

Deconstruction Of Female Tattoo Artists From A Postmodern Feminist Perspective

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Abstract. *This research analyzes women's resistance against sexism and stereotypes in the context of the tattoo artist profession in Indonesia. In a society where patriarchal culture remains strong, women often face symbolic discrimination and social stigma that hinder their freedom of expression and professional mobility. Using a qualitative approach and Jacques Derrida's deconstruction theory, this research unpacks hidden meanings in language and discourse that shape stereotypes against women, particularly in the tattoo art industry. Deconstruction enables a rereading of gender constructions that have long reinforced male dominance in various sectors, including art and culture. Furthermore, this study draws on post-feminism and postmodernism perspectives to examine how female tattoo artists not only challenge traditional norms but also reconstruct their identities within the framework of individual freedom, agency, and gender fluidity. Post-feminism highlights how women are no longer merely objects of resistance against patriarchy but actively redefine their roles and existence in public spaces. Meanwhile, postmodernism provides an understanding that identity and social meanings are fluid and negotiable, allowing female tattoo artists to renegotiate their positions in society through artistic expression and social actions. The findings reveal that, despite facing resistance from conservative communities, female tattoo artists in Indonesia have successfully carved out their own existential space by demonstrating professional competence, artistic skills, and engagement in positive social activities. Their resistance against sexism is not only expressed through the rejection of stereotypes but also through strategies of identity reconstruction and the creation of new meanings within their profession. This study contributes to gender, art, and cultural studies by offering new perspectives on how women can deconstruct social boundaries and create space for diverse gender expressions in the contemporary era.*

Keywords: *sexism, stereotypes, female tattoo artists, deconstruction, post-feminism, postmodernism, patriarchy, gender identity.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the postmodern era, individual identity has become increasingly performative, where people can express themselves through various visual and symbolic elements, including the art of body tattooing. Tattoos have undergone a shift in meaning from merely being traditional symbols to becoming a form of self-expression and a part of one's lifestyle. Not only men but also women are increasingly adopting tattoos as a medium to showcase their uniqueness, freedom, and personal aesthetics. This phenomenon reflects a significant social change in how women perceive their bodies as canvases for self-expression.

As the tattoo industry continues to grow, the profession of tattoo artistry has become more attractive, including to women. Although this profession was previously dominated by men, more women are now pursuing this field and even opening their own tattoo studios. However, women's involvement in this industry is not without challenges, particularly in terms of social norms, morality, and religion. Stigma surrounding tattooed women and female tattoo artists remains prevalent, especially in societies that uphold conservative

values. Tattoos are often associated with rebellion against social norms and are sometimes perceived as conflicting with certain religious beliefs.

For female tattoo artists, their presence in this industry is not only as art practitioners but also as agents of change who challenge gender stereotypes. They strive to assert that women have the right to express themselves and determine their own paths in life, including choosing professions that are considered unconventional. This phenomenon is worth exploring further through the lens of Jacques Derrida's deconstruction, which views texts as entities without singular meanings, allowing them to be interpreted from multiple perspectives. Using this approach, this study aims to dismantle hidden assumptions about female tattoo artists and understand how they negotiate with existing social realities.

2. BACKGROUND

The evolution of tattoos as part of lifestyle and the creative industry has created promising economic opportunities. In various countries, tattoos are no longer merely cultural symbols or acts of rebellion but have become a multi-billion-dollar industry. In Indonesia, although there is no precise data on the industry's value, the demand for tattoo services is increasing. Numerous tattoo studios have emerged, offering services at varying prices depending on design, technique, and complexity. This trend indicates that tattoos have been accepted as a valuable form of artistic expression with significant economic potential.

However, despite the rapid growth of the tattoo industry, women pursuing careers as tattoo artists continue to face social challenges that their male counterparts do not experience. In many cultures, tattoos on women are still viewed as taboo and are often associated with rebellion or violations of traditional values. Female tattoo artists not only have to prove their skills and professionalism but also contend with various stereotypes and social prejudices.

In this context, Derrida's deconstruction approach can be applied to understand how female tattoo artists reconstruct their identities in response to social challenges. Deconstruction allows us to reinterpret cultural texts regarding tattooed women and female tattoo artists, highlighting how meanings that have long been considered fixed can be disrupted and redefined. Thus, this study not only seeks to understand the role of women in the tattoo industry but also aims to uncover how they negotiate their identities and existence within a society that still perceives tattoos through various normative assumptions.

