indicates that digital media plays a role in reproducing gender stereotypes and reinforcing patriarchal structures. However, most of these studies still position women as the group most vulnerable to sexism, while research on men as targets of bias, harassment, or stereotypes remains very limited, particularly within the context of comment sections—which are spontaneous, massive, and often viewed merely as a form of entertainment.

Based on this research gap, the author initiated a study titled “A Discourse Analysis of Sexism and the Normalization of Gender Bias Against Men in Comment Sections: A Comparative Study Between the ‘Kampus Cantik’ Trend vs. the ‘Kampus Ganteng’ Trend” to expand the scope of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in the realm of digital media, specifically through a comparison of public discourse regarding two TikTok trends featuring different genders. This study is expected to: (1) identify the forms of discourse related to gender bias that emerge in user comments on the “Kampus Cantik” and “Kampus Ganteng” trends, (2) examine how society interprets and normalizes gender bias toward men and women differently in these two trends, and (3) identify the factors contributing to the emergence of gender bias in trends created by men and women on social media platforms. Through this problem formulation, the study aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the practices of sexism and gender bias that are reproduced and normalized in digital interactions, which will subsequently be analyzed using the research methods described in the following section.



## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Teun A. van Dijk, in *Ideology: A Multidisciplinary Study* (1998), explains that discourse is not merely a collection of sentences but also a social practice that represents reality through particular perspectives, ideologies, and power relations. In the context of TikTok comment sections, discourse functions as a space that actively constructs meanings about men and masculinity. To analyze such discourse, this study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which aims to reveal how language reproduces domination and inequality, including sexism and gender bias. Van Dijk's CDA framework emphasizes the relationship between text structure, social cognition, and social context. The analysis focuses on linguistic elements such as word choice, metaphors, and rhetorical strategies, while also examining collective beliefs and dominant masculine norms that enable sexist discourse to be understood and normalized within broader patriarchal structures in digital spaces.

R. W. Connell, in *Masculinities* (2020), defines sexism as prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination based on sex or gender. Although sexism is commonly associated with discrimination against women within patriarchal systems, it may also be directed toward men through pressures to conform to narrow masculine norms, such as appearing emotionally strong, avoiding vulnerability, and fulfilling traditional masculine roles. Meanwhile, gender bias refers to conscious or unconscious tendencies that advantage or disadvantage particular genders. In digital spaces such as TikTok, gender bias against men is often normalized through comments targeting their physical appearance, emotional expression, or perceived inability to meet masculine expectations. Supported by algorithm-driven virality and humor-oriented culture, such discourse is frequently treated as entertainment, allowing sexism and gender stereotypes against men to be continuously reproduced and normalized within comment sections.

Normalization refers to the process through which certain behaviors, ideas, or social practices become accepted as ordinary or natural within society, while representation refers to how individuals or social realities are portrayed through language and media. In the digital era, social media platforms such as Instagram, X (Twitter), YouTube, and TikTok play a significant role in shaping public opinion and social perceptions. Through framing and repeated exposure, social media often



reproduces stereotypes regarding masculinity, including assumptions that men must always appear strong, unemotional, and resistant to vulnerability.

The rapid development of social media has also expanded opportunities for users to create and distribute content as forms of entertainment and self-expression. TikTok, in particular, frequently positions women as objects of public attention and exploitation through visual content. However, similar forms of objectification may also occur toward men, especially through representations emphasizing athletic bodies or idealized masculine appearances. Despite these similarities, public responses toward the objectification of men are often more permissive and normalized. This difference reflects the existence of sexism and gender bias in digital spaces, where expectations and standards for men and women are not applied equally.

TikTok is a short-video-based social media platform launched in 2016 by Zhang Yiming under the Chinese technology company ByteDance (Nufus & Handayani, 2022). The platform has rapidly grown into one of the most influential digital media platforms globally, including in Indonesia, by allowing users to create, share, and interact with short-form video content. One of TikTok's defining characteristics is its personalized algorithm, commonly known as the *For You Page* (FYP), which recommends content based on users' viewing behavior and interactions, such as likes, comments, and shares.

