

Research Horizon

ISSN: 2808-0696 (p), 2807-9531 (e)

Research Horizon

Volume: 05

Issue: 06

Year: 2025

Page: 3371-3382

Citation:

Sari, A. (2025). Postcolonial and multicultural analysis of gender-sexuality representation in the film "Gowok: Kamasutra Jawa". *Research Horizon*, 5(6), 3371-3382.

Article History:

Received: September 30, 2025

Revised: November 5, 2025

Accepted: December 20, 2025

Online since: December 31, 2025

Postcolonial and Multicultural Analysis of Gender-Sexuality Representation in the Film "Gowok: Kamasutra Jawa"

Atika Sari^{1*}

¹ Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia

* Corresponding author: Atika Sari (atika7410@gmail.com)

Abstract

The phenomenon of interracial romantic relationships and beauty standards in Indonesia reflects a colonial legacy that constructs white skin as a symbol of superiority and marginalizes dark skin, a condition often reproduced through film as a medium that shapes gender and sexuality discourse. The film *Gowok: Javanese Kamasutra*, which depicts traditional Javanese sexual education through female characters, serves as an important space for examining implicit racial and cultural inequalities. This study aims to analyze the representation of gender and sexuality in the film using a postcolonial and multicultural approach, particularly regarding interracial relations and biased beauty standards. The method used is qualitative, with content analysis of the film based on synopses and reviews, and secondary data from social media, especially TikTok, which discusses similar issues. The main findings indicate that interracial romantic relationships still reproduce the fetishization of Indonesian women's bodies as exotic objects, while the narrative of "beautiful is white" remains dominant as a continuation of colonial values. This study contributes by emphasizing the important role of media in dismantling historical power structures, breaking down colonial stereotypes, and encouraging more inclusive cultural practices to build a just and diverse Indonesian society.

Keywords

Beauty Standards, Gender, Indonesian Film, Interracial Relations, Multiculturalism, Postcolonialism, Sexuality.

1. Introduction

Indonesia's rich cultural diversity and long colonial history shape how issues of gender and sexuality appear in everyday life and media, particularly films. Phenomena such as interracial relationships and skin-color-based beauty standards cannot be separated from colonial legacies that continue to influence social perceptions. Postcolonialism helps explain the power structures inherited from colonial rule, while multiculturalism promotes respect for cultural diversity and equal recognition of identities. These perspectives work together to analyze how contemporary Indonesian society negotiates diversity (Sawant, 2012; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). In film representations, Indonesian women are often viewed through colonial lenses, such as being portrayed as exotic or submissive figures, a portrayal that matters because the media plays a key role in shaping how people perceive themselves and others.

The film *Gowok: Kamasutra Jawa* (2025) features a *gowok* who teaches young nobles about intimate relations. Set in the 1990s, the film blends themes of love, past conflict, and resistance to patriarchal values in Javanese culture. While focusing on gender roles and sexuality within a local context, it also reflects broader power imbalances rooted in colonial history. The film is significant for addressing taboo topics, particularly women's sexual agency in a traditional setting, and for opening discussions on the continued influence of colonial ideas on bodies and relationships (Putra et al., 2025).

A significant issue in Indonesian society is romantic and sexual relationships between white men and Indonesian women, often shaped by exoticism and unequal power relations (Saraswati, 2013; Bennett & Davies, 2014). Indonesian women are commonly imagined as gentle, obedient, and erotic, a view rooted in the colonial "nyai" figure, where native women served as domestic and sexual objects for European men (Gouda, 1993; Blackwood, 2005). These relationships were historically unequal, supported by economic power, global mobility, and racial hierarchy, and similar narratives persist in contemporary media discourse. From a postcolonial perspective, this reflects ongoing colonial power relations through the fetishization of Eastern bodies, where Asian women become symbolic commodities shaped by Western desire (Hooks, 1992). In contrast, multiculturalism promotes equal relationships free from racial, skin color, and class bias, while encouraging respect for diverse identities (Parekh, 2008).

