## Pakistan Journal of Life and Social Sciences
www.pjlss.edu.pk

**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

# Women in Coffee Shops: Negotiating Gender Roles and Transforming Public Sphere in West Aceh, Indonesia

Khori Suci Maifianti[1], Sarwititi Sarwoprasodjo[2], Rilus A kinseng[3], Dwi Sadono[4]

[1]Department of Science, Communication and Community Development, Faculty of Human Ecology IPB University, Indonesia. Lecturer of Universitas Teuku Umar, Awardee BPI,

[2,3,4] Department of Science, Communication and Community Development, Faculty of Human Ecology IPB University, Indonesia

| ARTICLE INFO | ABSTRACT |
|---|---|
| | This study explores the evolving role of women in coffee shops in West Aceh, Indonesia, highlighting these spaces as microcosms of public spheres where gender roles are negotiated and societal norms are reshaped. Drawing on Butler's gender performativity theory, the research examines how women's active participation in traditionally male-dominated public spaces challenges conventional norms and fosters broader social transformations. Through qualitative analysis, the study reveals that women engage in diverse social, intellectual, and professional activities within coffee shops, asserting their agency and expanding the boundaries of public engagement. Despite encountering cultural and social barriers, their consistent presence signals a gradual shift in gender dynamics and redefines the role of women in public spaces. By framing coffee shops as arenas for intellectual discussion and identity negotiation, this study underscores their significance in fostering inclusivity and transforming publicness in West Aceh. |

## INTRODUCTION

Coffee shops in West Aceh serve as a microcosm of public space, reflecting the complex negotiations of gender and democratic participation within the community. Historically, these venues have been predominantly male-dominated, functioning as sites for discussions on social, political, educational, and community issues. This gendered dynamic mirrors broader societal norms that often confine women to domestic roles, thereby limiting their engagement in public discourse (Krasniqi, 2019; Maulida, 2021) However, the socio-cultural landscape of West Aceh has undergone significant transformations, particularly following periods of conflict and natural disasters, which have catalyzed a shift in the role of women within the public sphere (Roviana et al., 2021). The increasing presence of women in coffee shops signifies a challenge to entrenched gender boundaries, suggesting that these spaces are not merely venues for social interaction but also arenas for negotiating identity and power dynamics.

The concept of public space is critical in understanding how coffee shops function as sites of gender negotiation. According to Ocktaviana and Kamaruzzaman Sullivan (2022), public spaces facilitate the negotiation of identity and gender roles, allowing for the reconfiguration of societal expectations. This aligns with Butler's theory of gender performativity, which posits that gender is a social construct shaped through repeated actions and interactions (Tempel & Neumann, 2016). In this

context, women's participation in coffee shops can be interpreted as a performative act that disrupts traditional gender norms, suggesting a gradual redefinition of who is entitled to occupy these spaces.

 The implications of this shift are profound, as coffee shops not only serve as social venues but also act as catalysts for gender change within West Aceh's society. Globally, similar phenomena can be observed in various contexts where women have begun to reclaim public spaces traditionally dominated by men. For instance, in urban areas of India, women have increasingly utilized public parks and cafes as sites for social interaction and political engagement, challenging existing gender norms (Downey & Neyazi, 2014). These examples highlight the relevance of the West Aceh case within the broader international discourse on gender and public space, emphasizing the universal struggle for women's rights and representation in public life. The purpose of this research is to explore the transformation of gender dynamics within coffee shops in West Aceh and to examine the implications of these changes for democratic practices and policies. By analyzing how women navigate and reshape these spaces, this study aims to contribute to the understanding of the interplay between gender performance, public space, and democracy. The findings will provide valuable insights for policymakers, activists, and scholars interested in gender studies, public space utilization, and democratic engagement in post-conflict societies.

The increasing presence of women in coffee shops in West Aceh represents a significant shift in gender dynamics, challenging traditional norms and expanding the boundaries of public participation. This study seeks to illuminate these dynamics, offering a nuanced understanding of how the transformation of public spaces can have profound implications for gender equality and democratic practices. As women assert their right to occupy these spaces, they not only challenge existing power structures but also contribute to the reconfiguration of public discourse, paving the way for more inclusive and equitable societal norms.

## 2. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative method with a descriptive phenomenological approach aimed at understanding the gender performance of women in coffee shops in West Aceh and how their interactions in this public space challenge and negotiate social and gender norms. The choice of a qualitative method is justified as it allows for an in-depth exploration of social phenomena through the experiences, perspectives, and behaviors of informants (Davidsen, 2013). This approach is particularly effective in capturing the nuanced ways in which women navigate and redefine their roles within traditionally male-dominated spaces (Skalski & Aanstoos, 2023).  The study will involve women aged 20-45 years who actively visit coffee shops for various social and professional activities, thereby ensuring a diverse range of experiences and insights.

The purposive sampling technique will be utilized to select relevant research subjects based on specific criteria, with the number of informants ranging from five to eight for in-depth interviews. This sample size is deemed sufficient to achieve data saturation while allowing for rich, detailed accounts of individual experiences (Sinfield et al., 2023). Data collection will be conducted through in-depth interviews and participatory observations, which are essential for capturing the complexities of women's interactions in coffee shops (Sale, 2022). Semi-structured interviews will facilitate the exploration of informants' experiences, views, and reflections regarding their presence in coffee shops, including aspects such as the frequency of visits, activities, social interactions, and experiences related to gender stereotypes.

In addition to interviews, participatory observation will be employed to directly observe the patterns of women's interactions in coffee shops. This method allows researchers to gain insights into how women engage with both men and other women, as well as the activities they undertake while in these spaces (Bliss, 2016). The combination of these methods is expected to yield a comprehensive

understanding of the dynamics at play within coffee shops as sites of gender performance and social negotiation.

