PROCEEDINGS
International Conference on Literature
Himpunan Sarjana-Kesusastraan Indonesia (HISKI)
E-ISSN 2988-4357

Intersectionality on the contemporary digital stage: A foucauldian analysis of power relations

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Abstract: *The development of contemporary digital cinema in Indonesia has opened up new spaces for the representation of gender identities that face multiple layers of oppression. This study aims to map the oppression and resistance of female subjects in Indonesia's contemporary digital landscape. Using a qualitative approach and integrating Crenshaw's intersectional feminist theory with Foucault's Critical Discourse Analysis, the research data are drawn from selected contemporary Indonesian digital films titled Budi Pekerti (2023) and Tuhan, Izinkan Aku Berdosa (2024). The findings reveal that the oppression experienced by the main characters (Mrs. Praniand Kiran) does not operate in a single dimension but rather as an intersection and overlap of gender inequality, socioeconomic class, age, status within bureaucratic/religious hierarchies, and digital literacy gaps. The digital stage becomes a digital Panopticon that exploits the commercialization of sensationalism to discipline women's bodies and morality through cyberbullying and victim-blaming. Power operates not only through physical violence but also through disciplinary and biopolitical power. This researched concludes that both films depict diverse dynamics of resistance, namely passive rejection in the form of withdrawal from a hypocritical system and subversive dismantling of the guise of moral authority.*

Keywords: *intersectionality, contemporary digital film, critical discourse analysis, Foucault's power relations*

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of digital streaming platforms has provided freedom to the filmmakers to explore aesthetics and narratives previously restricted by strict local government censorship and the demands of cinema commercialization (Widagdo, 2023). Independent filmmakers in various countries utilize the flexibility of the digital medium to construct intersectional politics of women's identity. They dissect how patriarchal structures do not operate in isolation but intersect with global capitalism, systemic racism, and ethnic prejudice. Contemporary digital cinematic narratives thus emerge as sites of resistance, challenging hegemonic power structures while offering new interpretations of women's positions in societies undergoing rapid modernization.

To understand how inequality and dominance operate within digital social media spaces, Crenshaw's (1989) concept of intersectionality is utilized to map how these identity layers intersect with algorithms, platform rules, and internet participatory culture (Crenshaw, 2017; Mohanty, 2018; Ford & Parker, 2018). Meanwhile, to analyze the resistance to such intersectional inequality, an appropriate epistemological tool is required: Foucault's theory of power relations (Foucault, 1980; Zuboff, 2019; Capodivacca & Giacomini, 2024).

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How to cite (APA 7th): Salamah, U., Darihastining, S., Muliyono, N. (2026). Intersectionality on the contemporary digital stage: A foucauldian analysis of power relations. *Proceedings 35th KIK*, *35*, 440–452. https://doi.org/10.68634/kik.v35i.174

Therefore, a comprehensive analytical framework grounded in Crenshaw's Intersectional Theory and Foucault's Critical Discourse Analysis is needed. Integrating these two theories enables the research to sharply map how identity inequalities are depicted visually and textually, as well as how the technological infrastructure of digital cinema triggers complex articulations of power.

Intersectional studies of digital media have tended to remain trapped in conventional sociological approaches viewing identity and inequality as rigid structural variables (Benjamin, 2019). Conversely, Foucauldian studies in the digital context focus more on abstract concepts of digital panopticism and data governance (Noble, 2018), overlooking how digital power operations are felt unequally based on intersections of gender, race, and class. Consequently, a significant research gap exists in digital sociology and critical media studies.

The novelty of this research lies in its integrative conceptual framework, positioning the digital stage as a Foucauldian "dispositif" that operates intersectionally. This study reveals how Foucauldian power, which is capillary and productive, operates through users' voluntary participation, self-branding practices, and adaptation to platform standards, constituting "technologies of the self" that simultaneously function as intersectional discipline.

This research is urgent, given that the digital stage has become a primary infrastructure in contemporary societal life. Without a deep understanding of power relations and intersectionality, discourses on digital justice and technological inclusivity will remain superficial narratives that perpetuate hidden systemic oppression. By dissecting Foucauldian power relations in the digital sphere from an intersectional perspective, this research significantly contributes to critical digital sociology, critical discourse theory, and contemporary gender philosophy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital Intersectional Theory and Contemporary Identity Formation

Intersectional theory, proposed by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), serves as a critical lens for examining how women's existence is fragmented under the oppression of gender, economic class, social status, moral stigma, and religious institutions.