Another important phenomenon is the dominance of light-skin beauty standards in Indonesia (Ifa et al., 2025; Izzati et al., 2025). Films, television, advertising, and social media often present light-skinned women as the ideal of beauty, while darker skin tones are marginalized or stereotyped. This pattern is rooted in colonial history, where white skin symbolized elite status and dark skin was associated with native labor. Paradoxically, in relationships with white foreign men, darker-skinned Indonesian women are sometimes viewed as more attractive due to their "exotic" image (Puspa, 2010). Although movements such as #KulitSawoMatang and representations by local brands like Wardah and Sariayu have begun to challenge these ideals (Suryaningsih, 2024), the "beauty is white" narrative and skin-whitening products remain dominant. Postcolonialism interprets this as the persistence of colonial values that link white skin to modernity and higher status (Saraswati, 2013; Olivotti, 2016), while multiculturalism promotes appreciation of diverse local beauty and bodily expressions (Rattansi, 2011).

Previous studies have examined gender and sexuality in Indonesian cinema, but many have not fully integrated postcolonialism and multiculturalism. Murtagh (2013) notes the increasing representation of LGBT characters after the Reformasi era yet does not address the colonial roots of sexual norms. Izharuddin (2016) explores Islam and gender in film but lacks a multicultural framework. Lee (2022)

discusses gender and sexuality stereotypes in post-2000 films but gives little attention to interracial relations shaped by colonial history. Paramaditha (2019) analyzes Indonesian horror films as responses to global influences but does not examine multiculturalism in everyday relationships. These gaps suggest the need for a more integrated approach.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze representations of gender and sexuality in *Gowok: Kamasutra Jawa* by combining postcolonial and multicultural perspectives. It focuses on how the film portrays interracial relations and beauty standards as colonial legacies while promoting values of equality and diversity. This study contributes to understanding the role of media in challenging colonial narratives and encouraging more inclusive cultural practices in Indonesian society.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. Postcolonial Theory

According to Said (1978), postcolonial theory looks at how colonial powers shaped cultures and identities long after independence, especially in places like Indonesia, where Dutch rule left deep marks on society. This idea helps explain ongoing power imbalances in relationships and beauty ideals. In Indonesia, postcolonialism shows up in how people view interracial romances, often seeing them as echoes of old colonial times when native women were treated as objects. Scholars argue that these views stem from historical structures in which white Europeans held economic and symbolic power, making local people feel inferior (Bonilla-Silva, 2000; Arnesen, 2001). For example, the “nyai” figure from colonial days represents women as servants and sexual partners, a pattern that still influences modern perceptions on social media (Yulianingsih, 2017). This theory is key for understanding films like “Gowok,” where traditional Javanese roles mix with broader colonial legacies in gender and sexuality.

Many studies apply postcolonial ideas to Indonesian media and culture. Wasista and Putri (2012) point out that films and ads continue to promote light skin as superior, linking it to modernity and progress away from colonial values. Darker skin, on the other hand, gets tied to traditional or lower-class images. This creates a divide that affects how people see themselves and others in romantic contexts. Williams (1991) and Alawi (2020) note that even today, relationships between white men and Indonesian women are often unequal, with women seen as exotic or submissive. Postcolonial analysis helps break down these narratives, showing they are not natural but built from history. It also connects to multiculturalism by highlighting the need to challenge these old power structures for a fairer society.

2.2. Multiculturalism in Diverse Societies

According to Kymlicka (1995), multiculturalism is about recognizing and respecting different cultural groups in a society, which is crucial for countries like Indonesia with its many ethnicities and histories. This approach pushes for equal treatment without favoring one group over another based on race or class. In Indonesia, multiculturalism helps address issues from colonialism, like biases in beauty standards and interracial relationships. It encourages people to value local identities, such as celebrating darker skin tones through campaigns like #KulitSawoMatang. Brands like Wardah are starting to show diverse models, which is a step toward inclusivity. However, these efforts are still new, and old ideas about “beauty is white” dominate ads and films.

