

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The institution of the family has historically held an important position in the social structure, being the foundation on which cultural norms, values, and traditions are passed on from one generation to the next. In Indonesia, as in many other countries, the concept of the family is deeply embedded in the social structure. In this context, the nuclear family model, characterized by heterosexual couples and their biological children, has long been upheld as the ideal form of a family. This is also stated in Law Number 52 of 2009 article 1 paragraph 6, which explains that the family is defined as the smallest unit in society with family members consisting of a husband, wife, children, or father or mother alone with their children. In other words, a family is considered imperfect if no children are in it (Hanandita, 2022). In addition, the presence of children is considered to provide a sense of security when parents are elderly (Nauck, 2014) and provide psychological, cultural, and religious benefits (Fahmi & Pinem, 2018).

However, social shifts and cultural transformations have ushered in an era of decline in family structures and reproductive choices. While the nuclear family may remain dominant, alternative family forms—including single-parent households, blended families, and families of choice—have become new options. Attitudes toward motherhood have also evolved, with individuals and couples choosing not to have children by choice or on other circumstances. This is evident in the striking phenomenon of significant declines in marriage rates across society.

The decline in the number of marriages in Indonesia throughout 2022 shows a downward trend in the institution of marriage. According to a report from the Indonesian Statistics Agency, there were 1.7 million marriages recorded, down 2.1% from the previous year, which was 1.74 million marriages. This indicates that fewer couples chose to get married that year compared to the previous year. It is important to note that this downward trend in the number of marriages has been occurring since 2012 when the number of marriages reached its highest figure in

the last ten years. Since then, there has been a gradual decline in the number of marriages in Indonesia. 2020 was the year with the lowest decline in that period, with the number of marriages decreasing by 8.96% compared to the previous year. This could be due to various factors such as economic conditions, changes in social values, or even the COVID-19 pandemic that hit the world that year.

In addition, it was also noted that the decline in the birth rate (fertility rate) in Indonesia is also decreasing. The birth rate or total fertility rate (TFR) in Indonesia has continued to decline in the last three decades. According to World Population Prospects data, in 1990 Indonesia's TFR was still at 3.10. This means that each woman gave birth to an average of three children throughout her reproductive life. Then in the following years, the TFR moved down to reach 2.15 in 2022. Cumulatively, Indonesia's birth rate has decreased by 30.64% during the 1990-2022 period. The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) projects that the number of births in Indonesia will be 4.62 million in 2023. This figure is down 0.6% compared to the previous year which was 4.65 million. This was also mentioned by the Minister of National Development Planning/Head of Bappenas, Suharso Monoarfa, that Indonesia's population growth in 2020-2050 averaged 0.67% per year, slowing down every year. The proportion of the population aged 0-14 years fell from 24.56% in 2020 to 19.61% in 2045.

In the context of a patriarchal society like Indonesia, experts continue to highlight the significant impact of gender roles on family dynamics. Patriarchal norms, which dictate that men are the primary breadwinners and women are responsible for domestic duties, remain deeply rooted. This system often places additional pressure on women to prioritize caregiving roles, as seen in societal expectations that women must assume responsibility for household tasks and child-rearing (Jultikasari & Salsabila, 2023). However, resistance to these rigid gender norms is growing, particularly with the rise of alternative family structures and the concept of childfree living, which challenges traditional expectations surrounding motherhood and female domestic roles. This shift reflects the broader fight for gender equality in Indonesia, where movements toward gender equity, including

legislative reforms and increasing representation of women in leadership, signal a transformation in societal perceptions (Dunstan & Bhardwaj, 2023).

Childfree generally refers to a life choice where an individual or couple deliberately decides not to have children, either through biological birth or adoption (Dr. Rohimi Zam Zam, S.Psi., S.H., M.Pd., 2023). This is different from the term Childless, which is more due to conditions that do not allow such as reproductive or physical problems (Blackstone, 2013). There are a number of academics and activists who have voiced their opinions on this matter. Laura Carroll, a childfree author and advocate, defines childfree as a conscious and voluntary choice not to have children (Laura, 2022).