The data obtained will be analyzed using thematic analysis methods, which involve a systematic process that includes interview transcription, data coding, theme grouping, and in-depth analysis related to gender performance issues, social norm negotiations, and the role of coffee shops as evolving social spaces (Oblak, 2021). To ensure the validity of the data, this study will employ data triangulation by integrating interview and observation methods, as well as conducting member checking to verify the results of the interpretation with informants (Tsap et al., 2018). Researchers will also prioritize the anonymity and confidentiality of informants to protect their privacy and ensure voluntary participation without coercion.

This research acknowledges certain limitations; specifically, the results may not be generalizable to other communities due to its exploratory nature and focus on the specific context of West Aceh. However, it is anticipated that this study will provide in-depth insights into how women in West Aceh navigate a previously male-dominated public space, challenge traditional gender norms, and contribute to broader social changes. By employing a descriptive phenomenological approach, this research aims to illuminate the lived experiences of women in coffee shops, thereby contributing to the understanding of gender dynamics in public spaces.

## 3. RESULTS

The study of gender dynamics within public spaces, particularly coffee shops in West Aceh, reveals a complex interplay of social, cultural, and economic factors that influence women's participation. This research integrates an intersectional approach, examining how class, religion, and culture shape women's experiences and interactions in these spaces. In patriarchal societies, public spaces often reflect existing power dynamics, where men dominate discussions and women are relegated to passive roles. This phenomenon is well-documented in feminist geography, which emphasizes the importance of understanding spatial dynamics in relation to gender and power structures (Mela & Tousi, 2023).

In West Aceh, coffee shops have historically been perceived as male-dominated environments where men gather to discuss political and social issues. Yet, recent shifts indicate that women are increasingly entering these spaces, thereby contesting established gender boundaries. This transformation can be understood through Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity, which posits that gender is not an innate characteristic but a social construct maintained through repeated actions (Westbrook & Schilt, 2014). Women's participation in coffee shops can thus be seen as a form of gender performance that redefines their roles and identities within society, challenging the traditional norms that have historically confined them to the domestic sphere (Thorsen & Sreedharan, 2019).

The intersection of class, religion, and culture plays a crucial role in shaping women's experiences in coffee shops. For instance, women from lower socio-economic backgrounds may face additional barriers to accessing these spaces due to financial constraints or societal expectations regarding their roles (Cindoglu & Unal, 2015). Similarly, religious norms can dictate acceptable behavior for women in public, influencing their willingness to engage in discussions or assert their opinions (Mela & Tousi, 2023). These factors highlight the importance of an intersectional lens in understanding the complexities of women's participation in public spaces, as they navigate the interplay of various identities that inform their experiences (Thorsen & Sreedharan, 2019)

Comparative studies from other regions further emphasize the relevance of these findings. In Southeast Asia, for example, women's participation in public spaces has been similarly constrained by cultural and religious norms. In Malaysia, women have begun to reclaim public spaces traditionally dominated by men, using cafés and community centers as platforms for social and

political engagement (Cindoglu & Unal, 2015). This phenomenon is echoed in other patriarchal societies, where women are increasingly asserting their presence in public life, challenging existing power structures, and advocating for their rights. These comparative cases underscore the universality of the struggle for women's rights and representation in public spaces, reinforcing the significance of the West Aceh context within the broader international discourse (Westbrook & Schilt, 2014).

The activities of women in coffee shops not only reflect shifts in gender dynamics but also embody core democratic values such as freedom of expression and inclusivity. By engaging in discussions on social, political, and economic issues, women contribute to the public discourse that is essential for a functioning democracy (Mela & Tousi, 2023). The presence of women in these spaces signifies a move towards more inclusive public participation, where diverse voices can be heard and valued. This aligns with the notion that public spaces should serve as platforms for civic engagement and social change, fostering an environment where all individuals, regardless of gender, can participate in shaping their communities (Thorsen & Sreedharan, 2019).

Moreover, the role of coffee shops as informal meeting places for women facilitates community building and networking. Research indicates that these spaces provide a sense of security and comfort, enabling women to express themselves freely and engage in meaningful conversations (Cindoglu & Unal, 2015). The relationships formed in these environments can lead to lasting friendships and support networks, illustrating the integral role of coffee shops in women's social lives. This aspect is particularly important in the context of Aceh, where traditional norms may limit women's opportunities for social interaction outside the home (Westbrook & Schilt, 2014).

Despite the progress made in women's participation in public spaces like coffee shops, significant challenges remain. Women continue to navigate various barriers, including gender stereotypes and social pressures that restrict their freedom (Mela & Tousi, 2023). Although women are increasingly frequenting coffee shops, they still contend with strict social norms, such as expectations regarding their behavior and interactions with men. This study emphasizes that while women may occupy public spaces, patriarchal norms persist and are challenging to alter fundamentally (Thorsen & Sreedharan, 2019).

In this context, the geosemiotic approach becomes a valuable tool for understanding how these public spaces, particularly coffee shops, influence women's experiences. The physical attributes of coffee shops—such as decorations, signage, and layout play a significant role in shaping the social meanings attached to these spaces (Cindoglu & Unal, 2015). Sensory experiences within these spaces further contribute to women's perceptions of community and their sense of belonging. Studies have shown that the semiotic landscape of coffee shops includes multilingual signs and diverse cultural elements that reflect the identities of their patrons (Mela & Tousi, 2023).

The transformation of coffee shops into more inclusive spaces for women in West Aceh can also be linked to broader socio-political changes occurring in the region. As women increasingly assert their rights and demand equal participation in public life, coffee shops have become sites of resistance against traditional gender roles (Westbrook & Schilt, 2013). This shift not only empowers women but also encourages a re-evaluation of societal norms that have historically marginalized their voices (Thorsen & Sreedharan, 2019).