Studies on multiculturalism in Asia show how it can counter postcolonial effects by promoting dialogue between cultures. In Indonesia, this means building relationships that are fair, without prejudices from the past. For example, social media discussions about Indonesian women dating foreigners often highlight inequalities, but multiculturalism suggests ways to make them more balanced. It

focuses on appreciating each person's background, which can help in healing colonial wounds. Researchers emphasize that multiculturalism isn't just about tolerance; it's about active respect and integration. This is especially important in media, where representations can either reinforce divisions or bridge them.

2.3. Gender and Sexuality in Postcolonial Contexts

According to Mohanty (1984) and Hasrudin and Sagena (2023), gender and sexuality in postcolonial contexts reveal how colonial power-controlled women's bodies, roles, and social positions. These patterns did not disappear with the end of formal colonialism but continue in various forms in postcolonial societies, including Indonesia. This perspective helps explain the legacy of the "nyai" figure, in which native women were constructed as exotic objects, domestic servants, and sexual companions for colonial men. Such representations shaped enduring images of Indonesian women as gentle, obedient, and erotic, images that remain visible in contemporary cultural narratives.

In the present context, similar constructions appear in media portrayals of relationships between Indonesian women and white foreign men. Indonesian women are often represented through traits that emphasize softness, submission, and sexual appeal, indirectly reproducing colonial power relations. These portrayals are closely linked to historical inequalities, where economic and racial hierarchies positioned white individuals as superior. In films and popular media, these unequal relations influence how stories of love and sexuality are framed, often reinforcing long-standing stereotypes rather than challenging them.

Studies on gender in postcolonial Asia also highlight the fetishization of Eastern bodies by the West, in which women are commodified through Western perspectives and reduced to symbolic representations rather than lived realities. In Indonesia, this process shapes social attitudes toward interracial couples, where equality is rarely achieved. Scholars, therefore, emphasize the importance of postcolonial feminism in challenging such constructions by centering women's voices and experiences. This approach aligns with multiculturalism, which calls for mutual respect across cultures in romantic and sexual relationships, including resistance to colonial beauty norms such as skin-whitening practices.

2.4. Beauty Standards and Racial Dynamics in Media

According to Saraswati (2013) and Priyanka and Sagena (2024), beauty standards in Indonesia are strongly shaped by colonial history, in which light skin is associated with high social status and modernity, while dark skin is linked to lower classes and manual labor. This bias remains visible in media representations such as films, advertisements, and social media, where light-skinned women are commonly presented as the ideal of beauty. In certain contexts, particularly in interracial relationships, darker-skinned women are sometimes viewed as more attractive by foreigners because they are considered "exotic." This paradox shows how beauty standards continue to operate within colonial logic. Campaigns such as #KulitSawoMatang attempt to challenge these dominant narratives by promoting local beauty and encouraging acceptance of natural skin tones. However, the continued dominance of skin-whitening products in the market indicates that the idea of "white is beautiful" remains powerful and difficult to resist.

Studies on racial dynamics in media further demonstrate how postcolonial values shape public perceptions of the body and beauty. In Indonesia, television programs and films often marginalize darker skin tones, reinforcing stereotypes inherited from the colonial era. These representations have real social consequences, influencing self-esteem and social interactions, particularly in romantic relationships. Scholars argue that multiculturalism offers an important framework to counter such biases by celebrating diversity in skin color and body types. For example, alternative advertising campaigns by local brands such as Sariayu feature models with diverse

appearances as a form of resistance. Nevertheless, dominant beauty narratives continue to privilege whiteness, making the shift toward more inclusive beauty standards gradual and challenging.

3. Methods

This study adopts a qualitative approach using content analysis and interpretive methods to examine the representation of gender, sexuality, and colonial legacies in the film *Gowok: Kamasutra Jawa*. A qualitative design is appropriate because it enables in-depth exploration of cultural meanings and social issues without relying on numerical data. The study examines how the film and related social media discussions portray power relations, racial dynamics, and constructions of gender and sexuality in the Indonesian context. An interpretive approach is applied to understand symbols, narratives, and characters in the film, particularly in relation to how past colonial power structures continue to influence contemporary representations. By combining content analysis and interpretation, this research connects the film's narrative to postcolonial and multicultural theoretical perspectives in a flexible, contextual manner.

