



## Body Shaming Found in The Imperfect Movie: Karier, Cinta Dan Timbangan Written by Ernest Prakasa

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### Abstract

Imperfect: Karier, Cinta dan Timbangan is a movie about a body-shammed woman. A body shamming action refers to a humiliating action or comments toward an individual's physical condition. This research describes how the described body shamming in the movie. The researchers used a qualitative approach with the semiotics analysis method of Roland Barthes. The results found two body-shamming actions, verbal, and non-verbal actions. Then, the researchers analyzed both denotation and connotation meanings. The verbal body shamming includes any utterances about the sizes of the body and fat shamming. The researchers found these actions in six scenes of the movie. Second, the researchers found non-verbal body shamming in three scenes of the movie. From the analysis, the underlying myth of the movie was how a woman's beauty is observed from physical appearance and beautiful body over the skills of the woman.

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## INTRODUCTION

In recent days, beauty is inseparable from a woman's life. Beauty becomes something preferred by most women. Many women want to appear beautifully in the mass media. Thus, many advertisements for various beauty products appear to offer beautification services with their observable beauty standard. Naomi Wolf, cited (Fitryarini, 2010), explains that beauty, in the nineteenth century, someone beautiful was identical with facial beauty, rounded shoulder, and skinny body. However, in this twentieth century, a beautiful woman is identical with big butt and tights. In 1965, a British model, Twiggy, a very thin woman, surprised the world with her thin and small body. This effort was a deconstructive effort of plump and buxom images. These two phenomena compete to define beauty based on body shapes.

The concept of beauty has been being connected with the physical appearance of a woman's body. This concept indirectly becomes the social control for women. This matter established the perception of women based on ideal and acknowledged beauty standards by the community (Wolf, 2002). For many ages, women's body shapes are full of controversy, both biologically, sexual economically, religiously, culturally, and in literature (Chasanah et al., 2014)

Technological advancement facilitates humans to access any information from various media, including TV or smartphone. These media influence the value spread and influence the social perception of a phenomenon, for example, the ideal standards for men and women's body shapes (Sakinah, 2018). Media become a constructive factor in women's beauty perception and standard that leads to a social perspective. This matter makes many women compete to have body treatment and ignore their self-quality of them, such as intelligence, personality, and many more (Aprilita & Listyani, 2016). Besides that, many women are also willing to spend some money and time to

receive perfect beauty treatment (Nimah & Lestari, 2016).

In Indonesia, there are many standards of beauty for each region. However, technological development and advancement change the standards of beauty. One of them is mass communication media, such as a movie. A movie covers both moving figures with audible sounds to reach various social segments. Thus, a movie can influence the public and constructs the community with the delivered message (Sobur, 2009). A movie teaches the community that the standard of woman's beauty is based on the shows in the movie. Most movies show women with ideal body shapes, such as high body shape, straight hair, pointed nose, etc. These features shown in the movies seem to emphasize the physical beauty standards of women.

Thus, physical conditions that do not meet the beauty specification in movies are not considered interesting. This matter will potentially lead to body shaming. Body shaming refers to the standard perception of ideal body image constructed by the community due to some factors, including the existing media. The ideal constructed body image becomes the standard to judge other individuals whether they are ideal or not (Tri Fajariani Fauzia, 2019).

Body shaming refers to humiliating actions with negative comments about their body shapes. *Body shaming* may include comments about physical appearances, starting from the face, body, skin, and many more. The perpetrators compare the current features of an individual to other individuals' features. Then, it ends by humiliating the physical appearances both verbally and non-verbally (Hayuputri, 2018). Body Shaming probably leads to self-blaming. It refers to a condition in which an individual blames himself or herself. This action has negative effects, such as increased stress or committing suicide possibility (Wijaya et al., 2020).

(Indah Sari, 2020) found that body shaming could lead to *anorexia nervosa*. It refers to an anxious symptom that is strongly connected to emotions and behaviors, including

dietary behaviors and problems suffered by body-shamed female adolescents. (Hidayat, 2019) Found the correlation between body shaming and self-image of Institute of Health Care students at Payung. Most body-shamed respondents found negative self-image of their body shapes. They thought about the humiliations personally, so these humiliations influenced their confidence and dietary pattern.

