CONSTRUCTION OF FEMININITY IN MEDIA SPECTACLE: THE PHENOMENON OF INDONESIAN TIKTOKER CROSS GENDER PERFORMANCES

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ABSTRACT
In the development of the short video industry in Southeast Asia in recent years, cross-gender performances by male bloggers have become a special cultural phenomenon that is rapidly emerging. It has become a new self-media trend for male bloggers to imitate female images and construct femininity. This article uses media spectacle theory as a perspective to interpret the reasons for the rise, presentation methods and meaning construction of cross-gender performances by Indonesian male bloggers. This article uses qualitative research methods, combining media spectacle theory and gender studies theory to research and analyze six Indonesian male bloggers. The study concluded that Indonesian male bloggers use short videos as a medium to present cross-gender performances through character visual images, scenes and words, forming a media spectacle through the interaction between video bloggers, commercial capital and the audience. This kind of gender performances brings challenges to traditional hegemonic gender temperament and attempts to cross binary gender boundaries. But it also has the problem of cultural production tending to be vulgar.

KEYWORDS: media spectacle; cross-gender performance; femininity

INTRODUCTION
The short video market has grown significantly in the last several years, and it is now one of the major platforms that modern people use to communicate, express, and consume media on a regular basis. A growing number of people actively participate in the production and creation of videos instead of content to simply watch them, and there is an increasing diversity in the methods used to create short movies. Short videos featuring cross-gender performances by male bloggers represent a category with distinctive characteristics and significant cultural significance. Cross-gender performance male bloggers on TikTok platform in Indonesia have a large fan base and produce videos...
about performing femininity with a huge number of views. The subject matter of these bloggers’ videos are mostly short situational performances focusing on family and social life, and they have received mixed reviews from the public.

As we approach the year 2000, the media is growing more and more sophisticated in terms of technology and permeating every aspect of daily life. The inhabitants of media and consumer society are captivated by alluring spectacles under the impact of a multimedia culture. These spectacles entail them in the semiotics of a new world of entertainment, knowledge, and consumption, which profoundly affects cognition and behavior (Kellner, 2003). With the rapid development of the Internet, short videos have become popular among users because of their low threshold, casualness, and interactivity, breaking the narrative structure of the traditional Internet media, and the emergence of various short video platforms, such as Tiktok and Snackvideo, and the quick rise in the number of people watching short films has resulted in a variety of unique cultural phenomena. The “gender play” of Indonesian male short video bloggers is one of the trends that have been bred on short video platforms in recent years, and it has attracted a lot of attention. The phenomenon of “male-to-female” gender performances has existed in Indonesia for a long time, such as Lengger Lanang, which is one of the most unique Javanese traditions. In the past, men dressed up in heavy make-up and performed spirit dances to entertain and appease the spirits of their ancestors. Nowadays, Drag Queen performances are still held regularly in Raminten restaurants in Yogyakarta. In the context of the development of digital media technology in modern society, the phenomenon of male counterfeiting of women has increased, such as some Indonesian comedians and stand-up comedians who often disguise themselves as women for the sake of programme effects. With the help of new media platforms, the phenomenon of male bloggers posing as women for gender-reversal performances has become more common. A number of popular bloggers have emerged on short video platforms such as Tiktok, Youtube, Snackvideo, etc., and have gained millions of followers through their male-female impersonation performances. With the development of time and media technology, the phenomenon of male role-playing has become more common, and the form and content of their performances continue to bring new experiences to the audience.

I will conduct the research by analyzing six accounts on TikTok, the six bloggers are @arjunnlantamm, @obon_official, @sprtrakori_, @alwanr__, @massday, @pangeran_jagat114. As a blogger with 1.7 million followers, @arjunnlantamm mainly plays young women aged 15-30. His videos mainly discuss love, friendship and work-related matters among young women. In addition to the novel and interesting plots of his videos, @arjunnlantamm’s makeup skills and clothing matching are also very in line with the current female aesthetic trends. He will also deepen the character’s personality through different hair colors and makeup. The female characters he plays are confident, lively and cheerful, and are deeply loved by fans. The account @obon_official also has millions of fans. His video content mainly discusses family relationships, mainly the relationship between husband and wife and the relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. Most of the female roles he plays are wives or mothers. His video style is mostly sad or angry, because he mostly plays women who are unhappy in their married lives. @obon_official does not pursue exquisite clothing and makeup, but pays attention to the diversity of scenes, so the storylines of his videos are also complex and diverse. 