In the contemporary digital landscape, intersectional theory expands not only to offline identities but also to how algorithms, platforms, and social media visibility mediate these hierarchies. According to Noble (2018), digital platforms provide a stage for identity expression yet simultaneously reinforce the double marginalization of vulnerable groups. The assumption that the internet fully democratizes identity is disrupted by the reality that digital agents continue to operate within real-world inequality structures.

Crenshaw (2017) emphasizes a crucial paradigm shift. "Intersectionality is not a primary category to describe identity, but a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects." The primary focus is not the number of identities, but how social structures treat those combinations.

Intersectionality maps the sources of power or domination (patriarchy, racism, capitalism, heteronormativity) (Crenshaw, 2017). Its most substantive point is the interconnected nature of power: various oppressions occur simultaneously, creating

unique discriminations rather than separate conflicts. Systems of oppression reinforce one another.

In the digital sphere, this theory analyses how algorithms, platform rules, and internet norms operate as power structures. It reveals how digital bias does not affect everyone equally, but most severely oppresses groups situated at the intersection of social inequalities.

The Dialectic of Power and Resistance in the Digital Stage Foucauldian's

From Foucault's perspective (2017), power relations are dynamic and dialectical; where there is power, there is resistance. Through digital counter-publics (Fraser, 2020; Jackson et al., 2020), intersectional groups use social media as a tool of agency to deconstruct dominant discourses via hashtag activism, counter-content, and community organization. Nevertheless, this resistance operates within the infrastructure of digital capitalism controlled by platform owners.

Foucault (1980) asserts that power is everywhere, continuously produced at every point of social interaction. Power is a strategy and relational dynamic, existing only when exercised through actions, rules, norms, and ways of thinking.

Contemporary scholars have expanded this framework. Bucher (2018) reveals how Foucauldian power operates on social media: algorithms determine what we see, like, and share. Users voluntarily engage in self-discipline, shaping content to align with algorithms, demonstrating power operating from within the subject (technologies of the self). Foucauldian thought adapts the Panopticon to describe a "disciplinary society"; in the digital arena, users voluntarily monitor and are monitored by algorithms collecting data.

Zuboff (2019) notes that digital platform power takes the form of behavioral modification rather than territorial control. Furthermore, Benjamin (2019) and Noble (2018) demonstrate how this pervasive power produces internalized racism and gender bias. Power operates not because of a single racist actor, but because historical data, algorithmic coding, and social norms are intertwined to perpetuate discrimination.

Behind the freedom of expression, digital media practices can turn into an arena of public trial vulnerable to real-world character assassination. Through the phenomenon of virality, unverified narratives can spread massively within seconds, driving netizens to judge, bully, and even engage in cancel culture.

METHOD

This research uses a critical qualitative approach based on the poststructuralist paradigm, examining films as a "dispositive"—a combination of technology, discursive structures, and knowledge systems shaping power relations over intersecting bodies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018). To unravel this complexity, the research integrates Foucault's critical discourse analysis and Crenshaw's intersectional feminist analysis (Foucault, 1980; Crenshaw, 1989; Crenshaw, 2017; Agamben, 2019).

Data collection focuses on primary and secondary sources. Primary data is obtained through textual and visual units in contemporary digital films selected for their strong intersectional issues and complex power relations: the film Budi Pekerti, directed by Wregas Bhanuteja (2023), and Tuhan Izinkan Aku Berdosa, directed by Hanung Bramantyo (2024). Both films explicitly position social media not merely as

communication tools, but as contemporary stages where power is distributed, negotiated, and exercised. Analyzed elements include aspects of digital cinematography. Secondary data includes supporting discourse, such as contested reviews on streaming platforms, film criticism, and public discourse in digital media.

The data analysis procedure was conducted in stages through four systematic steps. After repeated viewings, the researcher (1) mapped how gender, class, and racial identities intertwine and determine characters' positions of oppression; (2) reconstructed Foucault's "discourse-power-control" framework via dialogue and visual symbols to identify dominant discourses producing a "regime of truth" that subtly disciplines or legitimizes subjugation; (3) analyzed how digital camera technology and stage instruments function as panopticon mechanisms determining which bodies are highlighted, monitored, ignored, or normalized; and (4) traced moments of resistance where characters subvert power relations and reclaim agency. Through these stages, the research explains how the digital cinematic stage operates as a dynamic arena of contestation over power and knowledge.