Beyond functioning as spaces for response, TikTok comment sections also serve as arenas for public participation and discourse production, particularly regarding gender roles and social representation. In addition, TikTok's humor-oriented culture frequently presents sensitive issues, including gender-related topics, through jokes, satire, and parody. Although this approach makes such topics more accessible to wider audiences, it may also contribute to the normalization of sexism and gender stereotypes. Furthermore, engagement metrics play a significant role in determining content visibility, as highly interactive content is more likely to appear on users' FYPs and influence public opinion in digital spaces.



### III. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative method using Teun A. van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model to analyze power relations, ideology, and gender bias in TikTok comments on the "Kampus Cantik" and "Kampus Ganteng" trends. The analysis is conducted through three main dimensions: text structure, social cognition, and social context. Text analysis is used to examine the micro structure of language, word choice, metaphors, and rhetorical strategies in the comments. Social cognition analysis examined users' beliefs, knowledge, and collective values in interpreting the comments, while social context analysis situated the findings within the structures of patriarchy, viral culture, and gender power relations in digital society. The analysis process was conducted interactively through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The research data consists of comments containing gender bias, sexual humor, sarcasm, and physical objectification in TikTok content. Primary data sources were obtained through virtual observation and digital documentation in the form of screenshots of comments, videos, and post descriptions. Non-participant observation was conducted on user interactions until data saturation was reached (Moleong, 2006), while digital documentation was used as authentic data to support the validity of the findings (Sugiyono, 2010). Secondary data was obtained from journals and literature related to digital sexism and critical discourse analysis. Data selection was conducted using purposive sampling based on the relevance and intensity of comment interactions. The research was conducted from September to November 2025, with the researcher acting as a human instrument assisted by a digital observation sheet.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### **The Dynamics of Gender Discourse in TikTok's Comment Section**

Over the past decade, social media has become not only a space for entertainment but also an arena for the reproduction of social discourse that shapes how the digital generation understands the body, gender, and power relations. As a platform with nearly two billion active users, TikTok has transformed into a public stage where bodies are evaluated, interpreted, and negotiated through interactions in the



comment section. According to Rahman et al. (2023), social media enables users to communicate, exchange information, and express themselves through various interactive features. In this context, TikTok's comment section functions not only as a space for spontaneous responses but also as a means of shaping and disseminating social values, ideologies, and cultural constructions related to gender.

This understanding positions TikTok not merely as an entertainment platform but also as a space for the exchange of social ideas. The open and interactive comment feature allows users to help shape and disseminate values, ideologies, and cultural constructions related to gender. In this context, TikTok's comment section becomes a space for negotiating meanings regarding the body, modesty, masculinity, and femininity, thereby enabling various forms of gender bias to emerge and become normalized. TikTok's algorithm, which prioritizes visuals, places body representation at the center of digital interaction. Content that highlights physical appearance tends to garner a larger public response, turning the comment section into a space for negotiating beauty standards and gender expectations. The patterns of comments that emerge do not merely reflect aesthetic preferences but reveal how social structures and gender ideologies operate in daily life—both explicitly and implicitly within popular culture.

In this context, comments containing sexism, demeaning humor, moral judgments, and normalized harassment frequently appear on content highlighting physical appearance. Interestingly, these responses do not apply equally to women and men. This disparity in treatment serves as the starting point for the formation of gender bias in digital spaces, as well as the foundation for researchers to examine how sexist discourse is produced, articulated, and distributed in TikTok comment sections—a topic that will be further explored through an analysis of two main trends in the following section.

### **The “Kampus Cantik” vs. “Kampus Ganteng” Trend**

The “Kampus Cantik” and “Kampus Ganteng” trends are viral phenomena on TikTok featuring portraits of students from various campuses across Indonesia, with a primary focus on the physical attractiveness of the individuals depicted. Presented through popular music, creative transitions, and visually appealing aesthetics, this content quickly sparks curiosity, admiration, and judgment from other users. For the



purposes of analysis, the author compiled a number of comments from TikTok posts related to both trends. The collected comments encompass both sides of the discourse simultaneously: those containing objectification, sexual humor, and moral judgments, as well as those expressing defense, social criticism, and rejection of such objectification practices.