Furthermore, the economic aspect of coffee shops cannot be overlooked. As more women enter the workforce and gain financial independence, their ability to frequent coffee shops and engage in public discourse increases (Mela & Tousi, 2023). This economic empowerment is crucial in challenging the patriarchal structures that have long dictated women's roles in society. The intersection of economic factors with gender dynamics highlights the importance of understanding women's participation in

public spaces as a multifaceted issue that requires a comprehensive approach (Cindoglu & Unal, 2015).

This interplay between space and identity emphasizes how women navigate their social world through consumption in these environments, balancing personal freedom with societal expectations.In addition to their role in consumption, coffee shops significantly contribute to community building among women. They serve as informal meeting places where women can connect, share experiences, and build networks. Research has highlighted that these spaces provide a sense of security and comfort, enabling women to express themselves freely and engage in meaningful conversations (Mardatillah et al., 2023). Coffee shops often host events or activities that encourage social interaction, such as book clubs or art fairs. These gatherings not only enhance the communal aspect but also empower women by providing platforms for self-expression and collaboration (Kibtiah & Medeleine, 2023). The relationships formed in these environments can lead to lasting friendships and support networks, illustrating the integral role of coffee shops in women's social lives.

The advent of digital technology has further transformed the role of coffee shops in women's lives. Many establishments now offer Wi-Fi and charging stations, making them popular locations for remote work and study sessions (Yeşiltaş et al., 2016). This integration of physical and digital spaces allows women to balance personal and professional lives while remaining connected to their communities. Additionally, some coffee shops align themselves with ethical consumption frameworks, attracting socially conscious consumers. Women are often drawn to establishments that prioritize sustainability and ethical sourcing, reflecting a broader trend toward responsible consumerism (Mutiarani et al., 2023). This intersection underscores how coffee shops function not only as spaces for relaxation but also as venues for driving social change through collective consumption practices.

Despite the progress made in women's participation in public spaces like coffee shops, significant challenges remain. Research demonstrates that women often navigate various barriers, including gender stereotypes and social pressures that restrict their freedom (Kumbara et al., 2023). Although women are increasingly frequenting coffee shops, they still contend with strict social norms, such as time constraints and expected behaviors in these spaces. This study emphasizes that while women may occupy public spaces, patriarchal norms persist and are challenging to alter fundamentally.

In this research, Judith Butler's gender performative theory serves as the primary theoretical framework for analyzing how women in West Aceh utilize public spaces, such as coffee shops, to challenge traditional gender norms. Furthermore, this study examines how coffee shops function as social spaces where gender norms are negotiated and how women's presence in these environments can foster broader social change. By integrating gender performative theory with development communication perspectives, this research aims to contribute significantly to understanding the dynamics of social and gender change in West Aceh.

This study involved five informants who participated in in-depth interviews with the researchers. The informants represented diverse professional backgrounds and age ranges, yet they shared a commonality in that they frequently engaged in discussions within coffee shops. Prior to the interviews, the researchers conducted ethnographic observations of communication and communicative actions. After confirming that the informants engaged in communicative actions, in-depth interviews were conducted. All informants provided relevant data, which was revealed through their quotes. However, the researchers selected four main themes for this article, which were subsequently analyzed using Judith Butler's gender performative theory.

According to Butler's theory, gender is not an innate characteristic but rather the result of actions that are continuously repeated. The presence of women in coffee shops, spaces historically

dominated by men, exemplifies a gender performance that challenges social norms. This phenomenon gradually alters perceptions of women's roles in the public sphere, expands the boundaries of traditional gender roles, and opens opportunities for women to engage in social, professional, and intellectual discussions. Through this research, it becomes evident that coffee shops not only serve as venues for consumption but also as social and intellectual platforms that reflect the evolving role of gender in society.

In conclusion, the findings of this research highlight the transformative potential of coffee shops as public spaces for women in West Aceh. By integrating an intersectional approach, this study reveals how class, religion, and culture shape women's experiences and participation in these environments. The comparative analysis with other regions underscores the relevance of these findings within the global discourse on gender and public space. Furthermore, the activities of women in coffee shops reflect core democratic values, emphasizing the importance of inclusivity and freedom of expression in fostering a vibrant public sphere. As women continue to assert their presence in these spaces, they challenge traditional norms and contribute to the ongoing negotiation of gender roles, paving the way for broader social change.

## GENDER PERFORMANCE OF WOMEN

The analysis of qualitative data represented through the project map shows the relationship between the concepts identified in women's behavior in coffee shops. Each node in the project map describes the category or code that appears during the analysis process, whereas the lines connecting the nodes reflect the interrelationships between those categories. The main categories found include "Duration at the Coffee Shop," "Visit Frequency," "Domination in Discussions," and "Activities in Coffee Shop."

These findings show that the activities of coffee shop visitors are not only limited to social activities but also include in-depth discussions, learning, self-development, and professional activities. In this context, coffee shops function as more than just a place to relax; they have become a social platform where various intellectual, social, and professional interactions take place.

Several categories identified, such as the duration of visits and frequency of attendance, showed differences in the patterns of women's participation in discussions and activities in coffee shops. The duration in a coffee shop measures how long an informant stays in the place, while the frequency of visits measures how often they come. The category of discussion dominance reveals a person's involvement in the conversation, whether they are leading or participating in the discussion. Activity in a coffee shop measures what is done during a visit, from daily to work-related activities or relaxation.

These four categories are interrelated and focus on aspects of time, habits, influence, and types of activities. The combination of these factors provides a comprehensive picture of the role of coffee shops in women's lives, in both social and intellectual spaces.
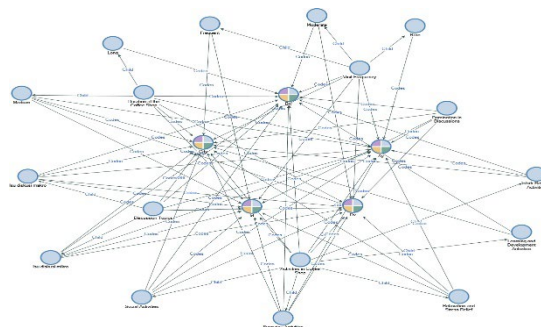


Figure 1 on the project map illustrates the relationships between concepts identified from the results of the qualitative data analysis. Each node represents a category or code discovered during the

analysis process, whereas the lines connecting the nodes reflect the relationships or interconnectedness between those categories. Some of the key categories identified include "Duration at the Coffee Shop," "Visit Frequency," "Domination in Discussions," and "Activities in Coffee Shop."