Many movies also present this phenomenon, body shaming. They tell how body shaming occurs to anyone, anywhere, and anytime. For example, a movie titled *Imperfect: Karier, Cinta dan Timbangan* heretofore is referred *imperfect*. *Imperfect* Is the work of Ernest Prakasa, adapted from a best-seller book written by Meira Anastasia, titled *Imperfect: A Journey to Self-Acceptance*, released in December 2019. The movie was successful and could reach 2.6 million viewers. This movie talks about body shaming issues in human daily life, dealing with the physical appearance of the objects. Most objects are women.

From the explanations, the discussed problem in this research dealt with the analysis of body shaming found in *Imperfect* movie. This research describes body shaming found in *Imperfect: Karier, Cinta dan Timbangan* directed by Ernest Prakasa.

## METHODOLOGY

The applied method in this research was qualitative descriptive. Qualitative research prioritized the comprehension of inter-conceptual interaction with empirical reviews (Prasetyo, 2017). Descriptive research reveals qualitative information by describing the investigated matters carefully a phenomenon. This research does not only emphasize data collection but also analysis and interpretation (Fitria et al., 2017). This research applied the semiotics theory of Roland Barthes by examining the meaning of verbal and non-verbal body shaming with two stages of meaning: denotative and connotative meanings of the developed myth. The researchers took the data and data source from the texts in *Imperfect*

movie, in the forms of words, sentences, dialogs, and video clips, consisting of figures.

The techniques of collecting the data were (1) watching and observing the movie directly, (2) listening and observing all actions by paying attention to how the performed body shaming in the movie, (3) recording, categorizing, and expressing the important findings of verbal and non-verbal body shaming, and (4) screening, analyzing, and concluding the important data.

The data analysis techniques included (1) screening the relevant parts with the given topic about body shaming, (2) grouping the parts containing interpretations between verbal and non-verbal body shaming, (3) analyzing the screened parts with a semiotics approach, (4) interpreting the analysis results based on denotative and connotative meaning based on the community's myth, and (5) drawing conclusions from the analysis results.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Body Shaming in *Imperfect* Movie Directed by Ernest Prakasa

The researchers found two forms of body shaming: verbal and non-verbal body shaming. The verbal body shaming included humiliating the body sizes with some utterances, such as Paus terdampar, beda banget, ibu hamil, cantikan kurus, and ingat paha. The translations of the utterances are the sunken whale, the obvious difference, the pregnant woman, the beautiful slim, and mind your tight. The researchers also found fat shaming with a word of gendut or fat. The second form of body shaming is non-verbal body shaming, such as laughing, staring chauvinistically, and starring weirdly.

#### 1. Verbal Shamming

(Sakinah, 2018) explains two verbal and non-verbal body shaming. Verbal body shaming refers to a direct utterance that contains humiliation on an individual's appearance. It includes fat, thin, and skin shaming.

##### a) Fat Shamming

Fat-shaming refers to negative comments toward individuals with a fat body.

b) *Skinny or Thin Shaming*

Fat-shaming refers to negative comments toward individuals with a thin body.

c) *Hair Shaming*

Hair shaming refers to negative comments toward individuals with excessive hair growth on their bodies, including legs and arms. This shaming will be a serious matter for women because most communities think a hairy body is not excellent.

d) *Skin Shaming*

This shaming humiliates or negatively expresses some comments on individuals' skins, for example, darker or pale skins.

e) *Size Shaming*

This shaming refers to the humiliation of an individual's body size, for example too small, too short, too tall, or weird body. Here are the excerpts indicating the utterances found in the scenes.

a. **Size Shaming**



**Figure 1:** The phrase “stranded whale” at 03.50

Scene Figure 1 shows the scene of a mother waking up Rara, in the morning, inside Rara's bedroom (03.50). The mother wakes Rara since she is sleeping on her stomach so that her big body is visible. Her mother says, “Pusing Mama lihat kamu kayak paus terdampar!” (Translated: I dislike while you are sleeping like a stranded whale!) The expression of a stranded whale is a verbal body shaming against body size of Rara. At that time, the mother seems like creating an analogy that the fat Rara is like a stranded whale.