The data sources consist of primary and secondary materials. The primary data come from the film *Gowok: Kamasutra Jawa*, analyzed through its storyline, synopsis, and descriptions of key scenes obtained from online reviews and film databases such as IMDb and Medcom.id. As the film was released in June 2025, the analysis is based on publicly available trailers, plot summaries, and critical reviews. These materials are used to identify representations of main characters, especially Nyai Santi and Ratri, in relation to traditional Javanese sexual education, women's roles, and power relations. Secondary data are drawn from social media, particularly TikTok content discussing interracial relationships, attraction to white foreign men, and skin-color-based beauty standards in Indonesia. Additional searches were conducted using keywords such as "relasi bule Indonesia" and "standar kecantikan kulit putih" to capture wider public opinions. All data were collected ethically by using only publicly accessible posts without personal identification.

Data collection was carried out in a systematic and step-by-step manner. First, film review websites and databases were examined to obtain accurate contextual information about the film, including its release and narrative background. Next, TikTok content from 2025 was searched and selected based on its relevance to postcolonial themes, such as the legacy of the "nyai" figure and the exoticization of women. Approximately 10–15 videos were chosen as a representative sample. The film's synopsis and related materials were then reviewed multiple times to identify recurring patterns in dialogue, visuals, and narrative structure related to gender and race.

Data analysis was conducted through thematic coding, in which findings were organized into key themes such as racial fetishization, skin color bias, women's agency, and cultural resistance. This process involved continuous interpretation between the data and relevant theories from postcolonialism and multiculturalism. To enhance reliability, triangulation was applied by comparing film representations, social media content, and academic literature. However, this study has limitations, including reliance on online sources and the possibility of subjective interpretation. Future research could incorporate interviews or audience studies to provide deeper insights and strengthen the analysis.

4. Results

4.1. Interracial Romantic Relations and Fetishization

In the film “Gowok: Javanese Kamasutra,” the story centers on Ratri, a young woman trained as a *gowok*, who falls in love and betrays her teacher, leading to serious consequences in 1960s Java. While the plot focuses on Javanese traditions of sex education for grooms, it indirectly touches on power imbalances in relationships that echo colonial histories. For example, the *gowok* role positions women as guides in sexuality, but this can be seen as a form of objectification similar to how native women were viewed during Dutch rule. TikTok data supports this by showing real-life views on interracial romances, where white men and Indonesian women are often in unequal dynamics. These posts discuss how such relationships carry forward the “*nyai*” legacy, where women were domestic and sexual servants. The film, though not directly interracial, represents women’s bodies as sites of knowledge and control, linking to broader fetishization themes.



Figure 1. TikTok Clips Depicting Exoticism and Power in Romantic Relationships Between White Men and Women

Figure 1 captures TikTok posts about romantic and sexual relations between white men and Asian women, especially from Indonesia, often labeled as ‘exoticism’ and imbalance, where Indonesian women are seen as gentle, obedient, and erotic. This visual from social media shows clips of couples and discussions that highlight the ongoing narrative. Users point out how these views stem from colonial times, with white race valued higher in economic and symbolic terms. In the film, Ratri’s journey of love and revenge adds layers, as her background from a sex worker mother reflects exploited women’s stories. This connects to postcolonial ideas of Eastern bodies being commodified by Western gazes. Multiculturalism, in contrast, pushes for equal partnerships without racial biases, but the data shows this is still rare in public talks.

