



Women in Utilizing Free Time and Body Practices

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses how women, especially young women, utilize their free time. There are some interesting things related to the body practices carried out by girls to reconstruct their subjectivity. Body practices are studied and used as part of feminist bodywork in the context of girls' recreational culture. This paper aims to map the analysis of femininity based on young girls as citizens who are active, free to choose, and consume. How the multiple practices on their bodies in the process towards the ideal femininity requires competence and knowledge of appearance culture. Based on data collected from various seminars, and focus group discussions on 10 young girls, it was found that consumption allocation, body management, and beautification are the main elements of their leisure time use. Their recreational (pleasure) activities include reading magazines, gadgets, and TV movies, shopping for clothes and food, physical activity for exercise and dieting, applying beauty products, make-up, and changing hairstyles. This study uses practical body theory from Barker about diet and a slim body, Bene Ratih about white skin and body beauty, and Marcel Danesi about clothing and makeup. Physical culture is not primarily a need from the body, but beyond that, namely lifestyle, fashion, taste, and prestige. By describing the recreational activities (free time) of these young girls, researchers, practitioners, and parents must provide educational education that has a positive effect on the appearance culture of girls in their practice of daily life.

Keywords: *Body practices, Free time utilization, Women.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Dissatisfaction with body image is mostly expressed by the majority of women regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, status, body size, and body shape. Especially the young girl who always complains about their body condition such as they are not slim, fatty, having black or dark skin, wanting a white face, black and curly hair, and any other conditions that make them uncomfortable. There is dissatisfaction with their body image which makes them uncomfortable. The most powerful and influential representation of women is culture and media advertising "slim body, white skin" as a cultural norm. Therefore, women and young girls have their own way to stay beautiful, attractive, white, and thin.

The question is, how do women, especially young girls, have the experience and manage their physical body culture in everyday life? How the body is mediated to get an attractive appearance. How is the process towards the ideal femininity they want?

This paper aims to analyze femininity based on young girls as citizens who are active, autonomous, and free to

choose and consume. About how they explain the multiple practices on their bodies in the process towards the ideal femininity which requires competence and knowledge of appearance culture. In addition, this paper also aims to describe the recreational activities (free time) of these young girls so that practitioners and parents can provide educational education that has a positive effect on the performance culture of girls in the practice of daily life. This study uses body practice theory from Paris about diet and a slim body, Bene Ratih about white skin and body beauty, Marcel Danesi's theories regarding clothing and makeup (Barker, 2009).

Paris slimness and attention to diet and self-control have an important position in Western media culture and interest in body profiles that are more formed, slim, and soft. As a result, many advertisements point to the management of cellulite, fat, and a flat stomach in women. A slim body is a gendered body because slim means a beautiful woman (Barker, 2009). Slimness is the current ideal condition for female attractiveness, so girls and women generally tend to avoid eating unhealthy foods more than boys.

According to Sutrisno as written by in Bene Ratih stated that the female body has aesthetics (beauty) biologically, anatomically, and significantly for human survival (Dominic, 2009). The beauty of this body is glorified and interpreted in real as well as symbolic terms. For women, the beauty of this body must be cared for, maintained, and recognized so that they know how to treat their bodies (Sutrisno & Purwanto, 2005; Prianti, 2013; Yulianeta, 2021).

Clothing is important to maintain appearance. Buying or choosing clothes and discussing fashion is one way that feminine subjectivity is constructed. It may take a very long time to determine what to wear and it is necessary to check the entire wardrobe. Clothing is a sign that represents things such as personality, gender, race, social status, and character. In addition to clothing, it also functions as a protection of the body from cold and heat and for aesthetics, beauty, and forming one's self (Danesi, 2004; Arendt, Peter, & Beck, 2016).

Makeup is also essential for young girls to look beautiful and minimize flaws on the face or body. Practical make-up refers to the incorporation of beauty and points towards the commodification of gender. Girls who have learned the ability to do hairdressing, make-up, and beauty, generally often apply them in their daily life.