The phrase, stranded whale, is a verbal body shaming by analogizing the addressee's body with an oceanic mammal animal. The

denotative meaning: The phrase stranded whale spoken by Rara's mother while waking Rara up. The phrase is addressed to an individual with a fat body. On the other hand, the connotative meaning refers to the humiliation of an individual with a fat body shape. The spreading myth in most communities indicates that a beautiful female should be tall and slim.

Body size becomes an important matter for the beauty standards of women. In this case, an ideal body shape includes slim and tall body shapes. This standard makes women struggle to have ideal body shapes. This type of body shaming makes women struggle a lot to meet the beauty standard. The scene about Rara's mother, the entailing dialog, and the verbal body shaming are observable in current people's daily life. This verbal body shaming seems like having no limitations.



**Figure 2:** The phrase, is quite different (05.19)

Scene Figure 2 shows the scene of Rara chatting with her mother's friends. One of the mother's friends says, "Kalian tuh beda banget yah, Adek-Kakak." (Translated: both of you are quite different). The sayer compares Rara with her little sister, Lulu. Lulu is different from Rara because she has white skin, long hair, and a tall and ideal body shape. The phrase, quite different, is a verbal body shaming by comparing two different matters. In this comparison, the sayers usually underestimate a party. Comparing other people or being compared with other people are observable in our daily life. The perpetrators usually do it without thinking about the victims' feelings.

The phrase is spoken by one of Rara's mother's friends. The site background is in a dining room. At that time, Rara leaves her room with Lulu. Then, outside of the rooms,

there are the friends of her mother. After that, one of them utters the phrase. The phrase, quite different refers to two objects or subjects with opposite natures or features (denotation). The connotation meaning is - humiliating people and comparing people with other people with excellent conditions. The spreading myth says that beautiful women should have an ideal body shape, white skin, and long hair.



**Figure 3:** The phrase, pregnant woman (15.33)

In the contemporary era, body shaming is observable easily, both directly or indirectly via social media. People easily share their comments about other people's weaknesses. Recently, body shaming has a wider meaning because the realization of the body's judgment is varied. Body shaming is defined as criticizing actions, comments, physical appearance judgment, and much wider meaning (MA, 2019).

Based on the scene, figure 3, shows the scene in which Rara buys meals from a seller. When she passes her friends, one of them calls her pregnant woman with some dialog about nutrition for a pregnant woman. The phrase is a verbal body shaming addressed to a woman with a fat body. This matter describes that body shaming can occur anywhere and anytime, including in working place. The scene also describes how the sayer of the body-shaming should behave. Since the sayer is a woman, she should have respected and supported the woman. However, the sayer does it oppositely.

The denotation of "pregnant women," by one of the friends, named Irene, occurs in 15.33. The setting is a working office of Rara. Rara walks toward her desktop and passes Irene and Wiwid. At that time, Irene calls her with a

remark about a pregnant woman. The phrase, pregnant woman, means a woman that pregnant a baby. The connotative meaning is - humiliating an individual with a fat body. Thus, the spreading myth is - women with big bodies will seem ugly and not attractive.



**Figure 4:** The phrase, cantikan kurus is at (01.49.42)

Scene Figure 4 shows the scene in which Rara's mother's friends comment on her. Rara successfully loses her weight and becomes slimmer. However, she realizes that beauty does not guarantee her happiness. Rara does not think about her dietary habit so her body looks bigger and fat. At that time, many friends of her mother commented to her that she is beautiful if she is slim with the excerpt of "Kamu cantikan kurus." (Translated: you look so beautiful once you are slimmer). The word, cantikan kurus, is a verbal body shaming because it indicates that someone will be only beautiful if she is slimmer. In this case, the sayer wants to say that the ideal body shape must be slim instead of fat. Thus, it leads to a perception that fat is not interesting. This matter is frequently observable in current life. In the present time, many women are competing to purchase slimming products, such as visiting the gym and promoting plastic surgery to have an ideal body shape. This phenomenon occurs because the perpetrators of body shaming make women want to change their body shapes although they must spend money to reach it.