Validity is achieved by comparing and confirming findings from various perspectives. Textual and visual triangulation is conducted by combining an analysis of cinematographic aspects (lighting, camera angles, costumes, and makeup) with textual aspects (dialogue, narrative script, and character development). Data source triangulation is performed by cross-checking primary data with secondary data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

In the film Budi Pekerti, Mrs. Prani is portrayed as the head of a small family living in a rented house in Yogyakarta. She has become the backbone of the family because her husband suffers from bipolar disorder after his business went bankrupt due to the pandemic. She is supported by her two children: Muklas, an animal influencer, and Tita, who runs an online thrift shop. She works as an accomplished guidance counselor and has been nominated to become the vice principal.

The oppression Mrs. Prani faces begins with a minor incident at a market when a male customer cuts in line while people are waiting to buy putu cakes.



Figure 1: A scene of Mrs. Prani's altercation with another customer who did not follow the rules

The scene marks the beginning of social tension caused by a violation of social norms. Mrs. Prani uttered the phrase "*ah suwi*" in Javanese, meaning "oh, it's taking so long." Her statement was twisted into "*Asu i*," accompanied by a narrative framing her as losing control. The video clip successfully framed her with headlines such

as "*Asu*," "A Teacher Raging Uncontrollably!!," "Stressed," and cursing others with the phrase "*Asu i*." Such language was deemed inappropriate for a teacher. The dissemination of unconfirmed information led the public to direct hate speech toward Mrs. Prani (Rahmadhany et al., 2021).

The oppression resurfaced when a post video related to Gora (an alumnus who, at Ms. Prani's suggestion, had taken part in grave-digging as an exercise in reflection) was twisted by anonymous accounts and went viral.



Figure 2: Fadli threatens to issue a legal notice to Mrs. Prani



Figure 3: The principal dismisses Mrs. Prani



Figure 4: The physical education teacher expels Mrs. Prani

The scenes in Figures 2, 3, and 4 demonstrate the power of social media as a space exerting immense pressure on an individual. Fadli (the rule-breaking customer) constructs a narrative by staging a "clarification" stunt portraying Mrs. Prani as at fault and morally corrupt. The principal constructs a narrative by appearing to take firm action against moral misconduct by dismissing her. The gymnastics teacher constructs an image suggesting her studio should only be open to people of good moral character by expelling Mrs. Prani. These scenes illustrate social media as a space for a "mob trial," through public opinion, cancel culture, loss of public trust, and character assassination (Salamah, 2026).

Wregas Bhanuteja's (2023) visual narrative illustrates how digital media blurs the boundaries between private and public spheres. Through aggressive digital social sanctions, Mrs. Prani's character is assassinated, leading to real-world social ostracism.

The film Tuhan Izinkan Aku Berdosa (TIAB) tells the life story of Kiran, a female college student and religious student from a poor family. Kiran is portrayed as a devout, intelligent woman with a critical approach to knowledge.



Figure 5: Kiran as a student at a hardline Islamic boarding school.

Figure 5 depicts Kiran as a devout Muslim woman, innocent and makeup-free, wearing dark-colored Islamic attire. However, her eyes and walk reveal a resolute, intelligent figure with strong principles. The oppression against Kiran begins when she

becomes trapped within a hardline Islamic boarding school group led by Abu Darda. This group demands total devotion to Allah through extreme jihad. Within this study group, Kiran was forced to become Abu Darda's fourth wife as a form of jihad and devotion to God. Kiran refused and left. Abu Darda's followers pursued and framed her on social media as a rumor-spreading, promiscuous woman, deemed to have defied the Kyai's orders and disgraced the followers.

Further oppression occurred when Kiran tried to speak out about the truth and injustice she experienced; the media and her social circle engaged in victim-blaming (Bramantyo, 2024; Salamah, 2025). She was labeled deceitful, promiscuous, and ostracized. Negative news about Kiran on social media reached her village. Even her parents accused her of being a disobedient child who dared to defy religious scholars.

After being expelled, Kiran tried to survive and sought protection from another authority figure, Pak Tomo, her academic advisor. She again faced oppression from people masquerading as moralists. Initially, Mr. Tomo helped Kiran financially; however, she was ultimately turned into his mistress, forced to satisfy his sexual desires, assist with his academic projects, and support his prostitution business.