This research is expected to provide new insights into the role of women in the tattoo art industry and how they navigate the social, moral, and cultural barriers that exist. Through

deconstructive analysis, this study also aims to demonstrate that female tattoo artists are not merely participants in the industry but also contributors to shaping new discourses on freedom of expression and gender equality in public spaces.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Approach and Method

This study employs a qualitative approach with a deconstruction method within the framework of postmodern feminist perspectives to analyze the position and experiences of female tattoo artists in public spaces. A qualitative approach allows for a deeper understanding of individual experiences and socio-cultural phenomena that cannot be quantified.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992), a qualitative approach is a research method that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observed behaviors. This approach is relevant to this study as it focuses on meaning, subjective experiences, and social interactions of female tattoo artists in facing stereotypes and marginalization.

Derrida's deconstruction is used as an analytical tool to dismantle the underlying assumptions that uphold male dominance in the tattoo art world. Deconstruction seeks to uncover inconsistencies in social narratives that construct women as marginalized figures in this profession.

Additionally, this study incorporates a postmodern feminist perspective, which emphasizes the deconstruction of meaning within cultural, gender, and power contexts. This perspective helps identify gender inequalities in the tattoo art industry and how female tattoo artists negotiate their identities within a patriarchal social structure.

B. Data Sources and Informants

Data for this study are obtained through observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The data sources consist of:

1) Primary Data

- In-depth interviews with female tattoo artists who are actively engaged in Indonesia's tattoo industry.
- Interviews with clients, family members, and the general public to understand their perceptions of female tattoo artists.
- Direct observations at tattoo studios to examine interactions between artists and clients and how female tattoo artists express their art.

2) Secondary Data

- Literature studies on postmodernism, feminism, deconstruction, and tattoo art from a cultural perspective.
- Journal articles, research reports, and online sources related to the development of the tattoo industry and the position of women within it.

Informants in this study are selected using purposive sampling, which involves selecting participants based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2017). The informants are categorized into:

a) Key Informants:

- Nadya Natasya and Agatha (Sidespaceparlour Tattoo Studio)
- Caecilia (Altar Tattoo Gallery)
- Christine Harsojo and Jessica Verina (Revolver Studio)
- Fildza Nurulia Shabrina (Be No Square)
- Mawar Maria Lestari Pajouw (WB Tattoo Studio)
- Monica Olga (Olga Caca Studio)
- Tiarani Indraputri (Boo's Ink Tattoo and Piercing)
- Tiye (Indigo Tattoo Parlour)
- Laura Aprilia (Laura Ink Tattoo)

b) Supporting Informants:

- Clients who have been tattooed by female tattoo artists.
- Family members and colleagues of female tattoo artists.
- Representatives from the tattoo art community, such as Kurdian B. Pangaribuan (Indonesian Subculture) and Bagus Ferry (Magic Ink Magazine).
- Male tattoo artists, such as Ucha, as well as male and female clients who have received tattoos from female tattoo artists.

3. Data Collection Techniques

This study utilizes multiple data collection techniques:

- 1) **In-depth Interviews:** Conducted with female tattoo artists to understand their experiences, challenges, and strategies for negotiating their identities in public spaces.
- 2) **Participant Observation:** Directly observing the interactions between female tattoo artists and their clients, as well as their working environment.
- 3) **Document Analysis:** Examining articles, photos, videos, and publications related to female tattoo artists on social media and mass media.

4. Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis in this study is inductive, meaning that theories are constructed based on the data collected. The analytical techniques used include:

1. **Data Reduction:** Selecting, simplifying, and organizing relevant data.
2. **Data Presentation:** Arranging data in descriptive narrative form to facilitate understanding.
3. **Conclusion Drawing:** Analyzing relationships and patterns within the data to answer research questions.

To enhance data validity, this study employs source and method triangulation techniques, comparing data from different sources and collection methods to ensure the reliability of findings.