Every individual has a different image of ideal body shapes whether the body shapes are excellent or not. The image judgment of ideal body shape becomes the reference to judge individual bodies. Body shaming occurs when an individual judges other individuals' body

shapes based on the personal perception of the ideal. The humiliation occurs due to many lacks of an individual body shape by comparing the actual body shape of other individuals and the ideal body shape based on personal perception (MA, 2019). The scene describes the situation the facts, especially in Indonesia. The body shamming phenomenon is observable, including commenting and comparing with other people. The denotative phrase, *cantikan kurus*, spoken by the friends of her mother, named Wanda, in the central room indicates that being slim is beautiful and ideal. The connotative meaning is - having a fat body is ugly and not interesting. Thus, the spreading myth is - women with big bodies will seem ugly and not attractive.



**Figure 5:** The phrase, *ingat paha* (14.45)

Scene Figure 5 shows that Rara is in the middle of a dining room with her mother and sister. When Rara wants to have the second plate, her mother stops her. She reminds Rara that she has a fat body so she forbids her to eat more. The mother says, “Ingat Paha, Kaki!” (Translated: mind your tight sizes) One of the body shamming forms is verbal body shamming based on the shapes and the sizes. The utterance humiliates an individual’s body and warns the individual to not eat more since she has fat and big tights. The phrase is not spoken clearly, but it becomes a form of physical judgment.

The denotative meaning of the phrase, *ingat paha*, occurs at 14.45. The setting is in a dining room where Rara is with her mother and Lulu, her sister. Her mother stops Rara to take the second plate by saying, *ingat paha*. The mother says so because Rara has bigger tights than the ideal person. The connotative meaning of the utterance is - humiliating an individual's

physical appearance since the individual has a fat body shape. The spreading myth says that women must treat their bodies to be ideal, tall, and slim.

## b. Fat Shamming



**Figure 6.** The phrase, *Gendut*, at 04.37

Scene Figure 6 shows the scene in which Rara meets her mother's friends. They directly comment Rara who has just left her bedroom to go to work. One of them says, “kamu gendutan ya.” (Translated: you look fatter) The phrase, look fatter, is a verbal body shamming addressed to an individual with a fat body shape. The scene also describes real life, especially experienced by women. Most women become body shamming objects because many people women must be perfect. Thus, they must have beautiful body shapes. This matter is easily observed in our surroundings, such as schools, playgrounds, and at home. In the movie, Rara becomes the victim of body shamming at home done by her closest people. It indicates that body shamming can occur anytime, anywhere, and on anyone.

The denotation meaning of fat or *gendut* spoken by Diah, her mother's friend, at 04.37, occurs in the dining room when her mother is with aunt Olga. *Gendut* or fat refers to a fatty or big appearance of an individual. The connotative meaning is - humiliating other individuals that have big body shapes and consider the shapes as non-ideal shapes. Thus, the spreading myth is - women with big bodies will seem ugly and not attractive.

## 2. Non-Verbal Shamming

The researchers also found non-verbal shaming. The perpetrators of the non-verbal body shaming are online drivers and a passenger. The driver receives an order from a passenger with a fat body. Then, when the passenger gets on his motorbike, he directly checks his tire (Sakinah, 2018). It is visible in the following scene.



**Figure 7.** An action of laughing at 04.38

Scene Figure 7 shows two friends of Rara's mother are commenting on her body shape getting fatter. The friends of her mother also laugh at Rara's body shape. From this finding, body shaming can also occur nonverbally. The finding shows the friends of the mother do not humiliate Rara with verbal action. However, they do it with non-verbal actions, laughing. Their actions indicate that they are happy by humiliating other people. For Indonesian people, laughing at other individuals is a humiliation. This action is also impolite to do.

