

## LIVE IN STIGMA: “FAT SHAMING” OF WOMAN (DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON FACEBOOK SOCIAL MEDIA FAT WOMEN ASSOCIATION OF INDONESIA)

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**Abstrak.** Stigma obesitas cenderung terus beredar di masyarakat hingga saat ini. Misalnya, banyak wanita gemuk yang dianggap serakah dan malas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dinamika stigma dalam kehidupan sehari-hari yang dialami oleh wanita yang kelebihan berat badan (obesitas) dan memaparkan diskriminasi yang dirasakan oleh wanita obesitas. Penelitian ini mengamati komunitas Asosiasi Wanita Gemuk Indonesia (KAGUMI) di grup Facebook. Penelitian ini merupakan analisis kualitatif melalui stigma mendalam tentang obesitas yang muncul dari diskusi melalui postingan dan komentar anggota kelompok komunitas di Facebook. Penelitian ini dirancang untuk menyajikan analisis lengkap tentang hidup dalam stigma "mempermalukan" di akun grup Facebook Asosiasi Wanita Gemuk Indonesia (KAGUMI). Analisis wacana digunakan untuk mengeksplorasi postingan dan komentar yang berkaitan dengan obesitas.

**Kata kunci:** Ketidakpuasan tubuh, empati, stigma, wanita, *fat-shaming*

**Abstract.** The stigma of obesity tends to continue circulating in the community until now. For example, many fat women are considered greedy and lazy. This research aims to analyze the dynamics of stigma in daily life which experienced by women who are overweight (obesity) and presents the discrimination which felt by obese women. This research is observing the Fat Women Association of Indonesia (KAGUMI) community on the Facebook group. This research is a qualitative analysis through the in-depth stigma of obesity that arises from discussion through posts and comments by members of community groups on Facebook. The study is designed to present a full analysis of living in the stigma of "fat-shaming" in the Facebook group account of the Fat Women Association of Indonesia (KAGUMI). Discourse analysis is used to explore posts and comments relating to obesity.

**KEYWORDS :** Body dissatisfaction, empathy, stigma, woman, fat-shaming

### INTRODUCTION

Many say that appearance and physical form are the first standards of judgment seen by someone. Being overweight is one of the problems felt by many people, especially women. The issues faced and complained of by women who are obese are not confident, hard to find work and a mate, challenging to have offspring, often an ingredient of ridicule.

Fact, All humans have the same potential and opportunity in all things. Natural beauty and beauty of the heart can not only be owned by thin people or those who have an ideal body. But the fat woman has extraordinary beauty and a heart that can be better than other women. Even so, many people who casually bully fat women. Just because of different body size and body weight, a woman can feel her inner torment because she gets various kinds of ridicule and ridicule. As a result of the frequent occurrence of fat-shaming, it causes a deep appreciation of oneself not only from external parties but also from internal oneself. This paper aims to analyze the number of women who are not satisfied with their body condition and appearance. Because it often gets body shaming from its environment so that for a long time women tend to blame

their own physical and regret what they have done and feel physically uncomfortable and not worthy of being seen by others.

The ideal body image for women is a slender frame, whereas, for men, it is the upside-down triangular shape. This shape is characterized by a muscular, well-developed chest and arms, with broad shoulders that taper down to a narrow waist. This shape is often exhibited in the main characters of action movies such as Vin Diesel, Sylvester Stallone, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and Jean Claude Van Damme (Pope, Phillips, et al., 2000) (Wilson, 2010).

These things are very related to body shape dissatisfaction (body dissatisfaction). Dissatisfaction with the body shape according to Rosen and Reiter (Kartikasari, 2013) is the inconsistency of the mind about the negative assessment of physical appearance and the existence of feelings of shame about the physical state when in the social environment. Body dissatisfaction experienced by women has increased, not only in Indonesia but abroad. In other studies mentioned that resiliency may have a measurable mitigating effect on body image dissatisfaction in young women. Specifically, we hypothesize that as a young woman's resilience increases, her body image dissatisfaction will decrease (Mcgrath et al., 2012).

Body shaming has become a severe issue in our society. Body shaming is defined by [bodyshaming.org](http://bodyshaming.org) as being "inappropriate, negative statements and attitudes toward another person's weight or size." It is a form of bullying and, as well as being humiliating, and it can lead to short and long term psychological and health-related issues. Body shaming occurs in three main ways, criticizing yourself, criticizing someone else in front of them, and criticizing someone else behind their back (<https://pdby.co.za/body-shaming-and-its-effect-on-society/>).