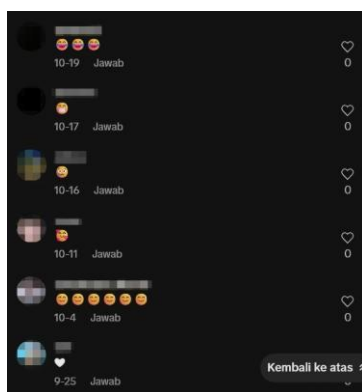
All comments were then grouped into analytical categories and processed using Teun A. van Dijk’s Critical Discourse Analysis framework across three levels: text structure, social cognition, and social context. This categorization allows the author to systematically map discourse patterns, ranging from how gender bias emerges and debates surrounding objectification to the discourses of defense constructed by some users.

### Comment Patterns in the “Kampus Cantik” Trend

An analysis of comments on “Kampus Cantik” content revealed that the majority of comments were dominated by positive praise, particularly from female users. This is evident from the language used, the emojis, and the visual identity—specifically, female profile pictures—of the accounts that posted comments.



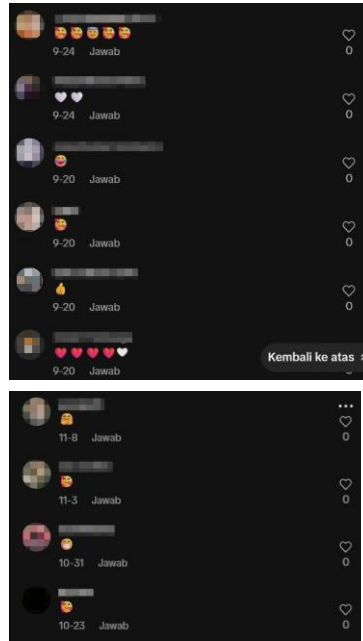
**Picture 1.** Compliments exchanged among women as a form of female solidarity



**Picture 2.** Complimentary comments with emojis



**Picture 3.** Praise exchanged among women as a form of female solidarity

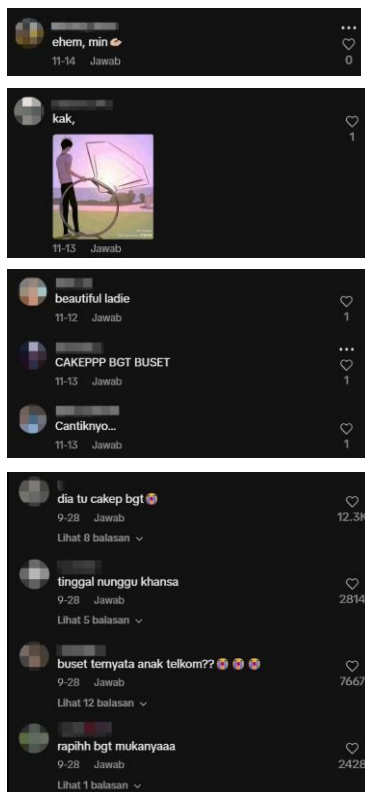


**Picture 4.** Complimentary comments with emojis

Comments like “kakak shantik banget 🐱,” “masyaallah cantiiii naa 🐱,” or “makan apa ci bisa cantiknya kelewat” are the most common expressions of appreciation found in the comments section. Comments like these demonstrate female solidarity and the practice of mutual support among women in the digital space.



**Picture 4.** Comments on objectification



**Picture 5.** Complimentary comments



**Picture 6.** Sexually suggestive comments

Nevertheless, the results of the author’s observations, conducted until saturation was reached, revealed a small number of comments with sexual harassment undertones made by male users, such as “berapa??”, “piroan?,” “pengen”, “Mantapp kalii ini menn”, or “cek harga”. These comments indicate forms of objectification and commodification of women’s bodies, although they are not dominant. Fortunately, these sexually harassing comments tend to be ignored and do not receive much support, as evidenced by the low number of likes and few replies from other users. Compared to positive comments that garner far more likes and responses, the harassing comments are drowned out in public interactions. This finding suggests the presence of social control mechanisms in the TikTok comment section within the “Kampus Cantik” trend, where women play a greater role in constructing positive narratives and rejecting the objectification of themselves. This phenomenon serves as an indicator that the public is striving to create a safe space for women.