Kiran fled to ask her college friends for help finding a better place to live. Darul, her college friend labeled "religiously devout," seeking to be elected as head of his campus organization, also betrays her after having intimate relations with her.

Feeling betrayed by the hypocrisy of religious dogma and a barrage of injustices, Kiran experiences a severe crisis of faith. She begins to question the existence of the God she has believed in, expressing disappointment that her devotion has been repaid only with severe trials.

Intersectional oppression in the contemporary digital sphere, as seen in the films Budi Pekerti and Tuhan Izinkan Aku Berdosa (TIAB), are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Intersectional Manifestations in the Contemporary Digital Stage

Dimension	Mrs. Praniin *Budi Pekerti*	Kiran in *TIAB*
Gender & Profession	Mrs. Prani is a guidance counselor who is dedicated and has strong integrity. Living in Yogyakarta, a city steeped in patriarchal traditions, she lacks an understanding of the dynamics of social media	Kiran is an intelligent, critical, obedient female college student with strong principles. Kiran comes from a family at risk of poverty.
Forms of Digital Oppression	Cyberbullying, mass judgment through short video clips, doxxing, and character assassination.	Victim-blaming based on religious narratives, digital stigma, and moral and visual exploitation.
Intersections of Oppression	Gender, lack of social media literacy, guidance counselors, patriarchal traditions, cyberbullying, doxxing, and character assassination	Gender (young women) from hardline Islamic boarding schools, low socioeconomic status, subordinate status within religious structures, and moral hypocrisy among academics and officials, bodily exploitation.
Social Impacts	Job loss, cancellation of promotions, family separation, ostracism by the community.	Silencing of victims' voices, exclusion from religious communities, systematic trauma.

Based on Table 1, Mrs. Prani's intersectional oppression stems from intersecting factors: her gender, patriarchal traditions, her profession as a guidance counselor, a digital literacy gap, and low socioeconomic status. Her community in Yogyakarta demands "moral purity" and gentleness beyond what is expected of men in similar positions. Her lack of understanding of social media dynamics and virality left her "confused" when the out-of-context video clip was uploaded, leading to cyberbullying, doxxing, and character assassination. Her economic class left her and her family without adequate means of defense against mass netizen judgment.

Kiran's intersectional oppression is caused by three intersecting factors: gender and sexuality, religious hierarchy and power, and the digital literacy gap. Her body is treated as an object of moral control by religious, academic, and political communities. Her position places her subordinate to Ustads Abu Darda and his followers, who possess strong social, political, and economic capital. As a poor but intelligent student, Kiran is exploited by her professor, Mr. Tomo, for his academic interests and biological needs, while simultaneously being sold to hypocritical political elites. When Kiran speaks out in her defense, the digital sphere is flooded with victim-blaming narratives produced by religious and academic power circles.

Based on this analysis, the contemporary digital sphere operates on commercialization and platform visibility rules (virality). Social media algorithms amplify content triggering extreme emotions, public outrage, and character assassination, rather than narratives of justice.

Although constrained by various structures of power and digital violence, the characters in the films Budi Pekerti and Tuhan Izinkan Aku Berdosa demonstrate different forms of agency and resistance. Their resistance reflects a subjective response to intersectional oppression, aligning with Foucault's (1978) opinion: "Where there is oppressive power, there is resistance."

Mrs. Prani's resignation represents a rejection of the corrupt system in Budi Pekerti. Initially, she and her family attempted to fight back by creating a clarification video using the same tools as their attackers. However, as the school's bureaucratic system and demands for public morality cornered her, she ultimately chose to step back and withdraw from the school community.

By posting a clarification video on her social media account, Mrs. Prani hoped to counter the viral clips damaging her reputation (Winingsih et al., 2022). Her expression in the clarification video can be seen in Figure 6.



Figure 6: A scene showing Mrs. Prani providing clarification

Figure 6 shows Mrs. Prani clarifying the viral video. The exercise of disciplinary power is evident as she is forced to make a public clarification via digital video. Her body was regulated so her facial expression had to show remorse, her attire reflect

compliance, and her tone of voice adjusted to meet netizens' expectations and quell public anger (normalizing judgment). At this moment, the traditional moral authority of the teaching profession was deconstructed and renormalized by cancel culture mechanisms. Drawing on Foucault (1980; Salamah, 2026), the body is the primary domain where power is manifested. Her attempt to "correct" the algorithm by creating counter-content underscores that she has been trapped and disciplined by the cyber system controlling her every move. Ms. Prani's defiance in Budi Pekerti through her resignation is a rejection of an educational system and society that is hypocritical and obsessed with digital image-making.