## METHOD

Many discourse analysis models are introduced and developed by experts. Eriyanto (2001) in his *Discourse Analysis* book, for example, presents models of discourse analysis developed by Roger Fowler et al. (1979), Theo van Leeuwen (1986), Sara Mills (1992), Norman Fairclough (1998), and Teun A. van Dijk. Critical discourse analysis (AWK) provides theories and methods that can be used to carry out empirical studies of the relationships between discourse and social and cultural development in different social domains. In the communication process, discourse analysis can take the form of oral or written. Orally, the conversation is a method of communication between communicators and communicants, while in writing can be seen as a result of disclosure of ideas or ideas.

In his discourse analysis, Fairclough offers a three-dimensional model that represents three domains that must be analyzed, namely text (speech, writing, visual image, or a combination of the three), discursive practices which include the production and consumption of book, and social practice (Elya, 2014).

This research can be categorized as a discourse analysis in writing because it analyzes the comments of members of the Kagumi Facebook group related to the problem of stigma and self-dissatisfaction with being overweight which tends to lead to fat-shaming. Critical discourse analysis, seeing language as an essential factor, is how the word is used to see power imbalances in society. This vital analysis of discourse also investigates how words in existing social groups fight each other and submit their versions. Several studies that raised the body shaming theme and women's dissatisfaction with their bodies discussed a lot about the ideal body, especially physical appearance (body proportion, skin color, facial skin condition, tooth shape, and hair growth) to be a significant assessment of someone. As the research conducted by Nina Yunita Kartikasari concluded that the higher the body dissatisfaction, the lower the psychological well being of the employee, and vice versa the more economical the body dissatisfaction, the higher the mental well being in the employee (Kartikasari, 2013). Likewise, the research conducted by Tria Anggarini Putri concluded that the higher the body image, the higher the confidence in students who are obese. Conversely, the lower the body image, the lower the spirit of students who are overweight (Putri, 2015). Critical discourse analysis (CDA), developed by Norman Fairclough (2001, 2010), among others, constitutes yet another kind of discourse analytical approach in which some key concerns of linguistic and critical social research merge. Critical discourse analysts are interested in the ways in which texts of different kinds reproduce power and inequalities in society ((Denzim & Lincoln, 2018).

According to Van Dijk, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a discourse analytic research that mainly studies how abuses of power and social inequalities are applicable, reproduced, legitimized, and opposed by texts and talks in social and political contexts. With this kind of research, critical discourse analysis takes a specific position and therefore wants to understand, expose, and ultimately challenge social inequality (Van Dick, 2015).

What is useful about this approach is that it enables you to focus on the signifiers that make up the text, the specific linguistic selections, their juxtapositioning, their sequencing, their layout and so on. However, it also requires you to recognise that the historical determination of these selections and to understand that these choices are tied to the conditions of possibility of that utterance. This is another way of saying that texts are instantiations of socially regulated discourses and that the processes of production and reception are socially constrained. Why Fairclough's approach to CDA is so useful is because it provides multiple points of analytic entry. It does not matter which kind of analysis one begins with, as long as in the end they are all included and are shown to be mutually explanatory. It is in the interconnections that the analyst finds the interesting patterns and disjunctions that need to be described, interpreted and explained (Janks, 2020).

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## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Women's appearance is always an exciting thing to discuss. When Body shape, skin color, how to dress and make up often become a conversation not only in the real world but also in cyberspace. The rise of social media use by all groups contributes to women seeking information and expressing themselves and their thoughts. If not used properly, social media can also harm users.

The ideal body shape that develops in society today makes people make it a "benchmark" for judging (body shaming) other people's body shapes if it is not by the ideal criteria, as informants in this study often become victims of the body shaming. Body shame is an individual's assessment of his body which gives rise to the feeling that his body is embarrassing due to his and others' judgments of the ideal body shape not by his authority (Damanik, 2018).

Body shame is a unique and influential part of the potential for embarrassment. Other people not only observe the body as part of ourselves, but the collection also becomes a place for the personality that can make a meaningful human subjective experience happen. The body is the basis of self (self). Thus, equality needs to be upheld and made a boundary between person and entity. Even though "I am my body" (I am my body) there will still be a feeling that "I have my body" (I have my body) (Damanik, 2018).

Body image is not just a cognitive construct, but also a reflection of attitudes and interactions with others. The tendency to link physical attractiveness with positive personal qualities has become a cultural stereotype, not only in western culture but also globally. The avalanche of perfect bodies in mass media, advertising, and social media is burdensome to the subconscious, causing people to accept that "what is beautiful is good," with physical attractiveness often being linked with success (Pop, 2016).

In this session, two forms of fat-shaming will be explained, which lead to self-dissatisfaction experienced, namely speech and a combination of lecture and action on oneself.