Gambar 7. Complimentary comments



Gambar 8. Defense content



Gambar 9. Defense Content

In addition to a small number of supportive and abusive comments, researchers also found both comments and content that were critical of and advocated against the issue of the objectification of women. Comments such as “udah 2025 kok bisa ya masih ada akun kayak gini, gatau yg bikin mahasiswa atau bukan tapi kayak gini termasuk objektifikasi tubuh perempuan, udah gede



harusnya paham” and content stating “stop objektifikasi pada perempuan” indicate that some users possess a high level of gender awareness and digital ethics. Such comments serve as a corrective discourse that challenges the normalization of content centered on women’s bodies for the sake of public consumption.

These advocacy-based comments emerge as a form of affirmation that women should not be treated as visual objects to be displayed and evaluated through aesthetic standards, especially within the context of educational institutions. The emergence of these comments reinforces the finding that the “Kampus Cantik” trend is not merely a celebration of beauty but has become a space for discourse battles regarding the ethics of representing women’s bodies on social media. The presence of this advocacy discourse also indicates that the public possesses a high level of moral sensitivity when discussing issues of the objectification of women.

### Comment Patterns in the “Kampus Ganteng” Trend



Picture 10. Comments with sexual humor



Picture 11. Comments that



Picture 12. Comments with sexual humor



objectify

Significantly different from the comment patterns on the “Kampus Cantik” trend, observations of posts tagged “Kampus Ganteng” reveal a far more permissive dynamic in the comments, often with a sexual undertone. The comment sections on videos featuring male students are filled with flirtations, seduction, and even explicit sexual fantasies. Comments like “duh, kelihatannya enak banget itu” “those biceps got me hard,” or “menggoda banget kayak takjil” appear repeatedly, and often become the comments with the most likes. This pattern illustrates how the objectification of men’s bodies is normalized through humor, sexually suggestive jokes, or expressions of admiration that go beyond ordinary visual appreciation.

One particularly striking finding is that these sexually suggestive comments are actually dominated by women. This response suggests that digital spaces offer women greater freedom to express their sexual interest in men without facing social sanctions. This contrasts with situations where men make sexual comments to women, which are typically met with condemnation and viewed as violating moral norms. In other words, a gender bias exists that treats men’s bodies as objects to be mocked, teased, or “enjoyed” publicly under the guise of humor, while women’s bodies remain.

Another finding was the number of comments that objectified men’s bodies as visual objects. Many comments directly addressed specific body parts such as lips, arms, jaws, or body shape, explicitly referencing “desires” or “fantasies.” The objectification of men here tends not to be taken seriously by the public but is instead treated as entertainment. This stands in stark contrast to the “Kampus Cantik” trend, where sexual comments are almost nonexistent, and when they do appear, they are deemed inappropriate. This normalization of the objectification of men’s bodies suggests that society tends to view men as more “tolerant” of sexual comments, so verbal harassment against men is not seen as a form of violation.

In addition to sexually charged comments, neutral or normative compliments were also found, such as “gantengnya effortless banget” or “obviously my type ini mah” However, such comments are far less dominant compared to explicitly sexual ones. Interestingly, there are almost no comments of defense, moral criticism, or discussion regarding objectification in the “Kampus Ganteng” trend. The public



tends to enjoy and perpetuate this sexual humor, and in some cases even encourages more vulgar interactions. The absence of criticism indicates that the objectification of men is viewed as more acceptable and not seen as a moral threat.

Thus, the pattern of comments on the “Kampus Ganteng” trend reveals three main trends:

1. the dominance of explicit sexual comments and humor with erotic undertones,
2. the normalization of the objectification of men’s bodies without public condemnation, and
3. the absence of comments defending men or offering social criticism of such objectification.

This pattern reveals a gender bias in how the public responds to women’s and men’s bodies. While women receive strong moral protection, men are instead positioned as objects of entertainment who can be the targets of overt sexual comments. It is this contrast that is crucial to analyze in the following subsection regarding how these two trends produce, reproduce, and maintain gender constructions in the digital space.