Overall, this shows that visitor behavior and activities are not limited to ordinary social activities but also include in-depth discussions, such as learning, self-development, and work-related activities. This analysis provides insight into how coffee shops not only function as a place to relax but also as a social space where professional interaction, personal development, and work activities take place. In this context, coffee shops are not only places for the consumption of food and drinks but also platforms where various social interactions, intellectual discussions, and work activities take place.

The "Duration at the Coffee Shop" category measures the duration or length of time a person is in a coffee shop, while "Visit Frequency" measures how often a person visits a coffee shop. The "Domination in Discussions" category indicates a person's involvement in a discussion that takes place in a coffee shop, identifying whether a person dominates the discussion because they have greater social power or because they feel more comfortable in the space. This category also measures how influential a person is in social interactions, especially in discussions. "Activities in Coffee Shop" measures the activities that a person does while in a coffee shop.

Activities in the café are connected to several other categories such as "Everyday Activities," "Work-Related Activities," and "Relaxation and Stress Relief." This shows that cafés function as places where people engage in a variety of activities, from work to relaxation. The connection with "Learning and Development Activities" and "Social Activities" shows that cafes are also spaces for activities related to social or professional learning.

| | Cdy | Ay | Id | Dv | Bw |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| These four categories are interrelated, although the focus is different: duration, habits, influence, and type of activity. This suggests that a person's experience in a café is not only determined by one factor, but by a combination of the duration of the visit, the frequency of the visit, participation in the discussion, and the type of activity carried out there. Coffee shops, traditionally considered a male-dominated space, are now also a space for women to engage in social activities, intellectual discussions, and self-development. In this context, women's involvement in coffee shops not only changes the way public spaces are understood, but also expands the boundaries of traditional gender roles. Researchers can analyze that all have performance in public spaces or coffee shops, only those who have different visit frequencies with the duration of their coffee shops. Meanwhile, dominance in discussions, discussion issues and social activities are all carried out. The following are the results of the analysis of each informant: <br> Gender Performance of Women | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Visit Frequency** | | | | | |
| Rare | × | √ | × | × | × |
| Moderate | × | × | × | √ | √ |
| Frequent | √ | × | √ | × | × |
| **Duration at the Coffee Shop** | | | | | |
| Long | √ | × | × | × | × |
| Medium | × | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| **Discussion Topics** | | | | | |
| Isu diskusi mikro | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Isu diskusi makro | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Domination in Discussions | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| **Activities in Coffee Shop** | | | | | |
| Learning And Development Activitie | √ | × | × | × | √ |
| Work-Related Activities | √ | √ | × | × | √ |
| Relaxation and Stress Relief | √ | √ | √ | √ | × |
| Social Activities | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Everyday Activities | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |

The above table shows information on women's gender performance in various categories related to their interactions in coffee shops. Cdy and ID are informants who often go to coffee shops. This informant goes to a coffee shop daily. Cdy spends long periods of time in cafés with infrequent visits but engages in a variety of activities, including discussion and dominance in discussions. He also has a fairly wide involvement in activities. Ay visited the café and spent a moderate amount of time there. He is also dominant in discussions and is active in various activities, especially in work, relaxation, and social activities. Id often visited cafés and spent long periods there. Despite dominating the discussion, ID tends to engage in social activities and relaxation more than professional activities. **Dv** often visits cafés but spends moderate time there. Like Id, Dv engages in social activities and relaxation but not in study or work activities. **Bw** rarely visits cafés, but when he leaves, he engages in a variety of activities, especially those related to learning, work, and society, although he is not much involved in relaxation activities. This table shows that each informant had a different pattern of behavior in their interactions in the café. There were differences in the frequency of visits, duration, dominance in discussions, and activities carried out in cafés. Some informants such as **Cdy and Id** were more involved in discussions, while others such as **Ay and Bw** had more diverse activity patterns.

## GENDER SUBVERSION

Concept Map of Gender Subversion in the Context of Women's Use of Coffee Shops. Each node in this diagram symbolizes various categories or codes related to women's behavior in utilizing coffee shops. Some of the key categories identified included "Women Holding Work Meetings," "Women Lead Discussions," "Non-Traditional Role Playing," as well as other variables such as "Women Spend a Long Time," "Women Comes Alone," and "Women Often Go."

The lines connecting the nodes illustrate the relationships between the codes and show the interconnectedness between categories, providing a complex picture of how women take on different roles, both traditional and non-traditional, in public spaces such as coffee shops. The diagram highlights that some women not only socialize but also lead discussions, conduct work meetings, or even take on leadership roles in their communities, challenging traditional gender norms.
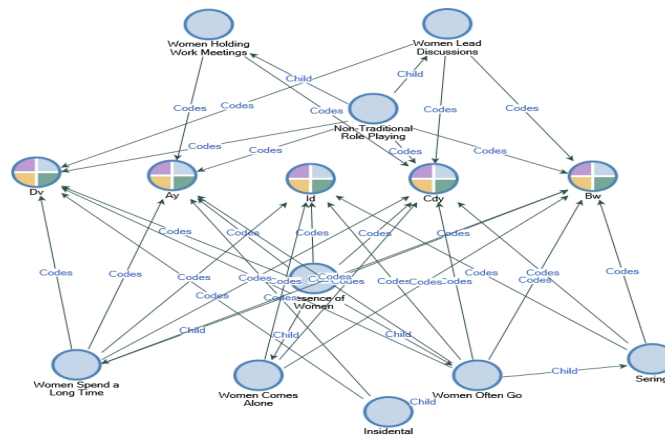
| Gender Subversion | Cdy | Ay | Id | Dv | Bw |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Presence of Women | | | | | |
| Women Often Go | | | | | |
| Insidental | × | √ | × | √ | × |
| Sering | √ | × | √ | × | √ |
| Women Comes Alone | √ | × | √ | × | √ |
| Women Spend a Long Time | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Non-Traditional Role Playing | | | | | |
| Women Lead Discussions | √ | × | × | √ | √ |
| Women Holding Work Meetings | √ | √ | × | × | × |