### Fat Shaming culminates in verbal shaming body dissatisfaction

The rise of full shaming cases that occur within the scope of association is seen as an ordinary thing and must be understood, even though if seen more in fat-shaming it can be categorized as verbal violence (bullying). The community does not have the same understanding that fat shaming is not unusual because it hurts the victims. Apart from losing self-confidence, the victim can become very depressed. The following are some excerpts from the comments column that illustrate this :



Source : Kagumi Facebook  
Picture 1. group member comments

Body shaming, both through speech and speech as well as actions taken by someone can disrupt comfort and cause an adverse impact for people who are the object of body-shaming, which is increasingly lack of self-confidence (lack of confidence) and feel insecure (insecure feeling); and strive to be ideal (strive to be perfect) (Sakinah, 2018).

Communication in speech or also called verbal communication is communication that uses words, whether oral or written or a form of communication that uses words, both in the way of conversation and writing (speak the language). This communication is most used in human relations. Through words, they express their feelings, emotions, thoughts, ideas, or intentions, convey facts, data, and information and explain it, exchange impressions and reflections, argue with each other, and fight. In verbal communication, that language plays an important role. Verbal communication contains denotative meaning. Media often used the word because language can translate one's thoughts to others (Kusumawati, 2016).

In social life, empathy and sympathy are essential parts where we can accept the condition of others and do not differentiate from personal circumstances. What hurts is that in the many cases discussed in the comments column in the KAGUMI group about the treatment of insults and ridicule, they are delivered by those closest to them. From the acknowledgment of several informants, they have made efforts to beautify themselves by losing weight and adopting a healthy lifestyle. Some even want to operate on their bodies, but there are still many of the informants who are aware and use common sense so that they do not get to the operating stage to get the ideal body.

Communication will not take place if there are no symbols (languages) exchanged. Vice versa, word will not have meaning if it is not seen in a social context or when it is transferred

(Nurmala et al., 2016). The verbal language used in insulting and mocking other people's body shapes or commonly referred to as fat-shaming will hurt the victims.

Fat shaming is very closely related to the image of one's body, which is about the formation of perceptions about the ideal shape according to the community so that a standard of beauty emerges that makes someone feel inferior if they cannot reach that standard. In Indonesia, for example, a woman is considered beautiful when she is white, has long and straight hair, and has a slim body. With the existence of this beauty standard, often women who are considered not meeting the standards then get different treatment, such as intentional or not allusions can be referred to as verbal violence or more commonly referred to as body shaming.

In Communication, verbal is called the delivery of messages through language and words that come out of someone's mouth. According to Larry L. Barker (in Mulyana, 2005), language has three functions: naming (labeling), interaction, and information transmission. Naming or labeling refers to the attempt to identify an object, act, or person by naming them so that they can be applied to in communication. The function of interaction emphasizes sharing ideas and emotions, which can invite sympathy and understanding or anger and confusion. Through language, information can be conveyed to others, and this is called the transmission function of language. The privilege of communication as a function of the transmission of information across time, by connecting the past, present, and future, enables the continuity of our culture and traditions (Kusumawati, 2016).

From some of the comments that fat-shaming in oral form mocks and insults others with speech. Many argue that fat-shaming using verbal usually starts from just joking about melting the atmosphere, but it can lead to depression, and a sense of insecurity felt by victims of fat-shaming. In communication, there is a term that states that every message delivered to another person, then the message will be remembered by the recipient of the word. If the message sent in a definite form allows there will be a good chance for the recipient of the message, conversely if the message conveyed in the negative way that occurs will cause adverse effects for the recipient of the message. Some comment columns submitted on KAGUMI Facebook, members, experience fat-shaming with ridicule and insults by throwing words like "fat", "black", "short", "swollen elephant", "dinosaur egg", "fart bundle", "Roll mattress", even said to be like "hippo". Fat-shaming in this verbal form is undoubtedly very painful for the victims, causing dissatisfaction with their body shape. Verbal language is often used to cast insults and insults on the condition of one's body, as seen in the following comments column on KAGUMI Facebook :



Source : Kagumi Facebook

Picture 2. group member comments about verbal language

The verbal text sets up a dichotomy between knowing and not knowing, which reinforces questions relating to the woman's uncertainty or certainty raised in the visual text (Janks, 2020). Verbal type generally aims to lower the victim's self-esteem. By saying bad things related to a person's physical attributes such as fat, thin, black, short, and so forth. Verbal abuse is difficult to know the signs because there are no physical signs visible. This type of verbal abuse is more

relevant to the psychological side that can be remembered by someone for life. Verbal abuse is easily found and occurs everywhere. Such as swearing, mocking, gossiping, fooling, and stunting. Whether it's in an intentional context or not. Either done in the context of joking or serious. Verbal abuse can occur either in the family, friendship, or even worse, is in the educational environment. Verbal abuse occurs when parents, caregivers, friends or the environment around them often say words that are condescending, discrediting, belittling, or labeling them with a negative label, which makes all these insults crystallize in the person. After these effects form in a person, the confidence possessed will be relatively low and will also affect aspects of his life, both personal and social life (Fajariani & Rahmiaji, 2019). Dissatisfaction with his body originated from the perception of body size linked to the standardization circulating in the community. And the emphasis is more on negative feelings towards his body.