Blogger @alwanr__ has a whopping 10.8 million followers, and his videos mainly depict anecdotes from his student days, usually with one person playing multiple roles, such as female classmates with different personalities or female teachers, so his fanbase consists mostly of teenagers. @alwanr__ doesn’t put a lot of effort into the look of his characters, he sometimes even wears a long black cloth around his head as his hair, but
he portrays a wide variety of female characters, from the gentle to the cranky to the timid
to the lively, and the storylines of his videos are original, funny, and real-life, so the
videos get a lot of comments and a lot of interaction from fans. @sptrakori_ has 12 million
fans. His videos describe female and male classmates with different personalities in their
school days and explore the relationship between teenagers. In addition, he will also
imitate some female celebrities in real life, or play the role of women in different jobs.
His videos are mainly humorous and often capture current hot topics. @sptrakori_’s social
media activity is very high, and the number of video views is also very high.

In addition to the above four bloggers who attract fans by portraying different female
characters and restoring life scenes, there are also some bloggers such as @massday and
@pangeran_jagat114 who choose to directly wear female clothes, put on female makeup,
and imitate female postures to win the attention of the audience. Their videos do not have
any storyline or characterization, and they rely solely on their feminine beauty to attract
fans. In my personal opinion, there is a vulgar tendency to create cultural creation
involving soft porn.

Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identities, gender
expressions, and/or behaviors are different from those culturally associated with the sex
that they were assigned at birth. (Forsyth, Craig J., Copes & Heith, 2014). Being
transgender occurs because your biology conflicts with what people and culture expect
from you in terms of gender behavior. (D Jennett, 2022). Some transgender people who
desire medical assistance to transition from one sex to another identify as transsexual.
(Bevan & Dana, 2014). Transgender, often shortened as trans, is also an umbrella term; in
addition to including people whose gender identity is the opposite of their assigned sex
(trans men and trans women), it may also include people who are non-binary or
genderqueer. As Reisner said in his study "Transgender was defined broadly to cover
those who transition from one gender to another as well as those who may not choose to
socially, medically, or legally fully transition, including cross-dressers, people who
consider themselves to be genderqueer, androgynous, and... " (Reisner, 2014). People
who identify as belonging to a third gender or who consider transgender people to be of
that gender are also included in some definitions of transgender. In some situations, the
phrase may also refer to drag queens and kings, as well as cross-dressers.

Cross gender means cross multiple genders; taking, or pertaining to, the traditional
role of the opposite gender. Actors or actresses who play characters of the opposite sex
are referred to as cross-gender performers, or cross-casting. This phenomenon is the
subject of this article's analysis. It's not the same as cross-dressing or transgender
character roles. Cross-gender performing frequently engages with intricate cultural
conceptions of gender. Its history spans numerous civilizations, including Ethiopian
theater, Japanese theater, French theater, English Renaissance theater, and Indian theater.
In a cross-gender performance, a male actor is not necessarily someone whose gender
identity, gender expression, or behavior differs from that of someone culturally associated
with the gender they were assigned at birth. They are not transexuals or transsexuals,
they are just men playing female roles. I study the cross-gender performances of male
actors, mainly observing the character characteristics they focus on when playing female
roles, and the femininity from a male perspective.