However, history shows that the childfree phenomenon is not something new in human history. This phenomenon has existed since ancient times, when some people chose to live as monks, nuns, or ascetics who avoided worldly life, including marriage and reproduction (Park, 2005). This phenomenon also appeared in several civilizations, such as Greece, Rome, Egypt, and India, which had philosophical, religious, or ethical views on childfree. After the Middle Ages, around the early 1500s, many women in cities and villages in north-western Europe began to delay marriage until their mid-20s. They no longer married in their early teens, when they were first biologically capable of becoming mothers. In England, during 1600-1800, infertility occurred in 3.3% of couples where the woman married at age twenty to twenty-four, 8.4% for those aged twenty-five to twenty-nine, and 14.8% for those aged 30-34, while for women marrying in their late thirties, the infertility rate was 25% or higher. Meanwhile, this pattern of delay also opens up the possibility of individuals choosing never to marry and never to have children in England, Denmark, Sweden, Northern France, and the Netherlands. People who chose to be single for life, in French cities for example, in the 17th and 18th centuries, 15-22% of the adult population were single for life (Michael Anderson, 1998).

In Donald T. Rowland's research entitled *Historical Trends in Childlessness*, it was found that during the 1800s to 1900s, the childfree trend increased (Rowland, 2007). However, during this period the decision not to have children was not a

problem. In general, at that time people lived in large families with many members. So even though they adopted the childfree concept, this did not cause significant differences in the family. Discussions about childfree then began to develop and emerged as a trend in the 1970s driven by the widespread use of contraception, the second wave of feminism, higher education for women, and a strong drive to have a career.

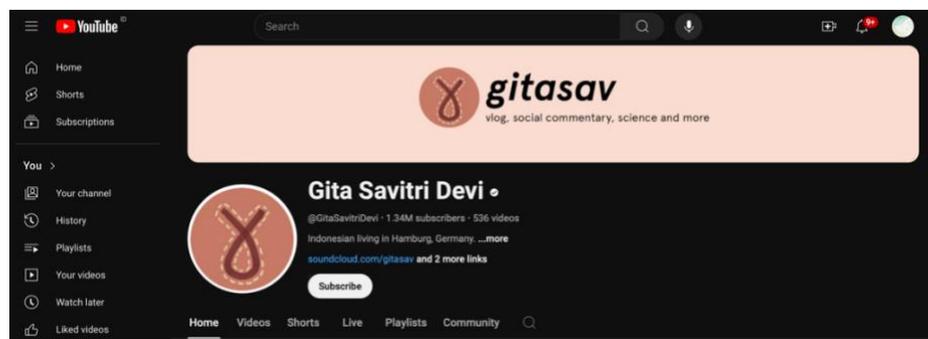
In the last two decades, scientists have been busy with the development of the childfree phenomenon trend in developed countries in the dimension of modernity (Bhambhani, 2020; A Blackstone & Stewart, 2012; Iwasawa, 2004). Several theories and opinions have emerged to address this phenomenon, one of which was put forward by Doyle in his research study that the childfree community usually develops in women who live in industrialized countries which are motivated by issues of protection, increasing workforce participation and reducing gender differences (Doyle et al., 2012). Even in Australia, a statistical study recorded that of 7448 women aged 22 to 27 years, 9.1% tended to choose not to have children (Doyle et al., 2012).

In the context of Indonesia, this phenomenon is not new and can be traced back long before the modern era with various driving factors and contexts behind it. In the pre-modern era, economic constraints were the main factor driving the decision to be childfree. However, when entering the colonial era, Dutch government policies, such as the forced cultivation system, encouraged an increase in population to meet the need for labor. This triggered the tradition of many children, much fortune which is still held firmly by some people today. On the other hand, over time, the women's emancipation movement in the early 20th century opened up space for women to choose a focus on life outside of marriage and children. This marked the beginning of a shift in gender roles that opened up opportunities for women to determine their own future. In the modern era, the factors driving childfree are increasingly diverse. Changes in gender roles and increased education for women in Indonesia open up new opportunities for women to develop careers and determine their future.