Extending this, the results reveal how media like “Gowok” can challenge or reinforce these patterns (Alawi, 2020). The film’s depiction of premarital intimacy and women’s agency in teaching sexuality offers a local resistance to colonial purity norms imposed on native people. However, TikTok comments often criticize interracial pairs for power gaps, like access to global mobility favoring white

partners. This aligns with the film's theme of betrayal and consequences, in which personal desires clash with societal roles. Adding to this, reviews note the movie's visual style emphasizes emotional entanglements, mirroring real-life fetishization where Asian women are exoticized. Overall, these findings suggest that while progress exists, colonial shadows linger in how relationships are perceived today.

The data also includes examples from broader Indonesian cinema, where interracial elements are subtle but present in historical contexts. In "Gowok," the 1960s setting recalls post-independence struggles, when colonial influences on gender roles were still fresh. TikTok users link this to current dating trends, where Indonesian women with foreigners are judged harshly. This fetishization turns bodies into symbols, as seen in the film's training scenes that could be interpreted as empowering yet limiting. Multicultural approaches in the data advocate for appreciating diverse identities, but resistance is slow amid dominant narratives.

4.2. Beauty Standards and Skin Color Bias

Beauty standards in Indonesia remain skewed toward light skin, as seen in films, ads, and social media, where fair-skinned women dominate as ideals, pushing darker tones to the margins. In "Gowok: Javanese Kamasutra," characters like Ratri are portrayed as beautiful within Javanese contexts, but the film's focus on traditional roles indirectly questions colonial-linked biases. Colonial history tied white skin to elite status and dark skin to laborers, a pattern that persists in media representations. TikTok data highlights this, with posts that equate light skin with modernity and attractiveness, while darker skin is stereotyped as traditional or less desirable. Interestingly, in interracial attractions, darker-skinned Indonesian women are sometimes favored by foreigners as more exotic, creating a contradiction. The film, set in the 1960s, shows local beauty through Javanese attire and settings, potentially resisting these biases.

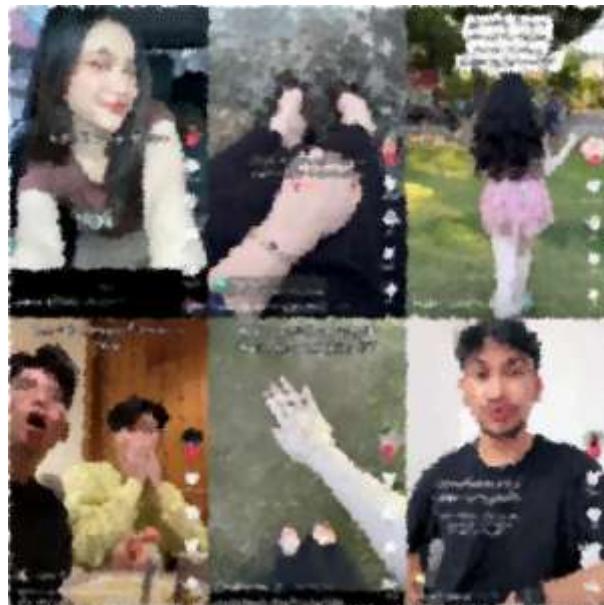


Figure 2. TikTok Content Highlighting Bias Toward Light Skin in Indonesian Beauty Standards

Figure 2 addresses the strong bias in beauty standards toward light skin, featuring TikTok clips that show dominant fair-skinned models in ads and films, contrasted with emerging campaigns for darker tones. These visuals include examples from brands like Wardah promoting diverse skin colors but note that

whitening products still rule. In the film, Ratri's talent and beauty are celebrated in a cultural context, but without explicit racial elements, it still ties to postcolonial views where light skin symbolizes progress. Reviews mention the movie's cross-generational melodrama, where physical appearances play into emotional stories, reflecting societal pressures. Multiculturalism in the data calls for celebrating local features, such as sawo matang skin, as seen in hashtags pushing back against colonial norms.

Further results show movements like #KulitSawoMatang gaining traction, but resistance is early, with dominant narratives holding strong. In "Gowok," the emphasis on women's bodies in education roles could challenge beauty biases by valuing knowledge over looks, yet it risks reinforcing objectification. TikTok discussions point to ads where light skin leads to better roles, mirroring colonial hierarchies. This affects self-perception, especially among young women, as data from social media reveals ongoing debates. The film's plot of love and betrayal adds depth, showing how personal identities clash with societal standards inherited from the past.