5. Research Ethics

This study adheres to ethical principles of social research, including:

1. **Informed Consent:** Informants are provided with complete information about the research objectives and give their consent before being interviewed.
2. **Confidentiality and Anonymity:** Informants' data will be kept confidential and will not be used beyond research purposes.
3. **Researcher Reflexivity:** The researcher maintains objectivity and critical awareness when interpreting data to avoid bias toward any particular narrative.

This research method is designed to explore the experiences of female tattoo artists through a qualitative approach using deconstruction methods. By employing in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis, this study aims to understand the social, cultural, and gender dynamics that influence the position of female tattoo artists in the tattoo industry. The analysis is conducted using a postmodern feminist approach to reveal the social constructs and resistance against male dominance in this profession.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Construction of Female Tattoo Artists: A Communication Perspective

1) Representation of Female Tattoo Artists in Public Discourse

The tattoo industry in Bali has undergone a significant transformation from merely a body art practice to an established creative industry. The presence of female tattoo artists at the Bali Tattoo Expo reflects a cultural shift towards greater inclusivity, allowing women to enter a profession that was previously dominated by men. From a

communication perspective, this signifies the successful creation of a new discursive space for women in the tattoo industry, where they not only participate but also shape their own identity and representation within the field.

Female tattoo artists such as Nadcil, Christine, and Olga Caca have broken traditional boundaries and redefined the perception of women in the industry. With mastery of various tattoo styles, ranging from new school to hand poke, they demonstrate that women possess artistic and technical capabilities equal to their male counterparts. This discourse is further reinforced by support from the community and events like the Bali Tattoo Expo, which provide a platform for female tattoo artists to showcase their work on a larger scale.

2) Identity and Visual Communication in Female Tattoo Artists' Work

Visual communication plays a crucial role in the tattoo industry. Through the designs they create, female tattoo artists not only showcase their artistic skills but also construct narratives and deeper meanings. For example, Nadcil, with her surrealism watercolor style, conveys an emotional and expressive dimension that reflects free-thinking and limitless creativity. Similarly, Christine, through her oriental and Celtic tattoo styles, integrates rich cultural heritage into her artwork.

In the context of communication, tattoo designs can be understood as a form of nonverbal communication that enables individuals to express their identity, experiences, and personal values. For many clients, tattoos are not merely body decorations but also a form of identity communication, representing life experiences, beliefs, or artistic statements. This explains why female tattoo artists hold a unique appeal in the industry; they bring a distinctive perspective that reflects female experiences and sensibilities in tattoo artistry.

3) Challenges and Communication Strategies of Female Tattoo Artists

Although the tattoo industry has become more open to women, challenges remain, particularly regarding social stigma and the risk of harassment. For instance, some female tattoo artists, such as Tiara, emphasize the importance of mental preparedness and self-protection when dealing with male clients. Effective interpersonal communication strategies are essential in overcoming these challenges, both in establishing professional boundaries and in building healthy relationships with clients.

From an organizational communication perspective, female tattoo artists who own their studios, such as Olga Caca and Mawar Pajouw, must also manage

communication with their teams and clients. They need to ensure that standard operating procedures (SOPs) are strictly followed, particularly in terms of hygiene, safety, and service quality. In this regard, strong communication skills in explaining procedures and managing client expectations are key factors in their success.

4) Community Dynamics and Social Networks in the Tattoo Industry

The community of female tattoo artists is growing through active interaction and collaboration, both locally and internationally. The Bali Tattoo Expo, as a major event in the industry, serves as a communication medium that connects tattoo artists from diverse cultural and technical backgrounds. Women's participation in such events not only strengthens their position in the industry but also opens opportunities for cross-country collaborations.

The presence of strong social networks within the tattoo community benefits female tattoo artists by expanding their market reach and increasing their visibility. For example, Fildza and Viona, who specialize in hand poke techniques, have gained attention for their traditional approach. In the digital era, social media also plays a crucial role as a communication and promotional tool, enabling them to reach a wider audience.

From a communication perspective, the presence of female tattoo artists in the tattoo industry exemplifies how identity, representation, and visual communication can shape new social realities. Through their skills and creativity, female tattoo artists not only challenge stereotypes but also build communities and discursive spaces that are more inclusive for women in the industry. Despite facing ongoing challenges, effective communication strategies and community support can help them continue to grow and strengthen their position in the increasingly dynamic tattoo world.