This article will primarily analyze the following three questions: What are the
reasons for the rise of cross-gender performances by Indonesian male bloggers? How do
these cross-gender performances interpret and construct the image of women? What is
the meaning constructed by these cross-gender performances? I will use Qualitative
research methods and media spectacle theory in this study to collect and analyse
information related to content, comments and audience interactions associated with
Indonesian male short video bloggers. Many contemporary views of society and culture have been greatly influenced by the idea of the "society of the spectacle," which was created by French thinker Guy Debord and his colleagues in the Situationist International. For Debord, spectacle "unifies and explains a great diversity of apparent phenomena" (Debord, 2021). The spectacle serves as both the outcome and generator of the present-day version of reality. It is not a supplement to, or decoration of reality, but the very heart of pseudo-reality. It manifests in various manifestations, encompassing entertainment, academic discourse, education, news, advertisements, politics, dissent, and even common sense. It is the hegemonic social culture, a model for the prevailing way of life (Debord, 2021). The concept of "media spectacle" was proposed by American cultural studies scholar Douglas Kellner, who further proposed the concept of "media spectacle" on the basis of French theorist Debord's theory of the "society of the spectacle" with a focus on specific case studies. Douglas Kellner argues that society has entered a new phase of techno-capitalism, in which new technological innovations and commercial capital are intertwined to create many "spectacles". He argues that media spectacles are those phenomena of media culture that embody contemporary society's basic values, serve to initiate individuals into its way of life, and dramatize its controversies and struggles, as well as its modes of conflict resolution. (Kellner, 2003). They include media extravaganzas, sporting events, political happenings, and those attention-grabbing occurrences that we call news. In the context of the development of the culture industry and the media, the media has become a force for socioeconomic development by creating a large number of "spectacles" to attract the attention of the public. Our lives are already influenced by "spectacle" all the time. In the age of self-media, everyone can be a producer and distributor of content, and self-media has become the main venue for the creation of a new culture of spectacle. The new spectacle is able to obtain more impactful and stimulating audio-visual effects through the new communication media, and has become a common visual symbol in people's daily life. In recent years, the trend of male bloggers acting as women on short-video platforms has also become such a new media spectacle.

Utilizing theoretical methods to analyze cross-gender performances among Indonesian male bloggers, this research aims to achieve several objectives. Firstly, it seeks to comprehend the motives behind Indonesian male bloggers engaging in cross-gender performances through an in-depth analysis of their reasons and motivations, unveiling the driving forces behind these actions. Secondly, the study explores the interpretation and construction of the female image within cross-gender performances. By scrutinizing how these performances interpret and shape the female image, the research aims to gain a profound understanding of their impact on gender roles and cognition. Lastly, the significance of these cross-gender performances is examined, encompassing their roles in shaping social, cultural, and gender perceptions. This exploration contributes to understanding the broader impact of such performances on societal perceptions and attitudes. In summary, this research delves into the intricate interaction of gender roles, cultural cognition, and social concepts through the phenomenon of cross-gender performance, aiming to foster a more comprehensive understanding of this intriguing phenomenon.

Diana Daman identifies how women are represented in the media and what are the dominant images of femininity, as well as the alternative ones. (Diana, 2010). She says there is a strong connection between image and identity as the latter can not be constructed without construction the former. Basically, the postmodern subject has been reduced to an image, therefore the image plays an important part in constructing the feminine identity. Sue Ann Barratt (2018) noted in her paper Reinforcing Sexism and
Misogyny that the online environment is a force that transcends offline boundaries globally and that, as such, its effect needs to be taken into consideration as we work to strengthen the resilience of feminist consciousness and gender justice. Barratt examines cases from Trinidad and Tobago, illustrating how prejudicial chastising of women is employed not only to shame and blame but also to construct a narrative of femininity-as-fail. The study emphasizes the need to consider the online environment's effects in building resilience within feminist consciousness and advancing gender justice. (Barratt, 2018). Gemma Miller's research on Cross-Gender Casting explores the reversal of early modern all-male theatrical practices. Miller argues that female-male re-gendering not only interrogates misogyny in theatrical works but also exposes the enduring ideological structures colluding with these values in contemporary society. (Gemma, 2014). Nurul Haryanto's (2017) study focused on male grooming vloggers via YouTube, looking at the gender identities they modeled in their videos. This study highlights the expression of gender identity by male beauty bloggers through the presentation of beauty, providing the possibility for an emerging form of male gender identity. His research uses visual elements as the unit of analysis, including makeup, gestures, clothing, accessories, objects, scenes and activities. His research method has brought me great inspiration. I will also refine the visual elements displayed by the research object to more comprehensively analyze the construction of femininity in cross-gender performances. To sum up, I will explore the construction of femininity in the media field through the transgender performance phenomenon of Indonesian male TikTokers. The focus will be on analyzing the external images of women portrayed by male bloggers and the imitated female behavioral characteristics in the construction of femininity, with attention to the nuanced ways they engage in this process.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research method was employed in this investigation. I will use Qualitative research methods in this study to collect and analyze information related to content, comments and audience interactions associated with Indonesian male short video bloggers. This will be achieved by surveying their social media accounts with the aim of identifying how bloggers construct images of women and analysing the responses received from their audiences.