There are several theories about body practices that become feminine beauty projects. Neorealism encourages women to surrender themselves and their bodies as vehicles to achieve their life goals. This condition is driven by capitalists to be given freedom (free market), making an ideology that moves women to achieve their life goals. This view intersects with the issue of capitalism which is the ruler of the technological path, through the power of technology and the market can determine the ideal world according to the interests of their life (Francombe, 2014). Young women and girls are an important consumer group and the image of successful women is a profitable product to sell. It says that girls and women are important consumers because they have shopping habits and to improve their appearance and lifestyle status, they do not hesitate to buy those products (Abdullah, 2009). The culture of consumerism is closely related to globalization and consumer goods are tied to various meanings and identities as women who are successful, classy, and prestige. A successful woman is a profitable product to sell, meaning that the image of outward appearance as the identity of a successful woman is seen as surpassing everything. Lifestyle is everything and everything is a lifestyle. Successful women become commodities intended for the formation of a lifestyle (Abdullah, 2015).

Young girls have an integral role and position in the future economic prosperity of society as (Francombe, 2014). Young girls or teenagers become an important commodity in capitalist society. The current globalization accelerated by technology and mass media

refers to a series of interrelated economic activities and is understood as the practice of capitalism. Girls are exploited for economic purposes which are understood as the practice of capitalism, for example, advertisements that often use girls to sell their products. Women are used as objects of exploitation for gaining profits for the media entrepreneurs themselves (Prasanti, 2012).

2. METHOD

This study uses qualitative research methods by conducting focused discussions or known as focus group discussions (FGD), which focused discussions in a group to discuss certain problems in an informal atmosphere. By asking questions according to the topic of study and certain issues to get an agreement. Intensive meetings and in-depth interviews with young girls to get answers to questions related to body practices are carried out to reconstruct their subjectivity. Body practices that are learned and used as part of feminism's bodywork in the context of utilizing leisure and recreational (pleasure) culture. The FGD method is to explore an issue or special phenomenon from the discussion of a group of individuals that focuses on joint activities among the individuals involved to produce an agreement (Kitzinger, 1995). Literature studies were also conducted to find data through books, journals, magazines, and other references.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study follows the way of thinking Francombe as outlined in his writing "Learning to leisure: femininity and practices of the body" about how a girl uses her spare time and reconstructs their subjectivity. In this paper, Francombe conceptualizes body practices that are learned and used as part of feminism's bodywork in the context of a young girl's recreational (pleasure) culture. This is a body practice carried out by young girls as active, autonomous citizens, free to choose and consume (Francombe, 2014).

Based on a debate that distinguishes between girls as passive recipients of cultural education and young girls as active citizens, autonomous, free to choose and consume. How the young girl's body works to explain the complex relationship between agency choice, consumption, and subjectivity. There were 10 young girls selected as case studies in this study consisting of high school students, university students, and workers, with ages ranging from 15 to 20 years. Questions were asked about the allocation of consumption, body management, beautifying themselves, and the use of their leisure time. Their recreational (pleasure) activities include reading magazines, gadgets and TV, movies, shopping for clothes and food, physical activity for exercise and dieting, applying beauty products, make-up, and changing hairstyles.

Questionnaires are written questions to obtain information from respondents about what was done and known. Questions were asked about the allocation of consumption, body management, beautifying themselves, and the use of their free time. Below are the results from FGD:

- Their recreational (pleasure) activities include reading magazines, gadgets and TV, movies, shopping for clothes and food, physical activity for exercise and dieting, applying beauty products, make-up and changing hairstyles.
- The reason they do this activity is that there is dissatisfaction with their body image. Many young girls always complain about their body condition, whether it is not slim, fatty, black or dark skin, wanting white face, wanting curly and black hair, or other conditions that make them uncomfortable.

There are four ways to practice or work a young girl's body in utilizing her spare time, which are dieting and exercising, maintaining aesthetics, dressing, and applying make-up.

Diet and exercise: respondents use gadgets, advertising media, and TV as information about their appearance. To get a picture of young girls who are thin, fashionable, attractive, and glamorous, they buy products such as food, soap, shampoo, make-up, slimming, eat low-calorie ingredients and buy sports equipment. Diet and exercise choices are seen as aspects of self-appearance that require a slim body. Fat people are considered ugly and they refuse to be fat. They want the perfect body, such as a thin body, no wavy, good legs, and a flat stomach. Exercise and diet are believed to lose weight, slim, and healthy.