B. Female Tattoo Artists in Popular Culture

1) The Transformation of Tattoo Meanings in Popular Culture

From a communication perspective, the meaning of tattoos has undergone a significant transformation with the advancement of technology and modernization. Previously, tattoos were primarily associated with traditional ethnic rituals and symbols of specific group identities. However, tattoos have now shifted into a mass-oriented element of popular culture. This change reflects a process of cultural communication in which the symbolic value and meaning of tattoos are recontextualized according to social dynamics.

In cultural communication theory, this phenomenon can be explained through the concept of "media amplification," where the exposure of tattoos in social media, films, and the fashion industry strengthens their acceptance in society. As a form of self-expression, tattoos have become a means of nonverbal communication that represents identity, lifestyle, and even resistance against dominant norms.

2) Changing Public Perceptions of Tattoos

Over the past two decades, public perceptions of tattoos have shifted significantly. Previously, tattoos were often associated with negative stereotypes such as criminality or rebellion. Today, however, society increasingly views tattoos as a legitimate form of artistic expression and a part of individual freedom.

Mass communication, especially through digital media, has played a major role in this shift. With platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, tattoo artists can build personal branding and showcase their work to a wider audience. This has also provided a space for female tattoo artists to display their skills and establish their presence in an industry that was once male-dominated.

3) Female Tattoo Artists: Identity and Representation in Popular Culture

The increasing number of female tattoo artists is an indicator that tattoo culture is no longer exclusive to men. From a gender communication perspective, this phenomenon represents a shift in social constructions regarding women and body art. Women who choose tattoos—whether as a form of self-expression or as a profession—challenge traditional norms that dictate that the female body should remain "clean" from certain symbols.

John Fiske, in his analysis of popular culture, argues that pop culture is often a form of resistance against dominant ideologies. In this context, female tattoo artists can be seen as agents of change, negotiating their identities in public spaces that were previously less accepting of them. This process is part of identity communication, where individuals or groups use symbols (in this case, tattoos) to define their position in society.

4) The Creative Industry and the Profession of Tattoo Artists

The growth of the tattoo industry in Indonesia shows that this profession is increasingly recognized as part of the creative economy. With rising demand, the profession of tattoo artistry is now open not only to men but also to women with an interest and skill in body painting.

From an economic communication perspective, tattoos have become a commodity with high economic value. Tattoo festivals, for example, serve as events where artists can promote their skills and build professional networks. This demonstrates that marketing communication and personal branding are crucial aspects of a tattoo artist's success in the digital era.

5) Tattoos as a Discourse of Resistance from a Postmodern Perspective

In cultural communication studies, tattoos as a pop culture phenomenon can be analyzed using a postmodernist perspective. As Fiske suggests, pop culture often emerges as a form of resistance against dominant structures. In this context, tattoos and female tattoo artists can be understood as symbols of resistance against social norms that restrict individual expression.

Women who choose to become tattoo artists are not only breaking gender barriers but also redefining the meaning of art and the body in society. In this discourse, tattoos are not merely body decorations but also visual communication media that allow individuals to convey personal and collective messages.

From a communication perspective, the phenomenon of female tattoo artists in popular culture reflects broader social changes related to tattoo meanings, identity expression, and the creative industry. These changes are driven by mass communication, digital media, and gender dynamics in popular culture.

This phenomenon also illustrates that tattoos are not just about aesthetics but also about how individuals use their bodies as a medium of communication. With increasing social acceptance of tattoos and the continuous growth of the creative industry in this field, the profession of tattoo artists—including female tattoo artists—has a promising future in Indonesia.

C. Overlooked Interpretations in Cultural "Texts"

Text and culture are two inseparable elements, as text is both a product and a construct of culture, while culture provides the context that gives diverse meanings to the texts created. In textual analysis, culture can be understood as a collection of social practices in which meaning is produced, circulated, and exchanged within society. Text itself is an everyday reality that generates meaning, while social life practices can be viewed as part of the text. Text consists of a combination of signs, which play a role in producing meaning within a cultural context (Thwaites et al., 2002).