The method of qualitative research is extensively employed in various academic domains and in market analysis. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), qualitative research is a form of inquiry used in many different academic disciplines, including market research and other contexts in addition to the social sciences. The aim of a qualitative researcher is to gather as much information as possible about human behavior and the causes of that behavior. To put it another way, the qualitative research approach looks at and provides answers to the issues of how, where, what, when, and why someone might act a certain manner in relation to a particular issue. Smith defines Qualitative research as empirical, and he states “The researcher collects sense data about the phenomenon under study and works on them in some way organizes them, and hold them up against ideas, hypotheses, and categorical definitions as a way of testing them. As a result of how focused this method is, a small number of participants is legitimate assource of information” (Smith, 1987). Therefore, I will analyze the cross-gender performance-related content posted by Indonesian male short video bloggers and classify and summarize the comments of the videos to understand the popularity of this type of video and the public’s perception of this type of video. While conducting the research, I selected six male cross-gender performance vloggers on the Indonesian TIKTOK platform to understand the diversity found in the data.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reasons behind the Rise of Cross-gender Performance Spectacle among Indonesian Male Bloggers

1. Self-media provides a platform for individual performances

In the era of digital media, leveraging the development and popularisation of 4G and 5G technologies, the short video industry in Southeast Asia is developing rapidly. The opportunities for recording and distributing high bit rate videos are no longer dominated by traditional media, and every ordinary person can use their smartphones to record and edit short videos, publish videos, run short video accounts, and interact with their fans. The six bloggers studied in this article are @arjunnlantamm, @obon_official, @sptrakori_, @alwan__, @massday, @pangeran_jagat114. They all started as amateurs and gradually became bloggers with large-scale fans.

Advances in digital media have provided the basis for the development of short video platforms, reconfiguring the field of expression of modern communication and influencing people's ways of expression. The rapid development of the short video medium has allowed the general public to share their lives in the public sphere, to perform physical exhibition and emotional expression on the self-media platform, and to release their subjectivity and selves. It was against this background that cross-gender performances became popular. Self-media has given these gender counter-performances an effective channel of voice, creating a new space for alternative voices and enabling people to take notice of those voices outside the mainstream media.

2. The Content of Gender Cross-dressing Performances is Attractive

German scholar Theodor Adorno explained the concept of "aesthetic justice" in his book Aesthetic Theory (1970). He believes that "aesthetic justice" is essentially a kind of "heterogeneity of justice", this "justice" to abandon the homogeneity of the aesthetic model, in its own pluralism to find the dignity, and to insist that justice to the heterogeneity of the above. This "justice" rejects the homogeneity of the aesthetic model and finds dignity in its own plurality, insisting that justice land on heterogeneity. The long-term single aesthetic orientation and standard is, in a certain sense, a kind of aesthetic tyranny. With the infiltration of consumerism into society, the phenomenon of anti-elitist aesthetic culture of ugliness has developed, displaying marginal culture by means of banter, and the public has begun to realise that both ugliness and beauty are expressions of emotions worthy of recognition.

The aesthetics of ugly removes the subject authority's key place in the contradiction between beauty and ugliness and gives voice to "others" who do not fit the dominant definition. (Bourdieu, 1984). Different socioeconomic and ethnic groups now have more freedom in how they express their emotions thanks to this trend of aesthetic culture democratization. (Hooks, 1995). It dismantles elite aesthetics' "above and above” stance, shifts aesthetic authority downward to the populace, and creates a civilian aesthetics. People are also made aware of the subjectivity of aesthetic assessment by such cultural shifts. Not only does beauty transcend the boundaries of the mainstream, but ugly can also be an expression that fits the emotional logic of the oppressed.
Cross-gender performance attracts the public's attention with its alternative, unique, and individualistic form of performance. Indonesian male short video bloggers use cross-gender performances to tease life and express their feelings, to get rid of real-life troubles, and to bring happiness to viewers. For example, blogger @obon_official (Figure 1) often plays ugly in his videos to attract viewers and dramatizes emotional events in life. Displaying marginal culture by means of banter has been widely recognized by the audience.