Expanding on this, Indonesian media often marginalizes darker skin in leading roles, as evidenced by sinetron and films favoring fair actresses. "Gowok" stands out by rooting beauty in cultural traditions, offering a multicultural counterpoint. However, the bias persists, with whitening creams advertised heavily. Postcolonial analysis in the results sees this as continuing values that link white to superior, while multiculturalism promotes diversity in expressions (Alawi, 2020). These findings underscore the need for more inclusive representations to shift perceptions.

4.3. Postcolonial Integration and Multiculturalism

Integrating postcolonialism and multiculturalism in analyzing "Gowok: Javanese Kamasutra" reveals how they complement each other in addressing gender and sexuality issues. Postcolonialism uncovers historical power structures in the film's depiction of gowok traditions, where women's roles echo colonial exploitations. Multiculturalism, meanwhile, offers a forward-looking view, promoting respect for Javanese cultural diversity in the face of dominant narratives (Arnesen, 2001). The data from TikTok and the film shows these approaches don't conflict but build on one another, with postcolonial critiques highlighting inequalities and multicultural ideals suggesting inclusive futures. In Indonesia's diverse society, this combination is vital for dismantling colonial remnants in relationships and beauty standards.

The film's story of apprenticeship, love, and consequences illustrates this integration, as Ratri's path represents reclaiming agency in a postcolonial context. TikTok posts on interracial dynamics and beauty biases provide real-world examples, where postcolonial lenses expose fetishization, and multiculturalism advocates equality. For instance, campaigns celebrating local skin tones use multicultural principles to resist colonial beauty ideals. Reviews praise "Gowok" for exploring taboo topics like premarital sex, which challenges patriarchal norms from colonial times. This dual approach in the results helps understand how media can foster fairer cultural practices.

Moreover, the findings indicate that postcolonialism points to ongoing social structures shaped by history, like the valuation of white over local in romances. Multiculturalism responds with visions of equity, as seen in emerging inclusive ads. In "Gowok," the Javanese setting honors local identities, aligning with multicultural respect while critiquing power imbalances in a postcolonial style. Data shows this integration is key in a formerly colonized nation, promoting justice in representations. The film's emotional depth adds to this, showing personal stories as sites for broader change.

Finally, these results emphasize the potential of films like "Gowok" to bridge the past and the future. By combining theories, we see how traditions can resist colonial

legacies through multicultural lenses. TikTok discussions reinforce this, calling for equal relations and diverse beauty.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that *Gowok: Kamasutra Jawa* represents gender and sexuality through frameworks that remain deeply shaped by postcolonial power structures in Indonesia, particularly in relation to interracial relationships and dominant beauty standards. By combining film analysis with TikTok discourse, this research reveals that romantic relationships between Indonesian women and white men are frequently framed through fetishization and unequal power relations. This pattern reflects what Hooks (1992) describes as the commodification of Eastern women's bodies through Western gazes, where women are positioned as objects of desire rather than equal subjects. In the Indonesian context, such representations are inseparable from colonial history, which placed native women in subordinate roles, as embodied by the colonial figure of the "nyai" (Gouda, 1993; Blackwood, 2005).

Within the film, Nyai Santi is portrayed as a traditional sexual educator who appears to challenge Javanese patriarchy by positioning women as holders of sexual knowledge. However, a critical dialogue with postcolonial scholarship reveals an ambivalence in this representation. While Nyai Santi's authority suggests female agency, it simultaneously risks reproducing objectification, echoing the historical positioning of nyai figures who existed between resistance and exploitation (Saraswati, 2013). This tension supports Bhabha's (1994) concept of postcolonial hybridity, in which cultural representations negotiate between resistance and the persistence of dominant colonial narratives rather than fully escaping them.