From the table above, researchers conclude that women use coffee shops frequently and incidentally, depending on their empty schedules and appointments. Only those who often go to coffee shops are brave and feel comfortable coming to coffee shops alone and performing their usual activities. Only some women led this discussion because of the spirit of leadership and having a high position in their community. For example, cdy is the chairman of the West Aceh KPU and an activist, so he is used to being a discussion leader. Bw is the head of the division in the student organization, while DV is a leader in his community and has a position in his workplace, so they know a lot of information. In terms of using coffee shops as workspaces, this applies only to cdy and ay. Cdy always does his work routine at a coffee shop, while ay chooses a coffee shop as a comfortable place to work overtime.

## MAINTAINING NORMS

This theme refers to how coffee shops function as places where established social norms are maintained and sometimes renegotiated. In this context, coffee shops function not only as social spaces where interactions take place but also as spaces where cultural values, traditions, and social norms are maintained by the community. In this data processing, the researcher concluded that there are five (5) categories in maintaining norms in coffee shops: Preservation of Social Norms, Guardian of Community Norms, Reinforcement of Traditional Gender Roles, Maintenance of Time and Space Norms, and Mediator of Gradual Social Change.
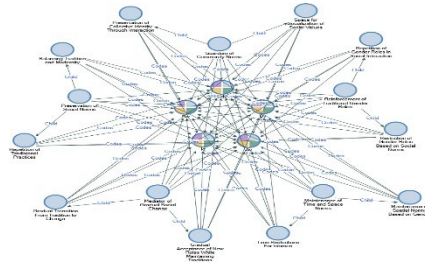
From the above picture, it can be seen that all informants are bound and maintain norms in conducting social interactions in coffee shops. The preservation of Social Norms in the public sphere shows that they carry out balancing tradition and modernity, where every informant makes coffee shops a space where traditional social norms are maintained, despite the influence of modernization or social negotiations. In addition, they also carry out a Repetition of Traditional Practices, where activities that take place in coffee shops tend to strengthen traditional norms that have been accepted in society. In addition to maintaining social norms, they also make coffee shops guardians of community norms, where coffee shops are spaces for the socialization of social values and preservation of collective identity through interaction.

| Maintaining Norms | Cdy | Ay | Id | Dv | Bw |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Preservation of Social Norms | | | | | |
| Balancing Tradition and Modernity | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Repetition of Tradisional Practices | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Guardian of Community Norms | | | | | |
| Space for Socialization of Social Values | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Preservation of Collective Identity Through Interaction | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Reinforcement of Traditional Gender Roles | | | | | |
| Repetition of Gender Roles in Social Interaction | | | | | |
| Restriction of Gender Roles Based on Social | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Maintenance of Time and Space Norms | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Maintenance of Spatial Norms Based on Gender | | | | | |
| Time Restriction For Women | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Mediator of Gradual Social Change | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Gradual Acceptance of New Roles While Maintaining Traditional | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Gradual Transition From Traditional to Change | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |

From this table, we can conclude that every woman is present at the coffee shop but still maintains behavior that is in accordance with the existing norms of social decency. Every discussion in a coffee shop often focuses on issues that support traditional values and do not challenge prevailing norms. Each woman gathered at a coffee shop to discuss matters related to daily life and to maintain community values. This discussion often revolves around topics that support the cultural and social identity of the local community, especially the social community of each woman. Women are expected to maintain their behavior in coffee shops to conform to social norms, such as not talking too loudly or not sitting with men they do not know and keeping time visiting coffee shops. Women often sit with their friends on the edge or corner of the coffee shop and let men sit in the front or middle of the coffee shop.

Even though they have been released from being in coffee shops, women still remember or maintain their time in coffee shops so that they are in coffee shops only in the morning, afternoon, or evening, avoiding nights that are considered inappropriate. Likewise, women tend to choose seats that do not

stand in coffee shops. Slowly, coffee shops are becoming places where changes in gender roles or social norms begin to be accepted but remain within established traditional boundaries, such as women starting to participate in discussions in coffee shops, but still maintaining a polite attitude and existing boundaries. In the event of change or negotiation, but always in a context that does not interfere with the core norms of the community.

**Negotiation Norms**

The theme of negotiation norms occurs when women's actions in coffee shops are repeated continuously so that they become part of the accepted social routine. The categories and codes below show how the new role of women in the public sphere is beginning to be accepted. There are three (3) negotiations in coffee shops, namely Attendance Negotiation, Participatory Negotiation, and Cultural Negotiation.
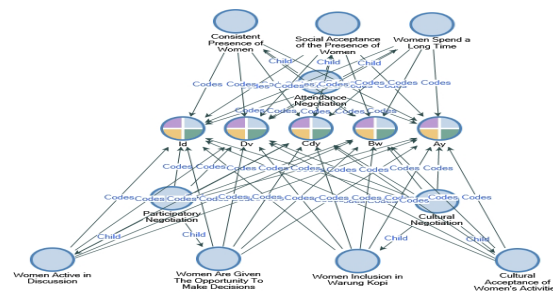