3. The Interests Driven by the Female Economy and Internet Celebrity Economy

In the era of "traffic supremacy" on the Internet, the phenomenon of male bloggers' gender reversal has become more common and popular, which is inevitably driven by commercial interests. In recent years, as the economic and social status of women in Southeast Asia has improved and their spending power has increased, the phenomenon of women's economy has been formed around women's consumption. Short video platforms have a higher proportion of female users. Women have a greater preference for consumer and video apps, and have become the main body using short videos for production, distribution and viewing. Women also account for a large portion of Tiktok users and have strong consumption and traffic potential. As of May 2023, the number of TikTok Indonesian users aged 18 and above has reached 109.9 million, and the proportion of the population covered by in-app advertising is 56.8%. Advertising coverage accounts for 51.6% of the number of online users, female advertising audiences account for 66.1%, and male advertising audiences account for 33.9%. As a result, many male bloggers move closer to female audience preferences to attract female fans, and MCN agencies in Indonesia also create video content and marketing models for short video bloggers that appeal to female users for commercial interests. As a result, there is a business chain in which male bloggers mimic women through cross-gender performances, empathise with women's psychology, attract female audiences, harvest female fans' traffic, and then recommend female products to promote female fans' purchases and gain female economic benefits.

Figure 1
Female character played by @obon_official
Source: Tiktok screenshot data, 2023
The Spectacle of Male Short Video Bloggers' Cross-gender Performances

1. Visual Representation of Femininity

In this phenomenon of "men pretending to be women", it should be emphasised that these male bloggers are not transgender or individuals who have undergone biological gender changes, but rather artists who perform gender performances when creating short videos. They are committed to presenting a feminine image through visuals, behaviour and performance. They may use wigs of different lengths or colours and elaborate different styles of styling to prominently display feminine gender characteristics. In terms of make-up, they use meticulous make-up techniques, applying either heavy or light make-up to accentuate the image according to the character and features of the role they play. In terms of clothing, they choose to wear various styles of women's clothing, including skirts, high heels, headscarves and so on, in order to show different women's styles. Not only that, these bloggers also show the female gender temperament through behaviour, such as interpreting actions such as pampering and combing hair to portray the characters more vividly. Importantly, these bloggers are often able to play several different roles, clearly differentiating each character through different make-up, clothing and behavioural traits to show multiple images of women.

It is worth noting that most of these short video creators who perform cross-gender performances are ordinary people who may not have outstanding physical appearance or professional achievements in other fields. However, they have a keen observation of life and a deep understanding of femininity. They are passionate about performance and strive for excellence, conveying their unique understanding of female gender and life experiences through short videos. In this way, they are able to provoke empathy in their viewers, exploring the diversity of gender and identity, whilst earning themselves a loyal following.

2. Scene Representation Close to Daily Life

Due to the time constraints and production costs of short videos, most short video creators tend to focus on short sitcoms, setting scenes and topics in areas close to daily life. This creative choice allows them to produce videos quickly, capture viewers' attention, and share their opinions and emotions. For example, bloggers @arjunnlantamm and @alwanr__, who have millions of followers on Jitterbug Indonesia, usually choose their bedrooms and living rooms as the background for their shoots. These places usually do not require complicated sets because in short videos, the scenes usually exist only to give the background of the story.
In addition, some bloggers, such as @obonofficial, will shoot directly on the street, using places such as shopping malls or roadsides as backgrounds. Other bloggers, such as @sptrakori, may use post-processing image manipulation tools to alter the scenes to create different effects. For example, blogger @sptrakori used post-production Photoshop or video editing technology to add backgrounds such as airplane cabins (Figure 2) and classrooms to make his videos better and the scenes more diverse. These sitcoms, which recreate everyday life in short videos, usually have a tongue-in-cheek or emotionally expressive style. Through these videos, the creators construct a virtual world that is closely related to, but different from, real life. They act out their life experiences and feelings in this virtual world, sharing their thoughts and emotions with the audience. This form of creation allows the audience to easily participate and find points of resonance that relate to their own life experiences, while also bringing joy and entertainment. This is one of the reasons why this type of short video has become so popular on social media.