The study also highlights the persistence of light-skin beauty standards in both the film and social media discourse. TikTok content reinforces how light skin continues to symbolize modernity, higher social status, and desirability, while darker skin remains marginalized. These findings align with Saraswati's (2013) argument that beauty standards in Indonesia are colonial constructions linking whiteness to progress and darker skin to backwardness. Interestingly, interracial relationships sometimes reverse this logic by framing darker-skinned Indonesian women as "exotic," yet this reversal does not dismantle inequality. Instead, it reconfigures colonial hierarchies through fetishization, maintaining unequal power relations.

Engaging with multiculturalism further complicates this analysis. Parekh (2008) emphasizes that multiculturalism calls for equal relationships free from racial and bodily prejudice. However, empirical evidence from TikTok suggests that such equality remains aspirational rather than realized. While movements such as #KulitSawoMatang and inclusive advertising campaigns signal growing resistance, they remain marginal compared to dominant narratives that continue to uphold whiteness as the beauty ideal.

The primary contribution of this study lies in its integration of postcolonialism and multiculturalism within Indonesian film analysis. Unlike previous studies that examine gender, race, or sexuality in isolation, this research demonstrates how *Gowok* functions as a complex site where colonial legacies, local traditions, and contemporary discourses intersect. The film neither simply reinforces nor fully dismantles colonial narratives; instead, it operates as a space of negotiation. Through this lens, *Gowok* is not only a cultural text reflecting societal tensions but also a critical medium that exposes the unfinished struggle against colonial power structures in contemporary Indonesia.

6. Conclusion

This study finds that the film *Gowok: Kamasutra Jawa* (Javanese *Kamasutra*) represents issues of gender and sexuality that are still influenced by colonial legacies in Indonesia, particularly through interracial relations and beauty standards that reproduce power inequalities, such as the exoticization of Indonesian women and the dominance of light skin. These findings answer the research objective by demonstrating that a postcolonial approach is effective in uncovering historical power structures that still operate in media representations, while multiculturalism offers a normative framework to encourage more equal relations and respect for diverse identities. The implications of this study emphasize the important role of media, especially film, in challenging colonial stereotypes and building more inclusive representations by strengthening local narratives and women's agency. However, this study has limitations in the use of online secondary data and potentially subjective interpretive analysis. Therefore, further research is recommended to involve interviews with audiences or filmmakers and expand the study to more Indonesian films to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the representation of gender, sexuality, and interracial relations in the context of postcolonial Indonesia.

References

- Alawi, M. F. (2020). Artikulasi hasrat berpasangan dengan laki-laki kulit putih di kalangan perempuan Indonesia: Pembacaan poskolonial pada weblog *desisachiko.com*. *Al-Flam: Jurnal Komunikasi dan Penyiaran Islam*, 3(2), 61–74.
- Arnesen, E. (2001). Whiteness and the historians' imagination. *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 60, 3–32.
- Bennett, L. R., & Davies, S. G. (Eds.). (2014). *Sex and sexualities in contemporary Indonesia: Sexual politics, health, diversity and representations*. London, England: Routledge.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1994). The postcolonial and the postmodern: The question of agency. In *The location of culture* (pp. 171–197). London, England: Routledge.
- Blackwood, E. (2005). Gender transgression in colonial and postcolonial Indonesia. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 64(4), 849–879.
- Bonilla-Silva, E. (2000). "This is a white country": The racial ideology of the Western nations of the world-system. *Sociological Inquiry*, 70(2), 188–214.
- Gouda, F. (1993). The gendered rhetoric of colonialism and anti-colonialism in twentieth-century Indonesia. *Indonesia*, 55, 1–22.
- Hasrudin, T., & Sagena, U. (2023). The role of Indonesian government policy in shaping the competitive landscape of the southeast Asian beauty industry. *Research Horizon*, 3(4), 433–444.
- Hooks, K. L. (1992). Gender effects and labor supply in public accounting: An agenda of research issues. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 17(3–4), 343–366.
- Ifa, K., Sudrajat, A., & Tedjomurti, F. (2025). Warna kulit dan stratifikasi sosial: Perjuangan representasi di ruang media sosial TikTok. *Dimensia: Jurnal Kajian Sosiologi*, 14(2), 58–66.
- Izharuddin, A. (2016). *Gender and Islam in Indonesian cinema*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer.
- Izzati, R. A., Sari, M. N., Amin, E. Q., Aulida, N. A., Siahaan, R. V. B., Krisnawati, M., & Maghfiroh, A. (2025). Estetika kolonialisme: Bagaimana warna kulit putih terinternalisasi di tengah tren kecantikan di Indonesia. *Trivikrama: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial*, 11(8), 801–810.
- Kymlicka, W. (2003). Multicultural states and intercultural citizens. *Theory and Research in Education*, 1(2), 147–169.
- Lee, A. Y. B. (2022). *Malaysian cinema in the new millennium: Transcendence beyond multiculturalism* (Vol. 5). Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
- Mohanty, C. T. (1984). Under Western eyes: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses. *Boundary 2*, 333–358.
- Murtagh, B. (2013). *Genders and sexualities in Indonesian cinema: Constructing gay, lesbi and waria identities on screen*. London, England: Routledge.

- Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. (2013). *Coloniality of power in postcolonial Africa*. Oxford, England: African Books Collective.
- Olivotti, F. (2016). The paradox of exclusion and multiculturalism in postcolonial identity. *Consumption Markets & Culture*, 19(5), 475–496.
- Paramaditha, I. (2019). Narratives of discovery: Joshua Oppenheimer's films on Indonesia's 1965 mass killings and the global human rights discourse. *Social Identities*, 25(4), 512–522.
- Priyanka, G., & Sagena, U. W. (2024). Changing the stigma of women's beauty through an international contest for people with disabilities. *Research Horizon*, 4(2), 77–86.
- Puspa, R. (2010). Isu ras dan warna kulit dalam konstruksi kecantikan ideal perempuan. In *The 2nd International Symposium "Urban Studies, Culture, and History"* (pp. 312–323). Surabaya, Indonesia: Fakultas Ilmu Budaya Universitas Airlangga.
- Putra, M. K., & Rivaldy, T. M. P. (2025). Representasi perempuan sebagai subaltern dalam film *Gorwok: Kamasutra Jawa*. *Integrative Perspectives of Social and Science Journal*, 2(03 Juli), 4675–4679.
- Rattansi, A. (2011). *Multiculturalism: A very short introduction* (Vol. 283). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Said, E. W. (2001). *Orientalism: Western conceptions of the Orient*. London, England: Penguin Books. (Original work published 1978)
- Saraswati, L. A. (2013). *Seeing beauty, sensing race in transnational Indonesia*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Sawant, S. B. (2012). Postcolonial theory: Meaning and significance. In *Proceedings of National Seminar on Postmodern Literary Theory and Literature* (pp. 120–126).
- Suryaningsih, A. (2024). *Representasi identitas kulit perempuan ideal dalam iklan skincare* (Doctoral dissertation). IAIN Parepare, Indonesia.
- Wasista, R., & Putri, M. (2012). *Representasi kecantikan perempuan postkolonial dalam iklan televisi You C 1000 mg periode 2004–2011* (Doctoral dissertation). Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia.
- Williams, W. L. (1991). *Javanese lives: Women and men in modern Indonesian society*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Yulianingsih, D. (2017). *Representasi kedudukan tokoh perempuan dalam novel Bumi Manusia karya Pramoedya Ananta Toer (Tinjauan feminisme sosialis Iris Young)* (Doctoral dissertation). Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni, Indonesia.

Acknowledgment

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of individuals who supported the completion of this article.

Funding Information

This research did not receive any funding.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval and Originality Statement

Ethical approval was obtained for this study. The manuscript represents original work and has not been previously published, nor is it under consideration by another journal.

Data Disclosure Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.



Copyright: © 2025 by the authors.

This work is licensed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>).