The subversive resistance and exposure of hypocrisy by Kiran in "God, Let Me Sin" occurred after her voice was silenced by religious discourse and digital stigma. Kiran changes her strategy. She exposes the hypocrisy of those holding moral authority by entering the dark corridors of power and recording/exposing their crimes. Kiran uses the body and narrative previously used to oppress her as tools to prove the public lies of the elite (Foucault, 1980; Salamah, 2025).



Figure 7: Kiran's physical transformation from being fully covered as a religious student, to semi-revealing, and finally to revealing as a prostitute

In Figure 7, a shift occurs in Kiran's body. She uses her body as a tool to strip away the masks of hypocrisy worn by the social and religious elites who destroyed her life. Kiran infiltrates a high-class prostitution ring. This grants her direct access to the private spaces of officials, politicians, professors, and religious figures wielding power and enjoying strong public reputations. In these intimate spaces, these leaders feel "safe" enough to shed their masks of virtue.

Kiran acts like an "investigator," using hidden cameras and audio recorders. In every transaction and private meeting, she secretly records conversations, collects documents, and gathers photographic and video evidence. Through these interactions, she coaxes clients into admitting and revealing their true behavior, contrasting sharply with the moral rhetoric they espouse in public. The evidence is used as a tool for resistance.

Kiran revealed the video recordings and the list of names to the media and the public to ensure this evidence reached a wider audience. She utilized mass media, journalists, and public platforms. This moment of exposure marked the climax of her rhetoric of resistance. The public, which had previously judged and victim-blamed Kiran, was forced to confront the truth about their leaders. Kiran shifts her position from

an ostracized victim to someone holding the dark secrets of those in power. The resistance strategies employed are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Strategies of Resistance in Foucault's Power Relations

Foucault's Dimensions	Mrs. Prani in *Budi Pekerti*	Kiran in "God, Let Me Sin"
Exercise of Power	Digital Panopticon, tradition, educational institutions	Patriarchal-religious, academic, and political-capitalist authorities, and the digital panopticon.
Types of Resistance	Reverse Discourse / Passive Negotiation	Subversive Resistance/Exposing Hypocrisy
Forms of Action	Creating a video clarifying bodily discipline, engaging in independent pedagogical reflection, and resigning from the school system.	Subverting the narrative of morality by exposing those who hold moral authority through her bodily experience as a high-class prostitute.

Discussion

Multilayered Oppression in Contemporary Digital Stage

Crenshaw's (1989) intersectional feminism asserts that the oppression of women cannot be understood based solely on gender. The films *Budi Pekerti* (2023) and *Tuhan, Izinkan Aku Berdosa* (2024) serve as representative case studies analyzing how the contemporary digital sphere functions as both a space for the reproduction of inequality and an arena of resistance.

The narratives place their female protagonists amid intersecting social identities. Mrs. Prani is a guidance counselor, a middle-aged woman in Yogyakarta, belonging to the lower-middle class, grappling with netizen power, educational bureaucracy, and the moral expectations of the local community. Kiran is a young female college student and religious boarding school student from a vulnerable economic background, deeply devout, caught within patriarchal religious structures, the boarding school system, and campus hierarchies.

The intersectional manifestations of the contemporary digital stage, such as social media, function as a modern panopticon where the public acts as both overseer and moral judge. In Budi Pekerti, a short video capturing Bu Prani's tension at the market is edited out of context, causing digital character assassination. Such false information is a phenomenon exploited by social media users (Nur Shabrina & Setiawan, 2022; Salamah, 2026). These reports are exaggerated and framed to create a sensational effect, causing them to go viral (Benmetan & Setyowibowo, 2021). This can be seen in the explanation for Figure 1 and Table 1. The digital media industry has played a significant role in her mistreatment (Amarilisya, 2020; Salamah, 2026). Amidst the commotion surrounding viral phenomena, the opportunity to cultivate a specific public image is often seized, as seen in the cases of Mr. Fadli (the consumer who cut the queue), the school principal, and the gymnastics instructor, as illustrated in Figures 2, 3, and 4. In "God, Let Me Sin", the digital space and social structures intertwine to silence Kiran (Crenshaw, 2017; Salamah, 2025). When she tried to speak out about sexual harassment at the hands of an influential religious figure and her professor, digital media and public opinion flipped the narrative, blaming Kiran (victim blaming), as shown in Table 1..