From the picture above, researchers can conclude that the presence of women who are increasingly in coffee shops is starting to be seen as normal and accepted by the community; the presence of women no longer receives negative attention or is considered a deviation from the norm. Women are actively involved in social, political, or professional discussions in the public sphere, which is beginning to be seen as a natural role. Women have also been given the opportunity to make decisions at coffee shops. Now, women are increasingly integrated in social spaces that were previously dominated by men. In addition, local culture began to accept women's activities in coffee shops as part of normal social dynamics and no longer questioned their presence.

| NEGOTIATION NORMS | Cdy | Ay | Id | Dv | Bw |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Attendance Negotiation | | | | | |
| Consistent Presence of Women | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Social Acceptance of the Presence of Women | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Women Spend a Long Time | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Participatory Negotiation | | | | | |
| Women Active in Discussion | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Women Are Given The Opportunity To Make | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Cultural Negotiation | | | | | |
| Women Inclusion in Warung Kopi | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Cultural Acceptance of Women's Activities | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |

From the results of the analysis in the figure above, it can be concluded that the presence of women in coffee shops is increasingly accepted and considered natural by the community. The presence of women no longer receives negative attention or is considered a deviation from social norms. Women who are actively involved in social, political, or professional discussions in the public sphere are beginning to be seen as commonplace. In addition, women were given the opportunity to be involved in decision-making in coffee shops, which were previously dominated by men. Thus, women are increasingly integrated into social spaces that are once closer to them. Local culture has also begun to accept women's activities in coffee shops as part of normal social dynamics without questioning their existence and activities in the place.

Policy Recommendations for Supporting Gender Equality and Inclusivity in Public Spaces in West Aceh.The findings from this research offer several policy recommendations aimed at fostering gender equality and inclusivity in public spaces, particularly in coffee shops as social interaction venues in West Aceh. These policies are designed to facilitate a more inclusive social transformation, enabling women to participate more actively in public life without being hindered by social norms or barriers. Below are the key recommendations:

Involvement of Women in Public Space Design. It is crucial for the government and relevant stakeholders to involve women in the planning and design of public spaces, including coffee shops and other communal areas. By incorporating women's perspectives, the needs and preferences of female patrons—such as improved lighting, safer environments, and areas conducive to social interaction—can be effectively addressed. Engaging local women's organizations in the public space planning process will ensure that these spaces support diversity and inclusivity (Zhang et al., 2023).

Enhancing Accessibility and Safety in Public Spaces: Public spaces, including coffee shops, must be made more accessible by providing facilities that cater to women, such as safe and comfortable access points, harassment-free zones, and amenities that support women's professional and personal activities. Policies should mandate coffee shop owners and other public venue operators to create women-friendly facilities and ensure safe environments through staff training on harassment prevention and discrimination (Nguyen et al., 2017).

Public Education on Gender Equality and Inclusiviti : Community education initiatives should be implemented to raise awareness about the importance of inclusivity and gender equality in public spaces. Educational programs and public awareness campaigns can help shift societal attitudes that uphold restrictive gender norms. Local training sessions emphasizing the significance of women's involvement in public life and their rights to participate without social constraints are essential (Settipani et al., 2019).

Increasing Women's Political and Social Participation : Policies that encourage women's participation in social, political, and professional discussions in public spaces are vital to ensure that women not only attend but also have an equal voice in decisions affecting their communities. This can be achieved by providing platforms for women to lead discussions or events in public spaces, such as coffee shops, and organizing inclusive forums that allow women from diverse backgrounds to speak and engage (Radushinskaya et al., 2019).

Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation : Gender equality policies related to public spaces should include mechanisms for ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure effective implementation and positive outcomes. Further research into gender dynamics in public spaces will help assess progress and identify challenges faced by women. Establishing monitoring teams comprising government representatives, NGOs, and community members can facilitate regular assessments of gender equality in public spaces and inform necessary policy adjustments.

These recommendations aim to create a supportive environment for women in West Aceh, enabling them to engage fully in public life and contribute to the community's social fabric. By addressing the barriers women face in public spaces, these policies can promote a culture of inclusivity and equality, reflecting the democratic values of freedom of expression and participation.

## 4. DISCUSSION

This discussion reveals important dynamics related to changes in the function of public spaces, especially coffee shops in West Aceh, in the context of gender. Coffee shops, which were once considered the domain of men, are now beginning to be accessed by women for various social, intellectual, and professional purposes. This shift reflects Butler's theory of gender as a social construct that is constantly negotiated through repetitive actions Bizjak (2017). The presence of

women in public spaces, such as coffee shops, is not just an ordinary social activity but also a political act that actively challenges traditional gender norms (Matthews, 2016).

In West Aceh, coffee shops have undergone a social transformation. If this place was previously dominated by men, women are now starting to be present consistently and actively. They are not only involved in activities such as work or discussions, but are also given the opportunity to lead conversations, even in professional discussions. This indicates a change in how gender roles are understood and accepted in the public sphere (Hewa, 2022). However, this change is not without challenges. Prevailing social norms still provide restrictions on how and when women can participate in public spaces, such as coffee shops. Their presence is often associated with activities that are considered "appropriate," such as work or family-related activities. Even so, women like Cdy and Id, who are active in coffee shops, show that these boundaries are negotiable, although not always easy (Liu et al., 2015).

This research also shows that coffee shops have the potential to act as catalysts for gender-related social change. The increasing presence of women in this space is a symbol of the broader gender negotiation process in Western Aceh society. This process is slow but consistent, and the more women use coffee shops for professional or intellectual activities, the more open the space for reconstructing gender roles in society (Yodanis, 2006). In addition, this study highlights that public spaces are not static. The presence of women in coffee shops proves that gender boundaries are constantly changing. Social spaces that were previously more masculine are now becoming more inclusive, where women are no longer seen as passive actors but as active agents of change (Lama, 2023). In this way, coffee shops are not only a place to relax or socialize, but also a place for women to build professional networks, broaden their horizons, and play a role in greater social dynamics.