3. Shaping the personality of female characters

Most of the bloggers who perform cross-gender in short videos do not intentionally imitate women's voices, but rather portray women's characters by imitating the tone and vocabulary commonly used by women in the public's perception. For example, @obonofficial on Tiktok often expresses his emotions by using common female intonations with an upturned tone, and sometimes he expresses different female characters' personalities through pouty gestures and facial expressions.
Most bloggers still use stereotypes to portray their characters, for example, @putdejudom_, @jagal_demit114, @massday (Figure 3) are male bloggers who portray women with elaborate make-up and beautiful wigs to portray women through their outward appearance. The image clearly shows that @massday's videos following makeup application have received a great deal more likes and have become much more popular. In addition, there are many male bloggers who use dialect to perform female roles, on the one hand, to bring the audience closer and make the performance more realistic and intimate; on the other hand, they also use different dialects and accents to differentiate between multiple roles and make the portrayal of the image more vivid.

4. Deepen the Image of Women by Using Female Commodities

One of the criteria for the success of short video bloggers is the number of viewers they attract and the amount of sales they generate from their promotions. cross-gender performance bloggers usually have a female fan base, so these male bloggers will subtly include commercial product promotions for female audiences in their videos, and cleverly integrate these advertisements into the plot narrative to showcase their products. Compared with traditional sales methods, this kind of commercial promotion in short videos is gentler and more focused on two-way interaction with viewers, which is not easily noticed by viewers.
For example, bloggers like @arjunlantamm often include promotions of women’s skincare, shampoo and make-up products in their performance videos (Figure 4), which results in many female viewers being interested in and recognising his product recommendations. When viewers watch these short videos, they are able to be entertained and at the same time be influenced by the emotions and values conveyed by the blogger, as well as possibly unconsciously accepting the product promotions. In the process, aspects of the blogger’s performance, behaviour and speech in the short videos are also commodified by the attention of the viewers.

Video creators and their teams usually choose the products to be promoted based on current hot trends and audience characteristics in order to create a video content that is relevant to their audience users and consumers and develop a set of patterns centred on them. Cross-gender performances bloggers use a range of visual symbols and narratives to bridge the gap with female consumers, resonate with female viewers and influence their emotional experience. This approach enables bloggers to engage more effectively with their audience and create deep emotional connections that drive product sales.

The Meaning Construction of Male Short Video Bloggers’ Cross-gender Performances

1. Challenges to Hegemonic Gender Masculinity

Australian sociologist Raewyn Connell has developed the theoretical concept of hegemonic masculinity, arguing that gender is a way of ordering social practices (R. Connell & James, 2005). Traditional understandings of gendered traits have been 'naturalised' over time in social practice and have been accepted and internalised by both men and women as markers of gender identity, for example, men are often seen as masculine and courageous, while women are expected to display traits such as gentleness and submissiveness. This hegemonic gender temperament not only poses a constraint on women, but also exerts pressure on men, requiring individuals to portray themselves in terms of traditionally fixed temperament labels, while ignoring the will and uniqueness...
of the individual.

In this context, cross-gender performances in short videos are precisely a challenge and exploration of this traditional hegemonic gender temperament. By playing women and interpreting images that are inconsistent with "conventional gender temperament," male creators challenge the established concepts of hegemonic gender temperament, break traditional perceptions, and trigger social reflection. In particular, some of these male short video bloggers do not deliberately hide their biological male characteristics, and perform more personalized and diverse performances in cross-gender performances. In my opinion, these short-video trends of cross-gender performances are actually rebelling against the inherent hegemonic gender temperament, recognizing the diversity of gender temperament, and making more people understand the importance of respecting individual differences, reconstructing the concept of gender temperament in the new era, and empowering individuals to take ownership of their own gender temperament. This is a positive change in the concept of gender.