### **A Comparison of Patterns of Sexism and Differences in Public Treatment**

The analysis results show that comments with sexual harassment undertones are still found in the “Kampus Cantik” trend, although they are not particularly prevalent. Forms of harassment The content that appears is generally light sexual humor, such as suggestive stickers or emojis. However, what stands out most is not the harassing comments themselves, but rather the public’s response to them. Many women have responded—whether through comments or video content—with everything from reprimands and criticism to moral education. In some cases, female users have even created separate content to address the objectification of women and emphasize that this trend risks leading to visual exploitation. In other words, while harassment within the “Kampus Cantik” trend does exist, it is quickly rejected by the audience, preventing it from becoming a dominant narrative.

In contrast, the “Kampus Ganteng” trend reveals a pattern of sexual harassment that is far more explicit and intense. The comments posted are not only sexually suggestive but also include fantasies, direct flirtations, and erotic metaphors



such as “bibirnya plis 🍷,” “duh kak keliatannya enak bgt itu,” “Ah, mantap anjir,” and “that bicep makes me hard.” These comments often end up at the top of the thread, garnering many likes and being considered funny or entertaining by other users. There was virtually no criticism, condemnation, or defense, unlike what occurred with the “Kampus Cantik” trend. This pattern indicates the normalization of the objectification of men’s bodies without public opposition, thereby fulfilling nearly all aspects of the study, including:

1. responses with a seductive tone
2. the normalization of sexism
3. moral protection of gender
4. criticism and advocacy
5. comparison of search results
6. representations of masculinity
7. social justification

From this comparison, a consistent gender bias is clearly evident. When women are the subject of sexual comments, the public views them as entities that must be protected and rejects such objectification. However, when men are sexualized, the public instead views it as entertainment and everyday banter. This pattern continues until harassment is considered normal. These findings reinforce the notion that constructions of masculinity lead men to be viewed as “stronger,” “unoffended,” and “deserving of flirtation,” whereas constructions of femininity position women as vulnerable and in need of moral protection.

These comparative findings provide a crucial foundation for understanding how sexism is shaped not only through the text of comments but also through the surrounding mindsets and social structures. Therefore, the following section employs Teun A. van Dijk’s Critical Discourse Analysis to explain how text, social cognition, and social context play a role in shaping and perpetuating such gender bias. Using Van Dijk’s framework, the analysis can demonstrate how gender bias is reproduced through language and why the public treats the two genders differently in the same situations.

### **Teun A. van Dijk’s Critical Discourse Analysis**

Teun A. van Dijk’s Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is used in this study to



examine comments on the “Kampus Cantik” and “Kampus Ganteng” trends as forms of social practice that reflect collective ways of thinking and the social structures governing gender relations. Van Dijk’s model views discourse as a construction comprising three dimensions-textual structure, social cognition, and social context that are interrelated in producing and normalizing specific ideologies. Through this framework, the study focuses its analysis on how sexism and gender bias are reflected, normalized, and perpetuated in TikTok comment sections.

In terms of text structure, differences in how men and women are treated are evident in the choice of vocabulary, writing style, and rhetorical strategies. In the “Kampus Cantik” trend, comments are dominated by positive compliments such as “Masyaallah cantik banget” “gemes banget kak” or “keren dan berprestasi pasti” Even critical comments tend to focus on issues of privacy and ethics, such as “ini fotonya disebarin tanpa izin ya?” or “ini praktik objektifikasi, tolong stop kaya gini” The linguistic structure that emerges constructs women as subjects in need of protection, so that comments with sexual undertones do not gain public legitimacy and are considered a violation of decency norms.

In contrast, in the “Kampus Ganteng” trend, the text structure is more sexual, explicit, and humorous. Many comments contain erotic metaphors, intensifiers, and hyperbole, such as “bibirnya enak banget keliatannya” “menggoda banget kek takjil” and “that bicep made me hard.” Rhetorical strategies of justification are evident in comments like “cuma bercanda kok” “yaudah kan cowok gapapa” or “emang ganteng banget sih wajar” which serve to legitimize the sexualization of men’s bodies as public humor. Unlike trends regarding women, no moral reprimands or advocacy for the protection of men were found, indicating a double standard in the treatment of gender. One example of a comment that emerged is “udah mandi kok itu, tadi aku yang mandiin” This comment uses simple language but carries sexual implications through a metaphor for an intimate activity. Humorous and hyperbolic language is used to mask the verbal harassment underlying the joke. The high number of likes on this comment indicates public acceptance of sexually charged content as a form of entertainment. This normalization has the potential to cause feelings of shame, devaluation, or objectification for those targeted by the comments.