Female tattoo artists can be understood as "cultural texts" because they are part of daily reality and social practices. The interpretation of their existence is dynamic and

influenced by the society that interacts with them. For tattoo art enthusiasts, female tattoo artists are perceived as having distinct advantages in creating unique and intricate designs compared to male tattoo artists. However, for other societal groups that lack direct interaction with female tattoo artists, different interpretations may arise, sometimes even overlooking or marginalizing their role in the tattoo art industry.

a. Deconstruction and the Reading of Cultural Texts

Deconstruction is a critical approach that seeks to uncover hidden meanings within a text by identifying contradictions, inconsistencies, and aspects that have been suppressed or ignored. In this context, female tattoo artists can be analyzed through deconstruction to highlight aspects that are often overlooked by the general public. Derrida stated that deconstruction aims to reveal the layers of meaning within a text so that previously hidden meanings can be uncovered.

Culture as a text can be understood through the process of reading and interpretation. In the context of female tattoo artists, they are not only part of the reality occurring in society but also actively shape that reality. The following are some aspects that construct the reality of female tattoo artists:

1) Unique Designs and Feminine Touch

Some clients choose female tattoo artists because their designs exhibit unique characteristics and detailed intricacies that are often hard to find among male tattoo artists. Their portfolios, showcased through social media platforms such as Instagram, serve as a distinctive attraction. Additionally, female tattoo artists often incorporate more feminine designs, catering to the preferences of female clients.

2) Privacy and Comfort for Female Clients

Many female clients prefer female tattoo artists because they feel more comfortable when getting tattoos on sensitive areas of their bodies, such as the chest, thighs, waist, or back. Safety concerns and the desire to avoid potential sexual harassment are among the main reasons why many female clients opt for female tattoo artists.

3) A Comfortable Studio Environment

Tattoo studios managed by female tattoo artists are often more well-organized, clean, and comfortable, with a more relaxed atmosphere compared to conventional tattoo studios. Facilities such as air conditioning, cable TV, music, and headphones are provided to enhance the client's comfort during the tattooing process.

4) Attention to Detail and Precision in Tattooing

Female tattoo artists are known for their patience, precision, and meticulous attention to detail. Many clients feel that tattoos done by female artists tend to be neater and less painful due to the careful and unhurried approach taken in the process.

5) In-Depth Consultation Process

Before creating a tattoo, female tattoo artists often provide a consultation session for their clients. This includes discussions about designs that suit the client's personality while also considering how the tattoo will age over time. This process gives the impression that female tattoo artists are not solely profit-oriented but also prioritize client satisfaction and comfort.

6) Motivation for Pursuing a Career in the Tattoo Industry

Many female tattoo artists enter the industry due to their passion for tattoo art. They possess unique drawing skills and wish to channel their artistic talents into tattooing. Although the industry has traditionally been male-dominated, female tattoo artists continue to strive to build their reputation and gain client trust through their dedication and expertise.

In the context of pop culture, female tattoo artists also represent resistance against dominant norms. A profession once dominated by men is now increasingly being occupied by women, reflecting a broader societal shift toward inclusivity and openness in various forms of artistic expression. Female tattoo artists are not just part of popular culture but also actively shape its development through their innovation and creativity in the tattoo industry.

The interpretation of female tattoo artists as cultural texts depends on the perspectives of the society that perceives them. Through the approach of deconstruction, it becomes evident that their existence is often overlooked in dominant discourses, despite their significant role in the tattoo industry. Social and cultural shifts toward inclusivity have opened up greater opportunities for women to pursue this profession.

Female tattoo artists not only offer unique artistic aesthetics but also provide comfort, safety, and innovation in the tattoo world. With the continuous evolution of pop culture and the creative industry, this profession is expected to gain increasing recognition in society, breaking down long-standing stigmas surrounding tattoos and women in this industry.