Power Relationships and Strategies of Resistance From A Foucaultan Perspective

The digital stage operates on sensationalism, where narratives pitting purity against moral transgression go viral faster than the enforcement of victims' rights. Kiran's economic vulnerability leaves herpowerless against the influence and networks of capital and digital power held by the perpetrators, as illustrated in Figure 5 and Table 2. Similarly, the power of digital media, as amplified by Abu Darda's followers, could not be countered by Mrs. Prani due to her vulnerability to poverty and limited understanding of social media dynamics, as shown in Figure 1 and Table 2.

Both films depict women's subjective responses to injustice. In Budi Pekerti, Mrs. Prani chooses to withdraw from the public space and school bureaucracy to preserve domestic peace and family survival. Her stance illustrates how the system forces women to bear the consequences of systemic violence (see figure 6 and table 2).

The radical resistance in "God's Name, Let Me Sin" involves deconstructing moral stigma by subverting the narratives of the body and purity demanded of her, exposing the hypocrisy of those holding moral authority on the same stage (see figure 7and table 2).

Foucault (1980) describes the Panopticon as a surveillance structure where individuals feel constantly watched, forcing them to discipline themselves. In Budi Pekerti, social media transforms into a giant Panopticon. Mrs. Prani experiences subjectification, formed by dominant discourses. The public demands she become a "docile body." Her initial resistance took the form of a counter-narrative; however, dominated by virality algorithms and mass judgment, this resistance was turned against her as legitimacy for accusations of "feigned innocence." Her resistance ultimately took the form of withdrawing from the school system as a rejection of the institution's hypocritical moral standards. Her decision to step down constitutes a "refusal" against the regime of truth and moral normalization imposed by institutions and digital discourse (Foucault, 1977; Pink et al., 2016; Salamah, 2026).

Figures of authority use religious positions to dominate Kiran biologically and psychologically. Her resistance reflects Foucault's concept of "reverse discourse" (Foucault, 1980).

The structure of power relations in both films operates subtly through disciplinary and biopolitical power (Foucault, 1978; Bartky, 2020). Disciplinary power dictates social norms and moral values. Biopolitics functions as a broader control mechanism to monitor, regulate, and restrict movements and decisions regarding bodies (Foucault, 1980).

In Budi Pekerti, the digital Panopticon takes the shape of the "Ideal Teacher" and "Norms of Decency" discourses. Social media functions as a modern Panopticon where netizens act as faceless overseers monitoring and disciplining Mrs. Prani. Initially an agent of the educational institution tasked with disciplining students, Mrs. Prani loses control over her narrative. Ultimately, power dynamics compel her to internalize guilt (self-correction), apologize for something she did not fully do, and resign.

In "God, Let Me Sin", power takes the form of religious discourse and hybrid authority, produced by the "regime of truth" upheld by religious figures, professors, and politicians masquerading as champions of morality. Kiran initially occupies a position of submission, her body and mind disciplined by religious moral discourse. By the end, she reverses the power dynamics, taking an active role (agency) by exposing the hypocrisy

of the religious and political elites through bodily resistance, sexuality, and the dismantling of the moral discourse that indoctrinated her.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results, analysis, and discussion, the films Budi Pekerti (2023) and "God, Let Me Sin" (2024) concretely illustrate that the oppression of women does not exist in isolation but constitutes an intersection of gender, socioeconomic class, age, professional/religious status, and digital literacy vulnerability.

The digital stage operates as a modern Panopticon. Digital spaces function as instruments of mass surveillance where netizens act as faceless moral judges who condemn, discipline, and perpetuate victim-blaming against structurally marginalized women.

Disciplinary and Biopolitical Power determine standards of morality and purity, dictating body and behavior norms. The Regime of Truth and Dominant Discourse are utilized by educational institutions, bureaucracies, and religious/political elites to secure authority and silence victims' resistance.

There are two contrasting forms of subjective resistance. Mrs. Prani submits to subjectification and self-discipline (self-correction) by withdrawing from the public sphere to protect her domestic livelihood, illustrating how the system forces women to bear the consequences of structural violence. Kiran, conversely, succeeds in reversing the power dynamics by repositioning the instruments of her oppression (her body and sexuality) as weapons to openly uncover and expose the hypocrisy of the moral-religious elite.

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