In the context of West Aceh, this change is still ongoing, and this study suggests the importance of further exploration of gender interactions in other public spaces. In the future, research is expected to include male perspectives and public policy, as well as consider external factors such as social media that may play a role in changing people's views of gender roles in public spaces (Rafael et al., 2023). In this case, coffee shops have become a symbol of a broader process of social change that continues to evolve. This study has several limitations that need to be noted. First, the limited number of participants means that the results of the study may not fully represent the experiences of all women in West Aceh who use coffee shops as public spaces. The focus of the research is only on the West Aceh region, which has specific social, cultural, and religious norms and also limits the generalization of research results to other regions in Indonesia (Aqeeli, 2023). During data collection, subjectivity bias can arise from both researchers and participants, which can affect the interpretation of the results.

This research paves the way for further exploration of gender interactions in public spaces, especially in the context of coffee shops. Further research recommendations include comparative studies in different regions of Aceh and Indonesia, which could uncover variations in women's participation based on different social and cultural contexts (Jan & Rahman, 2022). In addition, the use of mixed methods such as surveys and in-depth interviews will provide more comprehensive data on women's experiences in coffee shops. It is also important to include men's perspectives in future research to understand how they perceive women's presence in the space (Iqbal et al., 2021). Furthermore, the study of the impact of public policy on gender interactions, the analysis of changes over time, and research on women's economic activities in coffee shops can provide deeper insights. Considering the role of social media and technology, future research may explore how women use digital platforms to interact and organize (Branicki et al., 2023). Finally, research on community involvement in creating inclusive public spaces for women can contribute to broader social change processes. Overall, these recommendations can enrich our understanding of gender dynamics and lead to the increased participation of women in public spaces.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

This study highlights the significant transformation in the functioning of public spaces, especially coffee shops in West Aceh, through a gender-based perspective. Coffee shops, once considered an exclusive territory for men, have now become an arena where women can interact and contribute in various capacities social, professional, and intellectual. This transformation illustrates Butler's concept of gender as a dynamic and negotiated social construct through repeated actions, where the presence of women in public spaces serves as a form of resistance to traditional gender norms.

The inclusion of women in coffee shops signifies a positive shift in the understanding and acceptance of gender roles in society. Women are now not only participating but also actively leading discussions, demonstrating that public spaces can serve as platforms for them to express themselves and take the initiative. However, challenges remain, particularly in the form of social norms that limit women's participation, often requiring them to engage only in contexts considered "appropriate." Nevertheless, individuals such as Cdy and Id have shown that these limitations can be challenged and negotiated, despite various obstacles.

Furthermore, this study emphasizes that coffee shops have the potential to be catalysts for broader gender-related social change. The active presence of women in these spaces symbolizes the ongoing process of gender negotiation in West Aceh. Although slow, this process consistently expands the space for women to engage in professional and intellectual activities, which, in turn, can reconstruct the role of gender in society.

Coffee shops also reflect the dynamic nature of public spaces. The transformation from male-dominated spaces to more inclusive ones illustrates that gender boundaries are not static but continue to change over time. Women are now positioned not as passive actors, but as active agents of change contributing to greater social dynamics. Therefore, coffee shops not only serve as places to socialize but also as venues for building professional networks and broadening horizons.

This discussion also paves the way for further exploration of gender interactions in other public spaces in West Aceh. Future research is expected to incorporate male perspectives and public policy analysis, as well as consider external factors such as social media that may influence people's views on gender roles. As such, coffee shops are not only symbols of ongoing social change but also starting points for a broader discussion about women's rights and roles in an ever-evolving society.

### Ethical considerations

Not applicable

### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

## REFERENCES

Aqeeli, A. A. (2023). The Construction of Identities: Power Relations in Naomi Wallace's In the Heart of America. *Journal of Literary Studies*, *39*. https://doi.org/10.25159/1753-5387/13800

Bliss, L. A. (2016). Phenomenological Research. *International Journal of Adult Vocational Education and Technology*, *7*(3), 14–26. https://doi.org/10.4018/ijavet.2016070102

Branicki, L. J., King, E., & Norbury, K. (2023). Joy and the mop: The role of film in doing and undoing gender in entrepreneurship. *Gender, Work and Organization*, *30*(6), 1960–1979. https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.13031

Cindoglu, D., & Unal, D. (2015). Gender in Political Sex Scandals in Contemporary Turkey: Women's Agency and the Public Sphere. *Journal of Women, Politics and Policy*, *36*(4), 464–485. https://doi.org/10.1080/1554477X.2015.1050911

Davidsen, A. S. (2013). Phenomenological Approaches in Psychology and Health Sciences. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *10*(3), 318–339. https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2011.608466

Downey, J., & Neyazi, T. A. (2014). Complementary and Competitive Logics of Mediatization: Political, Commercial, and Professional Logics in Indian Media. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, *19*(4), 476–495. https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161214545809

Hewa, S. G. (2022). 'Monsters' vs. 'Angels': A Feminist Approach to the Film Brave Through the Character of Merida. *Vidyodaya Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, *07*(01), 223–234. https://doi.org/10.31357/fhss/vjhss.v07i01.14

Iqbal, L., Shah, F., Ali, A., & Ullah, I. (2021). Social Matrix and Construction of Gender Identity in Nathaniel Hawthorn'S the Scarlet Letter. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews*, *9*(3), 182–188. https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2021.9320

Jan, A., & Rahman, M. (2022). Linguistic representation of gender from essentialist to poststructuralist perspective in the Cholistan trilogy: a feminist critical discourse analysis. *Journal of Humanities, Social and Management Sciences (JHSMS)*, *3*(1), 377–386. https://doi.org/10.47264/idea.jhsms/3.1.33

Kibtiah, T. M., & Medeleine. (2023). Indonesia's Economic Recovery in a Post-Pandemic: Under the New Normal on Society 5.0. *E3S Web of Conferences*, *388*, 4016. https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202338804016