There is a dimension of social cognition the public's interpretation of these two trends is influenced by established cognitive schemas and gender stereotypes. Sexual comments directed at men are more often interpreted as jokes due to the belief that men are considered strong, rational, unsentimental, and in no need of protection. Conversely, similar comments directed at women are viewed as a form of harassment that constitutes an ethical violation and a moral threat, as women have long been constructed as subjects vulnerable to objectification. It is this collective belief that creates a double standard that is, the different treatment of experiences of sexism faced by men and women.

This phenomenon is underscored when a male user comments on a video advocating for women with the line, "Giliran akun yang ini nggak ada yang bahas, talk about double standards." This comment highlights the moral double standard surrounding the issue of objectification. However, the reply, "Ya bahas sendiri lah. Ngapa jadi dependent ke cewe buat ngangkat isu kalian. Talk about natural leader" demonstrates irony and sarcasm to undermine the validity of that argument. Textually, this comment seeks to negate men's experiences as victims by emphasizing the demands of traditional masculinity.

In the social context, patriarchal culture plays a major role in shaping public judgment of both trends. Patriarchy creates two unwritten rules: first, women must be protected morally and in terms of privacy second, men must always appear strong and be seen as capable of laughing off the sexualization of their bodies. TikTok reinforces this dynamic through algorithms that prioritize high-engagement content, such as sexually humorous comments. The algorithm promotes content that elicits emotional reactions, thereby causing the practice of objectification to be increasingly replicated and normalized through the mechanism of virality.

### **Factors Contributing to Gender Bias in Both Trends**

The phenomenon of gender bias is evident in the differing responses from netizens to the "Kampus Cantik" and "Kampus Ganteng" trends on TikTok. In the "Kampus Cantik" content, comments tend to be supportive and contain minimal objectification, whereas in the "Kampus Ganteng" content, sexual jokes and objectifying comments are more prevalent and are often viewed as normal or entertaining. This difference in responses indicates that gender bias still exists



regarding who is deemed worthy of praise and who is treated as an object. When analyzed through Van Dijk's contextual model, these comments are rooted in social structures, cultural values, and religious norms that shape society's perspective on men—who are often perceived as “tidak mungkin menjadi korban” due to the assumption that they are naturally stronger, more resilient, or won't be harmed by sexual comments. This perspective leads many women to feel free to make comments like “enak ya kak,” “bibirnya plis,” or “inimah enak” without realizing that such expressions actually contain objectification.

From a cultural perspective, Indonesian society still maintains a patriarchal mindset that affects not only women but also men. Within a patriarchal structure, men's bodies and masculine attributes are viewed as “kuat,” so verbal harassment against men is often not considered a serious issue (Miranti & Sudiana, 2021). The practice of sexualized jokes that have become normalized among women such as flirtatious comments directed at idols, celebrities, or male figures on social media further reinforces the perception that men are the ones who “boleh” receive such comments (Azhari et al., 2025). This is precisely why sexual comments on “Kampus Ganteng” content receive numerous likes and high engagement rates, as the public views them more as a form of entertainment than as harassment.

Social factors also play a significant role in shaping the dynamics of comment sections. Social media creates a physical distance between commenters and the individuals being commented on, allowing users to feel freer to express their opinions without facing immediate consequences. Within Van Dijk's framework of social structure, public discourse is shaped by collective perceptions; when the majority of users respond positively—such as with laughter or likes—to sexually suggestive comments, this reinforces the emergence of a new social norm that views such comments as acceptable. Consequently, the more frequently sexual comments appear, the more such behavior is considered normal within the community of female users (Dewi, 2021). This explains why comments like “ihh ngilerrr,” “ihh mau,” or “ah mantap bat anjir” become dominant without any pushback or criticism from other women.