Social phenomena have begun to emerge in modern society in a number of countries that demand understanding and support for individuals or couples who choose this path, including in Indonesia. Although not as massive as in western countries, the discourse on childfree has also occurred in Indonesia. The issue of childfree has resurfaced and become a hot topic in Indonesia in the last few months. This began with a statement by a well-known influencer, Gita Savitri, who expressed her decision to be childfree with her husband. With her status as married and living in Germany with her husband, Paul Partohap, she stated via the Instagram platform on February 4, 2023 that she prefers not to have children after getting married. This was then followed by an Instagram post on February 5 and 8 which continued her opinion on her choice. However, what became the highlight was when Gita Savitri did a Live IG broadcast on February 7 which stated her opinion more clearly and loudly. This statement then sparked various public reactions and discussions, both pro and con, on various social media platforms. Interestingly, the issue of childfree has also received attention from television media and online news in Indonesia. Various television stations that present infotainment programs and news articles and opinions related to childfree have been published presenting various points of view and perspectives on this phenomenon after Gita Savitri's response went viral. This can be seen from the significant rise in the volume of discussions and news related to the childfree movement since early 2023, as reflected in online trends and media coverage. This increase is highlighted by search data from platforms like Google Trends, which show growing public interest in the topic.

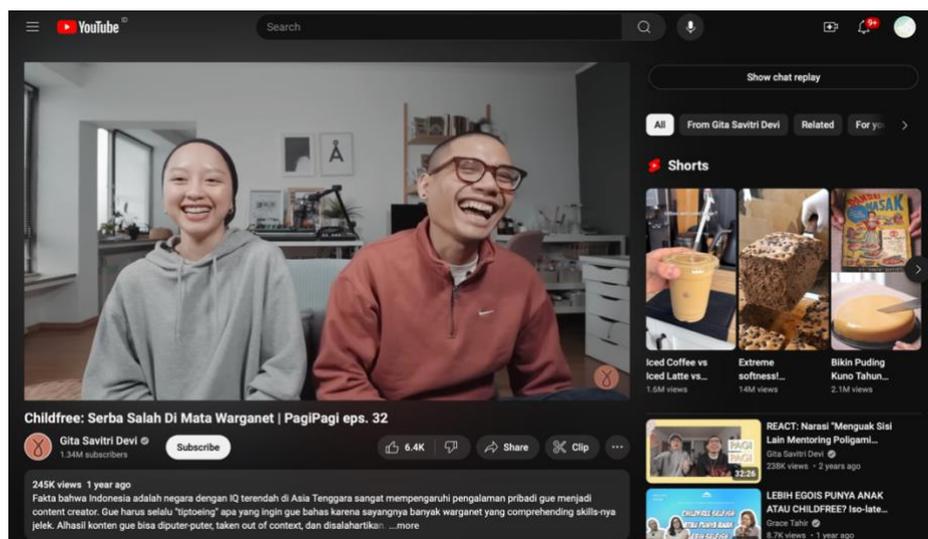
Although there are already people who do it, in the context of Indonesian culture, childfree is still controversial. This is inseparable from the strong influence of patriarchy in the social and cultural structure in Indonesia. Patriarchy, as a social system in which men hold a dominant role in decision-making and control of resources, puts great pressure on women's traditional roles in the family, especially as a wife and mother. The decision to choose childfree often goes against society's expectations for women to bear and raise children as part of their identity. In many cases, women who choose childfree are considered to be going against social norms

and traditional gender roles. They often face stigma, social pressure, and even rejection from family and community. Furthermore, in Indonesia, the values of the extended family and the importance of continuing the lineage are highly respected. The decision not to have children can be seen as an act that disrespects these values. Patriarchy reinforces the view that women's success and happiness depend on their ability to be a mother, making the choice of childfree seem more radical and difficult to accept. This is what caused the controversy with the phenomenon carried out by Gita Savitri.