Krasniqi, E. E. (2019). Women in Search of Social Security: Hostage of Family, Tradition and State. In *'All Equally Real': Femininities and Masculinities Today* (pp. 203–214). Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163/9781848883178_021

Kumbara, D. Y., Kurniawati, D., & Zulkarnain, I. (2023). Communication Strategy of the Sumatera Utara Regional Police Traffic Directorate in Disseminating E-Ticket in Medan City, Sumatera Utara Province, Indonesia. *International Journal of Research and Review*, *10*(12), 114–120. https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20231214

Lama, K. (2023). The Narrative of Abjection and Dissidence: Reading The Voice of Bhumika. *Khwopa Journal*, *5*(2), 27–35. https://doi.org/10.3126/kjour.v5i2.60406

Liu, H., Cutcher, L., & Grant, D. (2015). Doing authenticity: The gendered construction of authentic leadership. *Gender, Work and Organization*, *22*(3), 237–255. https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12073

Mardatillah, Marlindawaty, Gazali, S., & Lumbaa, M. (2023). Fraud Behavior in Perspective Human Resource Development. *International Journal of Professional Business Review*, *8*(5), e02030. https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i5.2030

Matthews, C. R. (2016). The Tyranny of the Male Preserve. *Gender and Society*, *30*(2), 312–333. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243215620557

Maulida, H. (2021). Perempuan dalam Kajian Sosiologi Gender: Konstruksi Peran Sosial, Ruang Publik, dan Teori Feminis. *Journal of Politics and Democracy*. https://idereach.com/Journal/index.php/polikrasi/article/view/6

Mela, A., & Tousi, E. (2023). Safe and Inclusive Urban Public Spaces: A Gendered Perspective. The Case of Attica's Public Spaces During the COVID-19 Pandemic in Greece. *Journal of Sustainable Architecture and Civil Engineering*, *33*(2), 5–14. https://doi.org/10.5755/j01.sace.33.2.33575

Mutiarani, R. A., Putra, P. S. U., Salsabil, M. R., Safri, M. I., & Wahyudi, W. (2023). Analysis of Design Rules Application on Instagram Feed Radar Bali. *Journal of Aesthetics, Design, and Art Management*, *3*(1), 15–19. https://doi.org/10.58982/jadam.v3i1.318

Nguyen, Q. C., Meng, H., Li, D., Kath, S., McCullough, M., Paul, D., Kanokvimankul, P., Nguyen, T. X., & Li, F. (2017). Social media indicators of the food environment and state health outcomes. *Public Health*, *148*, 120–128. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2017.03.013

Oblak, A. (2021). Participatory Sense-making as Consensual Validation of Phenomenal Data. *Interdisciplinary Description of Complex Systems*, *19*(4), 470–492. https://doi.org/10.7906/indecs.19.4.2

Radushinskaya, A., Pushkina, M., Antonova, A., Morozova, S., Dyakova, G., & Gaganova, E. (2019). Investment priorities and investment potential of various infrastructure facilities of the city. *E3S Web of Conferences*, *135*, 4055. https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/201913504055

Rafael, R. de M. R., Santos, H. G. de S., Caravaca-Morera, J. A., Wilson, E. C., & Breda, K. L. (2023). Inclusion or illusion of gender identity in the country with the highest transgender murders: a Brazilian critical essay. *Escola Anna Nery*, *27*. https://doi.org/10.1590/2177-9465-ean-2023-0117en

Roviana, S., Udasmoro, W., & Nurlaelawati, E. (2021). *Women in Public Sphere After the Implementation of Islamic Sharia in Aceh*. academia.edu. https://www.academia.edu/download/87164614/983.pdf

Settipani, C. A., Hawke, L. D., Cleverley, K., Chaim, G., Cheung, A., Mehra, K., Rice, M., Szatmari, P., & Henderson, J. (2019). Key attributes of integrated community-based youth service hubs for mental health: A scoping review. *International Journal of Mental Health Systems*, *13*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s13033-019-0306-7

Sinfield, G., Goldspink, S., & Wilson, C. (2023). Waiting in the Wings: The Enactment of a Descriptive Phenomenology Study. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *22*. https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069231207012

Skalski, J. E., & Aanstoos, C. (2023). The Phenomenology of Change Beyond Tolerating. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, *63*(5), 660–681. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022167819830782

Tempel, T., & Neumann, R. (2016). Gender role orientation moderates effects of stereotype activation on test performances. *Social Psychology*, *47*(2), 63–73. https://doi.org/10.1027/1864-9335/a000259

Thorsen, E., & Sreedharan, C. (2019). #EndMaleGuardianship: Women's rights, social media and the Arab public sphere. *New Media and Society*, *21*(5), 1121–1140. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444818821376

Tsap, Y. T., Stepanov, A. V., & Kopylova, Y. G. (2018). On the Description of Transverse Wave Propagation Along Thin Magnetic Flux Tubes. *Geomagnetism and Aeronomy*, *58*(7), 942–946. https://doi.org/10.1134/S001679321807023X

Westbrook, L., & Schilt, K. (2014). Doing Gender, Determining Gender: Transgender People, Gender Panics, and the Maintenance of the Sex/Gender/Sexuality System. *Gender and Society*, *28*(1), 32–57. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243213503203

Yeşiltaş, E., Eryılmaz, Ö., & Pehlivan, A. (2016). Social Problems in Turkish Social Studies Coursebooks and Workbooks. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, *4*(4), 856–867. https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2016.040423

Yodanis, C. (2006). A place in town: Doing class in a coffee shop. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *35*(3), 341–366. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241606286818

Zhang, M., Shen, T., & Lou, Y. (2023). Configuration paths of community cafe to enhance residents' well-being: fsQCA analysis of 20 cases in Shanghai. *Frontiers in Public Health*, *11*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1147126