Maintaining appearance and dress: young girls buy or choose clothes and discuss fashion is one of the ways feminine subjectivities are constructed. They will take quite a long time to decide what to wear and need to check all the wardrobes and clothes according to the trending fashion.

Makeup: makeup is important for young girls, to look beautiful and minimize flaws on the face or body. In everyday life, girls use make-up and hairdos for their beauty, such as using lip gloss which is often used to protect lips from drying out.

Aesthetic style: for maintaining the aesthetic style of the body, knowledge, practice, and strategy are needed, namely make the body slim, white, soft, not bulky, flat stomach, black hair, sharp nose, thin lips, thick eyebrows, long legs, and so on. The beauty of this body is seen outwardly and as a fulfillment of a commercial lifestyle that emphasizes individual subjectivity, prestige, status, class, and consumerism.

Based on the results of data collection, processing, and analysis, the results provide answers to the problems posed in this study. Regarding the motivation for active

behavior of young girls in filling their spare time based on body needs, 90% of them are on a diet. With the total data acquisition, maintaining a slimmer body appearance (90%), flat stomach (80%), and not sagging (70%). Questions about the reasons or motivations for the behavior of young girls based on dietary needs, all answered that the body became light, healthy, and comfortable to wear any clothes that were not narrow, and it is appropriate to use clothes of any model. In addition to diet, they also limit food and exercise. The most common sports are gymnastics (70%), cycling (50%), and running or walking (60%). Exercise to maintain health and lose fat, in addition to social needs as well as the heart to be happy, and maintain relationships with friends, and family. Diet and exercise are also for solving problems to be healthy (90%), self-actualization (70%), self-confidence (90%), and getting rid of low self-esteem (40%). These young girls try to limit calorie foods, they answered (90%) eat low calories, eat little rice but lots of fruit and vegetables, and not having dinner.

The results of group questions regarding maintaining a dress appearance are that these young girls always want to look fashionable and not out of date by viewing advertisements (80%), TV shows (60%), and discussing with friends (70%). Based on the needs of these clothes are maintaining appearance (80%), comfort (80%), showing social status (40%), always following fashion (70%), socializing (80%), and increasing self-confidence (70%). The clothes that young girls prefer are those that are casual, comfortable to wear, not complicated, not missing trendy fashion, and affordable prices. Discussions with friends, watching TV, and advertisements, are the most effective media for them to get the right clothes. Since the pandemic, buying clothes online has become their choice because it is more practical and economical, even though most of them buy in stores while walking in the mall, especially if there is a discount. The clothes worn by artists or public figures are often a benchmark that this young girl follows in the fashion world. This changing fashion of clothes makes them become consumptive, buying clothes not based on functional needs but purely for the sake of fashion. Fashion is a style or habit of dressing, a kind of dress code that sets the standard of his lifestyle according to gender, age, class, economy, and so on. By maintaining this dress appearance, according to these young girls, they can be accepted in their social environment, increase self-confidence, and not miss trendy fashion.

The result of group questions regarding makeup is that young girls want to look beautiful, attractive, clean, white, fresh, healthy, and glowing. Having a glowing face is the main desire of young girls (80%), white skin (90%), and clean skin (70%). For this reason, they do routine maintenance at the salon (40%) and routine self-care at home (90%). Purchasing for daily care such as facial cleanser, night and day cream, facial vitamins, and daily make-up tools such as powder, powder base,

eyebrow pencil, lipstick, eyeliner, and eyelashes. Facial care is the main thing that is done by young girls because it is very important to maintain beauty. Viewing YouTube, advertisements, and TV is a source of knowledge to get tutorials about facial makeup and types and tools of makeup. Experiences from friends who are successful in facial care and exchanging information are also a reference to these young girls.

The results of grouping questions regarding maintaining the aesthetic style of the body do require knowledge, practice, and strategies, such as how to make this body slim, white, soft, not bulky, flat stomach, black hair, sharp nose, thin lips, thick eyebrows, long legs, and glowing face. Young girls do sports on holidays or in the evenings coming home from work in gymnasiums, running or walking in the sports field, cycling with a purpose in certain places, eating low calories, avoiding cholesterol-fat foods, avoiding dinner and lots of vegetables, and fruit, doing routine facial treatments, discussing fashion and make-up with friends, opening YouTube make-up tutorials, and going to the salon every now and then usually to do haircuts and wash face.