Fat shaming can also occur anywhere, as seen in the comment column above, fat-shaming occurs in the family environment and is even carried out by the closest person like a husband. The word fat physical insult was conveyed by a husband to his wife and compared the physical wife to the material of another woman. The body is a part of the self that is visible so that when a person looks at him negatively, he will also look at the negative of his body.

Not only was discriminated against and received verbal abuse from the family but fat shaming also occurred in the workplace, where several informants who wrote in the comment column above said that having a thick body is challenging to get a job. Difficult to get a job because there is a stigma in society that people who have fat bodies tend to be lazy, difficult to move, and slow to work.

### **Fat Shaming culminates in nonverbal shaming body dissatisfaction**

Some people think that beautiful women are women with a body and a tall body and a white and clean face. Girls who experience body shaming also have thoughts that they can be accepted if they are beautiful. As well as the assumption also appears that men will be more attracted to pleasing and slim women ideal. The body-shaming experience leaves different memory marks and injuries in each individual who experiences it. Every individual has the most lasting body-shaming experience in their lives.

Fat shaming can occur through verbal or nonverbal if oral is more about speech and words of insult and reproach, while nonverbal talks about conveying messages through body movements, facial expressions both directly and indirectly. In other words, nonverbal communication is communication in which messages are packaged in words without form. In real life, nonverbal communication is used far more than verbal communication. In communicating almost automatically, nonverbal communication is used. Therefore, nonverbal communication is permanent and always exists.

Nonverbal communication is more honest in expressing what is to be revealed because it is spontaneous. Non-verbal can also be interpreted as human actions that are intentionally sent and understood as intended and have the potential for feedback from the recipient. In another sense, every form of communication without using verbal symbols such as words, both in the form of conversation and writing. Non-verbal communication can be in the form of symbols such as gestures, colors, facial expressions, and others (Kusumawati, 2016).

According to Larry A. Samovar and Richard E. Porter in Mulyana (2012:343), nonverbal communication includes all stimuli (except verbal stimuli) in a communication setting, produced by individuals and the use of the environment by individuals, which have potential message value for the sender or receiver. This definition includes intentional or unintentional behavior as part of the overall communication event. We send many nonverbal messages without realizing that those messages are meaningful to others.

Embarrassed about the appearance of the body, especially body shape, makes a person sometimes not grateful for the other potential they have. Like a few columns of comments that say that they intend to end their lives because they feel tired with all the insults and ridicule they experience. Not only that, but the informants also felt disappointed because their weight made it difficult to find work. In nonverbal communication, taunts and insults can

take the form of behavioral rejection and body language such as cynical stares, indifference when interacting with others.

Although sociologist Erving Goffman prominently wrote of stigma in the 1960s, there is still no widely accepted definition of the term. It is a cultural phenomenon that involves an us-vs.-them Mentality, in which people distinguish and differentiate themselves from others seen as having undesirable characteristics. Stigma can be a potent source of social control that can result in both the loss of status in a community, as well as overt discrimination. Those stigmatized often resort to attempts at concealment. Stigmatized may happen with a disease that is not always evident like HIV/AIDS or epilepsy. Hiding, though, is not an option for overweight and obese (Karasu, 2017)

For an overweight person, the awareness of his or her body size and volume will determine social reluctance, timidity, and low self-confidence, reflected in her/his posture and attitudes. Additionally, socio-cultural patterns associate fatness with laziness, and overweight persons are quickly labeled as lazy (Pop, 2016).

Body Shaming can happen to anyone. Especially women who experience body shaming will feel something terrible happening to themselves, as well as increasingly humbling and not confident. Various kinds of emotional changes have also been touched by victims of body shaming, especially women who are deemed to be carried away emotionally and emotionally. Starting with shame, then upset and angry, then hurt then the individual becomes easily sensitive and easily offended. The lack of awareness that all are born have their advantages and disadvantages, making the number of cases of fat-shaming, of course, will hurt someone's personal, even worse it can lead to the desire to commit suicide.

## CONCLUSIONS

The stigma of obese women with a variety of harmful things is still growing in society. This stigma then leads to fat-shaming for women who have a body shape that is far from women's image standards. Humiliation and reproach both verbal and nonverbal that are faced by them from various neighborhoods, both family and work environment make them shy and inferior. Realizing that all humans have potential in themselves regardless of body size and body shape will reduce the incidence of fat-shaming in women. Removing the negative stigma that develops will provide opportunities for obese women to show their existence and potential.

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