Additionally, religious aspects also exert influence, albeit not directly. In principle, religious teachings prohibit all forms of harassment; however, in social



practice, their application often differs between men and women. Preserving women's honor is frequently prioritized, whereas men's honor does not always receive equal attention (Furqon et al., 2021). Moral awareness usually arises when women are the victims, but when men experience harassment, these religious principles are not always referenced in social media interactions. This perspective results in gender bias, where harassment against women is treated as a serious issue, while harassment against men is viewed merely as a joke.

Upon closer examination, user responses to content themed "Kampus Cantik" reveal a specific pattern worthy of further analysis. This phenomenon is not something that arises spontaneously, but rather is shaped by a series of interconnected factors that influence one another.

First, there is a prevailing societal perspective that still prioritizes women's physical appearance as the primary aspect. This pattern appears to be a deeply ingrained social norm. In the context of college students, for example, public attention often focuses on judgments of beauty rather than their academic achievements or intellectual capabilities. Whether comments are complimentary such as "cantik banget" or negative, they essentially reinforce the idea that a woman's worth is primarily determined by her physical appearance alone.

Second, the nature of social media platforms like TikTok encourages users to voice their comments more boldly. The absence of face-to-face interaction makes many people feel freer to express opinions they might not voice in person. Interestingly, when derogatory comments appear, other users usually quickly step in to defend the person being targeted. However, such defenses often remain within the framework of physical judgment, for example through comments like, "kak? ini dibilang buluq? trs ak yg kayak tikus kejepit ini apa?" Rather than offering a more critical perspective, these responses only reinforce the view that physical appearance is the most defining aspect of a person's worth.

Third, there is a gender bias in how society judges men's and women's bodies. Vulgar comments directed at women are generally considered inappropriate and are quickly met with rejection, whereas similar comments about men are often treated as jokes and accepted without objection. This difference in response indicates that unequal moral standards still exist between men and women in the digital



public sphere.

Finally, the way social media platforms operate also plays a significant role. Algorithms automatically prioritize content that generates high levels of engagement, without considering whether that engagement is positive or negative. As a result, comments focused on physical appearance often become more visible because they are seen as capable of boosting user engagement. In other words, the platform's system itself reinforces a culture of comments that judge women primarily based on their appearance.

From this discussion, it is clear that the issue of comments on "Kampus Cantik" content has its own complexities. Efforts to address it cannot stop at simply urging users to stop making negative comments; rather, they require a more fundamental shift in perspective regarding women's bodies and their value. The four factors above demonstrate that gender bias is not merely formed at the textual level but is constructed through the interaction between language, collective cognition, and broader social structures. Therefore, the following section will discuss the theoretical, social, and practical implications of these findings, as well as how gender bias on TikTok influences public understanding of gender and power dynamics in the digital space.

## V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the analysis of comments within the "Kampus Cantik" and "Kampus Ganteng" trends, this study concludes that digital spaces are not entirely neutral, as users' comments reflect how men and women are perceived and treated according to gender norms and stereotypes embedded within society. In the "Kampus Cantik" trend, women generally received support and appreciation, while sexual comments were more likely to be criticized or rejected by other users, indicating that the public tends to maintain clearer moral boundaries regarding the objectification of women. In contrast, the "Kampus Ganteng" trend was dominated by teasing and sexually suggestive humor that was largely considered acceptable, showing how the objectification of men is often normalized and treated as harmless entertainment. These differences demonstrate that gender bias on social media affects both men and women in different ways, where women tend to face stricter moral standards while men are often perceived as acceptable targets of sexual jokes or objectification.



Overall, this phenomenon suggests that gender bias on TikTok continues to be shaped by popular culture and traditional stereotypes, meaning that digital spaces have not yet become fully equal environments for all genders. Based on these findings, this study suggests that social media users should become more responsible and respectful when posting comments, particularly those related to physical appearance or sexual content. Content creators are also expected to be more aware of the risks of objectification and encourage ethical interactions among their audiences. In addition, improving digital literacy and public awareness of gender bias is essential to help users better understand the impact of their comments in digital spaces. Future studies may expand this discussion by examining other social media platforms or applying additional research methods to gain deeper insights into the phenomenon. Furthermore, TikTok is expected to strengthen its comment moderation system in order to create a safer and more inclusive digital environment for all users.

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