Based on the denotative background, the scene occurs in a dining room when Rara is with her mother's friends. When Rara runs into the friends of her mother, the friend of her mothers are laughing at her because she is fat, dark-skinned, and curly-haired (04.38). In this case, laughing indicates a humiliating action. The connotation meaning tends to humiliate Rara's body shape. The spreading myth says that a beautiful woman's appearance should receive excellent attention and treatment.



**Figure 8.** An action of cynic starring at 11.28

Scene Figure 8 shows a scene of three friends of Dika inviting him to go hang out to celebrate his birthday. However, Dika denies it because he will take Rara home. His friends are surprised and stare at him. They ask, "She is your girl?" They do not believe that Rara is Dika's girl. They stare cynically due to Rara's appearance. This non-verbal body shaming occurs due to a cynic stare toward an individual. For example, Dika's friends toward Rara. They stare cynically because they do not believe that Rara is Dika's girlfriend since Rara is fat and does not fit to go with Dika.

The denotation of cynic starring occurs on a short-haired female with glasses. She stares cynically and seems to not believe that Dika prefers a woman with an ugly appearance and fat body shape. The cynic stare refers to a disliking stare while seeing other people. The connotation meaning is - humiliating with a disliking stare. The perpetrator also does not believe that Dika prefers a fat woman to her. The spreading myth says that a beautiful woman's appearance should receive excellent attention and treatment.



**Figure 9.** An action indicating a "Weird Stare" at 17.38

Scene Figure 9 shows a scene of two people who are having lunch while playing on their smartphones. Then, Rara and her friends come and ask whether they can sit around them or not. When Rara asks them, one of them stares at Rara weirdly due to Rara's appearance. Then, he asks Rara to go find another chair while saying that his friend is coming soon. This action is a non-verbal body shaming done by the men since Rara's body shape does not look interesting to them. Thus, they deny Rara to sit together with them.

The denotation of "weird stare" by Rara's job mate, at 17.38, occurs in a dining room. The weird stare occurs since Rara's appearance is fat so he does not allow Rara to sit at the table. The weird stare refers to a situation in which an individual looks at something strangely or uncommon matter that an individual usually sees. The connotative meaning is - humiliating since the stare is targeted at the eyes and the forehead of other people. The perpetrator does it because the perpetrator finds an untreated body shape of Rara. The spreading myth says that a beautiful woman's appearance should receive excellent attention and treatment.

Based on the explanation, the denotative meaning in the movie describes the story of a woman receiving body shaming from the surrounding people. The connotative meaning in this movie emphasizes that beauty is not about physical appearance, but how individuals can accept and feel grateful. Then, based on the semiotics method of Roland Barthes, some myths occurred due to the second level of meaning. In this case, the appearing myth is the measurable beauty standard of women based on physical appearance and ideal body shape. Thus, women are considered beautiful if they have a tall body, straight hair, white skin, pointed nose, etc. This matter spreads in the community and becomes an attached matter to the community that beauty is about physical appearance.

This matter goes in line with beauty standards in Indonesia. The females of Indonesia also attempt to meet the beauty

standard with various efforts. The physical size becomes the most significant matter to determine a female beauty. This matter becomes a beauty myth.

The movie describes a life of a woman that receives body shaming due to her appearance. Most people think that their body shapes are imperfect so her skills are considered low than her look. This matter makes women change their appearances although they may also find the treatment painful.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the movie, with the focus on body shaming and two stages of meaning, denotation, and connotation, the researchers found two types of body shaming. They are verbal and non-verbal body shaming. The verbal body shaming includes body size and fat shaming found in six scenes, such as stranded whale, pregnant woman, remember your tight, very different, think is beautiful, and fat. The non-verbal body shaming in three scenes of the movie, includes laughing, staring cynically, and starring weirdly. From the analysis, the underlying myth of the movie was how a woman's beauty is observed from physical appearance and beautiful body over the skills of the woman.

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