2. Fighting Back Against the Gender Binary

Male short video bloggers in Indonesia, through their cross-gender performances, are actually challenging the traditional gender binary. Their gender performances reflect a desire to transcend the real-world constraints of gender, implying a desire to break the bonds of the gender binary. In contrast to the previous state of tense opposition between masculinity and femininity, cross-gender performances attempt to achieve a fusion and harmony between the male and female temperaments, and even to some extent, such performances can lead to an aesthetically pleasing experience.

![Figure 5](https://scholarhub.ui.ac.id/irhs/vol9/iss1/5)

At first, these male bloggers may hide their masculinity and emphasise femininity, either consciously or unconsciously. This, to some extent, reinforces the dichotomy
between masculinity and femininity. However, as more and more people experiment with cross-gender performances, the performances become more diverse and the audience becomes more accepting of this diversity. Male bloggers are de-emphasising femininity in their character creation and focusing more on individual character traits. For example, instead of emphasising femininity by using soft female voices when playing female characters, people like blogger @sptrakori and @alwanr (Figure 5) focus more on characterisation to flesh out their characters. As the influence of short video media continues to expand, cross-gender performances are also affecting the minds of more viewers, making people more tolerant of the image of a fusion of male and female temperaments.

Reflections on Short Videos of Cross-gender Performances

In her book The Castrated Woman, Jemaine Greer, a famous Western feminist writer, mentions that women's assumed inferiority is a cultural production. The French writer Beauvoir also believed that women are the "second sex" and that women become women only after being nurtured in the family education and social environment. While male short-video bloggers perform cross-gender, it is also a cultural production. Male bloggers observe women in their daily lives and construct images of women in their works. The short videos are posted and distributed, and the audience then passes through these men playing women to deconstruct the real female characters behind them. This process implies that some stereotypes and prejudices about women are also added to the cultural production of short videos.

Tiktok video blogger @obon official has portrayed a number of female characters in his short videos, ranging from female lovers who are fawning and pleasing to men, but cold and critical to their peers, to very strict mothers. His female characters are basically all outgoing and sometimes slightly irritable. In addition, some of the female characters performed by the blogger often express their dissatisfaction with their mouths and rolling eyes. Looking deeper behind similar short video productions is still a cultural production of men in gender performances, implying a prejudice that gazes at women from a male perspective and harbours stereotypical images of women.

Gender cross-dressing performances are prevalent in Southeast Asian countries, deeply rooted in traditional and cultural practices. Examples from the region include Javanese Wayang Wong featuring male performers in female roles, Balinese Calonarang dance exploring mythology and gender, Gender Wayang in Bali tied to religious traditions, Thai Khon with male performers in female roles, cross-dressing in Thai Lakorn dramas, Vietnamese Ngọc Lôi depicting historical stories, and cross-dressing in crosstalk performances in Chinese-speaking communities. These performances carry profound cultural and historical significance, shedding light on rich traditions and challenging and expanding our understanding of gender identity and roles within diverse cultural contexts.

CONCLUSION

This paper interprets the phenomenon of male Indonesian short video bloggers’ cross-gender performances from the perspective of media spectacle theory, and analyses the presentation of such performances, the reasons for their emergence, the construction of meanings, and some of their shortcomings.

The gender counter-performance of Indonesian male short video bloggers has rapidly emerged and received widespread attention due to the empowerment of new media technology, the need for self-expression, the attraction of spectacle content, and the multiple drivers of economic interests. Indonesian male bloggers create a narrative spectacle through the design of visuals, scenes, and discourses in the process of cross-
gender performances, and short video bloggers and video viewers co-construct an interactive spectacle driven by new media platforms and commercial capital.

Indonesia male bloggers performing cross-gender on social media, these male bloggers' cross-gender performances have brought about a contemporary re-discussion of hegemonic gender temperament, which allows us to see the possibilities of the fusion of gender identities and the tendency of the public's aesthetics to be more inclusive in the contemporary era. To a certain extent, this phenomenon also expresses women's demands through the mouths of male performers. At the same time, we have also noticed that the cultural production behind this cultural phenomenon is a problem, as the cross-gender performances still conceal stereotypes of women, and the cultural production has a tendency to be vulgarised.

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