D. Rebellion Against the Subordination and Marginalization of Women from a Communication Perspective

a. Introduction

In Indonesian society, which remains deeply rooted in patriarchal culture, women often experience marginalization and subordination in various aspects of life, both in domestic and public spheres. The social structure that positions men as the "self" and women as the "other" creates systemic injustice that is difficult to avoid. Resistance against patriarchal hegemony has taken various forms of transformation, including through expressions of popular culture, such as tattoo art, which serves as a means of liberation for women.

b. Symbolic Violence in Patriarchal Discourse

Women in patriarchal societies often become objects of symbolic violence, a subtle and indirect form of violence that profoundly impacts how women perceive and understand themselves. Male dominance in social constructs results in women not only being controlled by patriarchal norms but also accepting and legitimizing these rules as something "natural" and "inevitable." As Bourdieu pointed out, this symbolic violence operates unconsciously, making women an integral part of the mechanism of domination itself.

c. Postfeminism as a Deconstruction of Dominant Discourse

Postfeminism emerges as a response to earlier waves of feminism that emphasized equality with men. This movement focuses on how women can find meaning in themselves without relying on male recognition. Postfeminism rejects the grand narrative of women's emancipation that solely focuses on equal rights and instead emphasizes the importance of differences in achieving gender justice.

In this context, tattoo art developed by women becomes a form of deconstruction against social boundaries that restrict them. This practice is not merely an artistic expression but also a form of resistance against the patriarchal structure that continues to place women in a subordinate position.

d. Tattoo Art as a Form of Resistance Against Patriarchal Hegemony

Female tattoo artists assert their position within an industry historically dominated by men. Women who choose this path not only showcase artistic creativity but also challenge the notion that tattoo art is an exclusive male domain. As a

phenomenon of popular culture, tattoos allow women to renegotiate their identity in a still-patriarchal society.

Support from family, partners, and close friends plays a crucial role in helping women achieve freedom and independence in this field. Although certain moralist groups still perceive tattoos as deviating from social norms, the presence of female tattoo artists demonstrates that women can define their own value systems without conforming to patriarchal societal standards.

e. The Role of Capitalism in Legitimizing Women's Competence

One interesting aspect of the phenomenon of female tattoo artists is how capitalism contributes to affirming women's positions in this industry. The expanding tattoo market creates opportunities for women to showcase their competence, indirectly challenging the assumption that this profession can only be undertaken by men. Clients, especially women, tend to feel more comfortable getting tattooed by female artists, which provides them with professional opportunities to compete in the industry.

f. Communication as a Tool of Deconstruction

From a communication perspective, tattoo art can be seen as a medium of cultural resistance that conveys a powerful message about women's identity and independence. Tattoos are not merely aesthetic elements but also a form of visual communication that conveys specific meanings to both individuals and society. Through tattoo artistry, women deconstruct gender stereotypes and create new spaces where they can empower themselves and take control of their bodies and expressions.

Additionally, the communication established between female tattoo artists and their clients reflects a more egalitarian relationship, where women are no longer positioned as passive objects in patriarchal culture but as active subjects who have control over their own lives.

The postfeminist movement, reflected in the phenomenon of female tattoo artists, illustrates that women are no longer merely fighting for equality with men but are also striving to discover their own meaning independently. Tattoo art has become a symbol of resistance against patriarchal hegemony and, at the same time, a space for women to affirm their existence in society.

From a communication perspective, this phenomenon demonstrates how women use art as a tool to construct new narratives about freedom, identity, and empowerment. Women in the tattoo industry have successfully dismantled social

barriers that once confined them, proving that they can create and compete in a field previously considered exclusive to men. This is not just about art; it is also about how women define themselves without being constrained by patriarchal norms that limit their potential.

E. Women's Resistance Against Sexism and Stereotypes: A Communication Perspective

Indonesia still faces significant challenges in eliminating sexism and gender stereotypes deeply embedded in patriarchal culture. Sexism, which refers to prejudice or discrimination based on gender, often disadvantages women and limits their roles and opportunities in various aspects of life (Webster, 2004). Communication plays a central role in shaping, perpetuating, and challenging sexism and gender stereotypes in society. This article discusses how women's resistance against sexism and stereotypes, particularly in male-dominated professions such as tattoo artistry, can be viewed from a communication perspective.

1) Gender Construction and Patriarchal Domination in Communication

Patriarchal culture has created gender constructions that place women in an inferior position. Women are often associated with gentleness, politeness, care, and emotional sensitivity, while men are identified with strength, bravery, and dominance (Kuntjara, 2003). Language, as the primary tool of communication, also serves as a medium for perpetuating male dominance. The use of terms such as "female tattoo artist" demonstrates how this profession is still considered a male domain, whereas men in the same profession are simply referred to as "tattoo artists" without any gender-specific label.