Thus, the body practices carried out by young girls in their spare time can be grouped based on the need for self-actualization (80%), increasing self-confidence (70%), improving health 80%, beauty (80%), and ideal body (90%). This is related to physiological, social, and psychological needs (safety, pleasure, and self-esteem). They are motivated by attractive beautiful faces and ideal bodies. Motivation is a tendency to behave selectively in a certain direction, and the behavior will persist until the goal is achieved. In this regard, it is shown from the behavior of young girls who assume that someone who participates actively tends to take action because they enjoy their behavior intrinsically.

Self-actualization in young girls can be seen from the maturity of how to use their free time to achieve the desire to get the ideal body. By getting the ideal body they feel able to fulfill their physical needs such as beauty, white, and slimness, so that they look attractive, especially to the opposite sex. In general, women feel like failures if they physically think they are not beautiful, therefore they are trying to be beautiful and attractive (Murwani, 2010). Having what they want, of course, will increase self-confidence because it is related to the results of a positive assessment of themselves. If men are asked about their desired partner, most of them want a beautiful woman than other criteria such as intelligence. It is the judgment of people, especially men, on the beauty of women, which makes young girls feel happier if they are considered beautiful. The reason can be seen in Figure 1.

According to the ideal body, women are socially constructed based on patriarchal and industrial ideologies related to women's bodies and beauty. The word "beautiful" becomes attached to women since the community constructs the attribution of beautiful

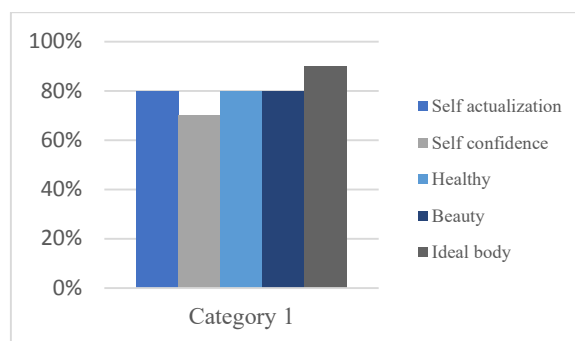


Figure 1 Reasons for women on doing body practices in free time.

terminology that is intended for every woman. Women always try to adjust their body shape to what social and cultural words say about the concept of beauty and health because women always judge their bodies in relation to the social and cultural environment outside of themselves (Hidajadi, 2000; Yulianeta, 2016). In addition, the existence of the ideal standard of women's beauty makes them no longer follow their role and nature, but are currently focused on one thing which is the ideal standard of the global community (Nurbaiti, 2021). Management of the body to achieve the ideal standard becomes so exhaustive today such as hair care, eyebrows, eyes, nose, lips, mouth, skin, stomach, and nails, breasts, waist, calves, feet, and leg hair. Even to maintain their health, they have to diet, eat low calories, exercise, not have dinner, reduce eating fatty foods, and increase their eating of fruit and vegetables. Efforts to manage this ideal body are what young girls do in utilizing their free time as a culture of recreation.

4. CONCLUSION

What women, especially young girls, do who always feel dissatisfied with their bodies and always complain about their body, appearance, and beauty which makes them uncomfortable. They make various efforts and strategies to maintain their appearance, such as exercise, diet, makeup, clothing, and maintaining an aesthetic style. Although this needs to be criticized as a lifestyle practice by exploring consumptive attitudes as an expression of commercial recreation which is only individual subjectivity and social status, prestige, class, and consumerism. They always keep abreast of the changing world of fashion and lifestyle. As a result, young girls buy more make-up clothes because they are victims of advertisements and media influence which eventually becomes consumerism. Their behavior shows that they have a need to maintain an ideal body condition to look beautiful, attractive, healthy, and have a sense of self-actualization and self-confidence. The behavior of the young girl shows that they have social, psychological, and physiological needs. By explaining the recreational activities to young girls, researchers, practitioners, and

parents must provide educational education or lectures that have a positive effect on the appearance of girls in their daily life practices. Do not let these young girls get caught up in the ideology of beauty and body care politicized by the advertisement of the products which results in profit for capitalism.

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