

CONSTRUCTION OF FAMILY AND GENDER STEREOTYPES IN PICTURE BOOKS ON THE PAUDPEDIA KEMDIKBUD WEBSITE

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INTRODUCTION

- Children are often compared to a blank slate, as they absorb everything they see, hear, and read, including children's literature.
- Written works for children, such as children's literature, are a medium for parents to instill values in their children.
- Children's literature is defined as a literary work written by adults for children to read with adult guidance. (Davis in Sarumpaet 2010:3).
- As a result, children's books contain ideological and social constructions that are common in society.
- One of the social constructions often found in children's stories is gender construction. This is present in the picture books on the official PAUDPEDIA website.



PAUDPEDIA is the official website of the Directorate of Early Childhood Education, under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. The website provides various information about early childhood education, including program information and reading materials for educators and children in the "story room" menu. The story room contains a variety of picture e-books that were printed and published in November 2022

(<https://paudpedia.kemdikbud.go.id>)

LITERATURE REVIEW

- Chamberlain (2011) analyzed gender stereotypes in 43 children's picture books that received the Caldecott Award between 2001 and 2011.
- Lee and Chin (2021) studied gender stereotypes in books produced by Native English Teacher (NET) Advisors in Hong Kong.
- Sari and Tisnawijaya (2021) analyzed gender stereotypes in picture books by Brown Watson.
- Caple (2022) examined gender stereotypes in picture books that won the 'Early Childhood' Book of the Year award from the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA).
- Layana (2021) discussed gender inequality in picture books published by the Anggun Kemdikbud Website.

METHOD

- This study used a qualitative descriptive analysis method with a semiotic approach.
- It employed the theory of family construction proposed by Murray Bowen, an American psychiatrist and psychologist. Bowen's theory states that a family can be understood as a system made up of several subsystems, such as the husband-wife subsystem, parent-child subsystem, and sibling subsystem. Each subsystem has different tasks and roles, but they are interconnected and influence one another.
- The study also used the theory of gender stereotypes initiated by Sandra Bem, an American social psychologist and feminist. According to Bem, gender stereotypes are descriptive and prescriptive demands placed on individuals based on their gender.
- The descriptive demands cause gender stereotypes to depict behaviors generally displayed by males or females in a society.
- According to Bem, the prescriptive demands direct individuals to play roles based on their gender over time.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Construction of the Father's Role as Male Gender in the Family

- Out of six books, only two, *My Water Bottle* and *Let's Fix Your Broken Toy!*, featured a father character.
- The father's appearance in *My Water Bottle* was not very significant, and he was depicted as passive.
- The narration describes the father as an unseen figure. In the book *Let's Fix Your Broken Toy!*, the father is shown participating in household or domestic matters.



FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Construction of the Mother's Role in Nurturing and Caregiving

- Mothers are depicted as the characters who interact most frequently with children. They serve as a discussion partner for children to solve their problems.
- Mothers frequently say the word "dear" to their children, which indicates their role as a provider of affection in the family.

Construction of the Mother's Role in the Domestic Sphere

- Mothers are mostly shown in the domestic sphere, inside the house. The jobs mothers do in the house are generally those identified with female gender stereotypes, such as cleaning the house, cooking, and sewing. When mothers are shown in the public sphere, their activities are still related to domestic matters.



FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Construction of Sibling Relationships

- Only three of the six books analyzed showed a relationship between siblings.
- These three books depicted a sibling relationship between two children, and no more.
- The relationships shown were between two brothers, a brother and a sister, and two sisters.
- The brother is positioned as a playmate. The sister is a discussion partner and a study partner.
- The older sister has a teaching and caring role.



FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Family Construction in Paudpedia Picture Books and Its Relationship with the Government's Vision

- The Paudpedia website, a program of the Directorate of Early Childhood Education, Primary, and Secondary Education within the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, has its own ideology regarding the ideal family portrait.
- The family model presented in the Paudpedia picture books is a family with one or two children. This aligns with the government's vision of limiting the number of children, a program by the National Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN) with the tagline "two children are enough".
- The roles are divided with the father as the family leader who works outside the home, while the mother is responsible for childcare and household duties. This construction is likely due to the social and cultural conditions of Indonesian society, which is still patriarchal.
- Indonesia ranks third as a "fatherless country," where there is a lack of father figures' involvement in children's lives. This is reflected in the books published by the Directorate General of Early Childhood Education, where the father figure is rarely shown, and when he is, his presence is not very significant.

CONCLUSION

- The division of roles is constructed with the father as the family leader who works outside the home, while the mother's role is inside the home, handling childcare and household duties.
- This construction is likely due to the patriarchal social and cultural conditions in Indonesian society.
- Indonesia is ranked third as a "fatherless country," where the father figure is not involved in children's lives. This is also reflected in the books published by the Directorate General of Early Childhood Education, where the father figure is rarely featured, and his presence is not very significant even when he is included.

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