Communication serves as an effective means of challenging these stereotypes. Women can use both verbal and nonverbal communication to demonstrate their competence and professionalism, thereby deconstructing the notion that they are unfit for certain professions.

2) Sexism in Language and Media

Language is one of the primary instruments that shape social reality. In many cultures, including Indonesia, the language used often contains gender biases that reinforce the dominant position of men. For instance, vocabulary that associates beauty with women and strength with men reflects a deep-rooted gender disparity. This aligns with the concept of symbolic violence described by Bourdieu (1991), where gender domination is reinforced through linguistic structures that go unnoticed by society.

Media also play a significant role in shaping perceptions of women. The limited representation of women in domestic roles or as sexual objects across various communication platforms hinders more inclusive social change. Therefore, resistance to sexism in communication must begin with the use of more inclusive language and a more diverse representation of women in mass media.

3) Women's Resistance in the Tattoo Art Industry

The profession of tattoo artistry is a concrete example of how women face gender-based discrimination. In patriarchal culture, women with tattoos are often stigmatized as "rebellious" or "immoral." This stigma creates communication barriers between female tattoo artists and society, particularly in their efforts to gain professional recognition.

Female tattoo artists resist these stereotypes through various communication strategies, such as:

- **Existence and Consistency:** Demonstrating skill and professionalism in their work to prove that women are equally capable of excelling in tattoo artistry.
- **Education and Advocacy:** Utilizing social media and various communication forums to educate the public that tattoos are a form of artistic expression rather than an indicator of morality.
- **Empowerment and Solidarity:** Establishing communities and support networks for female tattoo artists to advocate for their rights and strengthen their presence in the industry.

F. The Role of Communication in Changing Perceptions

To combat sexism and stereotypes, effective communication must be implemented at various levels:

- **Interpersonal Communication:** Women can build a positive image through direct interactions with society, for example, by demonstrating professionalism and strong work ethics.
- **Mass Communication:** The media should actively promote diverse representations of women that go beyond traditional stereotypes.
- **Organizational Communication:** Artistic institutions and organizations can play a role in establishing more inclusive policies that support gender diversity in the tattoo industry.

Women's resistance against sexism and gender stereotypes requires a transformation in communication patterns. By understanding how language and media shape gender constructs, women can adopt more strategic approaches in advocating for their rights. Female tattoo artists in Indonesia have proven that with courage, education, and effective communication, they can change societal perceptions and demonstrate that their profession is not only legitimate but also of high artistic value.

The fight against sexism is not just about claiming more space for women; it is also about raising awareness that gender equality is a shared responsibility in creating a fairer and more inclusive society.

5. CONCLUSION

This qualitative study reveals that women's resistance against sexism and stereotypes in the tattoo art industry represents a form of defiance against patriarchal social norms. Through qualitative research methods with a descriptive approach, this study explores the experiences and perspectives of female tattoo artists in facing gender discrimination and social stigma.

The findings indicate that sexism persists systematically in language, culture, and social structures. The stereotypes attached to women, such as the expectation to be gentle, obedient, and emotional, create barriers for those who aspire to build careers in male-dominated fields, including tattoo artistry. Female tattoo artists experience discrimination in various forms, from doubts about their competence to negative moral stigmas.

However, this study also finds that female tattoo artists engage in various forms of resistance against sexism and gender stereotypes. They demonstrate professionalism through competence, work ethic, and dedication to their craft. Additionally, they educate the public about the history of tattooing in Indonesia and contribute to social initiatives to change the negative stigma surrounding their profession.

From a communication perspective, resistance to sexism is carried out through discourse shifts and changes in communication practices within society. The elimination of sexist language, the empowerment of women through positive representation, and the promotion of public awareness about gender equality serve as key strategies in combating gender-based discrimination.

This study concludes that women's resistance against sexism in the tattoo art industry is not merely an individual struggle but also part of a broader social transformation. Women pursuing careers as tattoo artists not only assert their existence in the art world but also

challenge societal perceptions of women in unconventional professions. Thus, this resistance becomes a tangible step toward creating a more inclusive and equitable environment for women in various professional fields.

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