Picture 1.1: Homepage Channel YouTube Gita Savitri

Source: YouTube @GitaSavitriDevi



Picture 1.2: YouTube Content Video of Gita Savitri about *Childfree*

Source: YouTube @GitaSavitriDevi

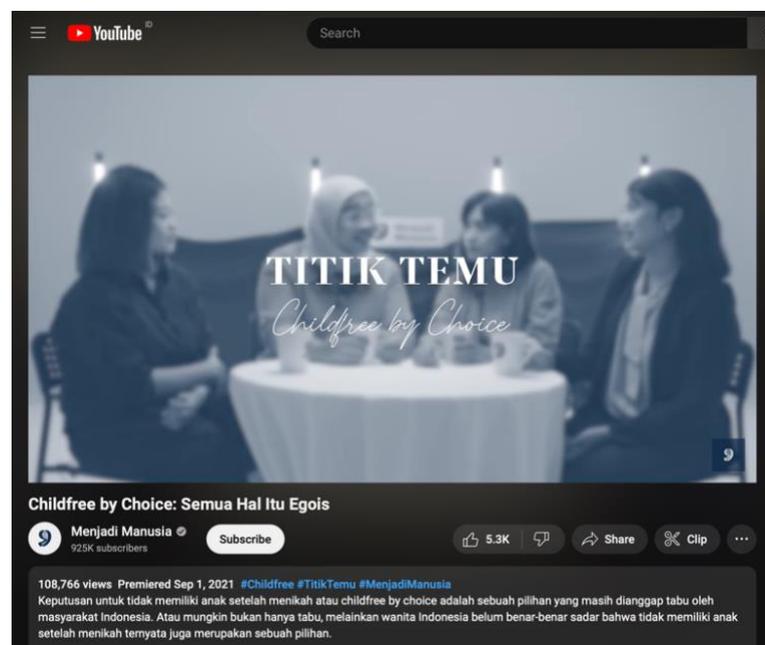
The spotlight of this controversy can also be seen on the YouTube platform. Founded in 2005, YouTube provides a space for content creators to share views and information, and allows users to participate through comments. With 93.8% of Indonesia's population active on YouTube, this platform is the second largest after Facebook (Kemp, 2021). In early 2024, the number of YouTube users in Indonesia reached 139 million (We Are Social Indonesia, 2024). Gita Savitri's viral statement sparked an increase in videos about childfree, with many creators and TV channels discussing the reasons, impacts, and religious and cultural views related to childfree. This also shows that childfree is a hot and controversial topic, provoking intense discussion in society. The image above is a video clip made by Gita Savitri and Paul on their YouTube channel on February 15, 2023. The video discussing the statements and clarifications made by the two after Gita Savitri's previous viral statement has again sparked controversy in Indonesia. The video has also generated 2,528 comments as of June 6, 2024, with many pro and con opinions emerging.

Among the many videos discussing childfree, there is one YouTube channel that attracts attention to be studied further. The YouTube channel *Menjadi Manusia*, was established on July 1, 2020 with the main menu of video content that discusses a number of topics with dialogues of exchange of ideas delivered from various perspectives by various sources. Each content carries a narrative style that will make its audience feel like sitting with friends and listening to problems that are close to our daily lives. This variety of perspectives is also presented for several reasons: to open minds to all possibilities, and also to inspire those who need solutions. One of the contents that has become a hot topic among Indonesian people is the content entitled 'Childfree by Choice: Semua Hal itu Egois'. Published on September 1, 2021, the content presents one woman as a moderator and invites three women with different backgrounds to chat together discussing the meaning of children in a marriage. This content has received great attention from the public, triggering various reactions and discussions that show how important this topic is to the audience.



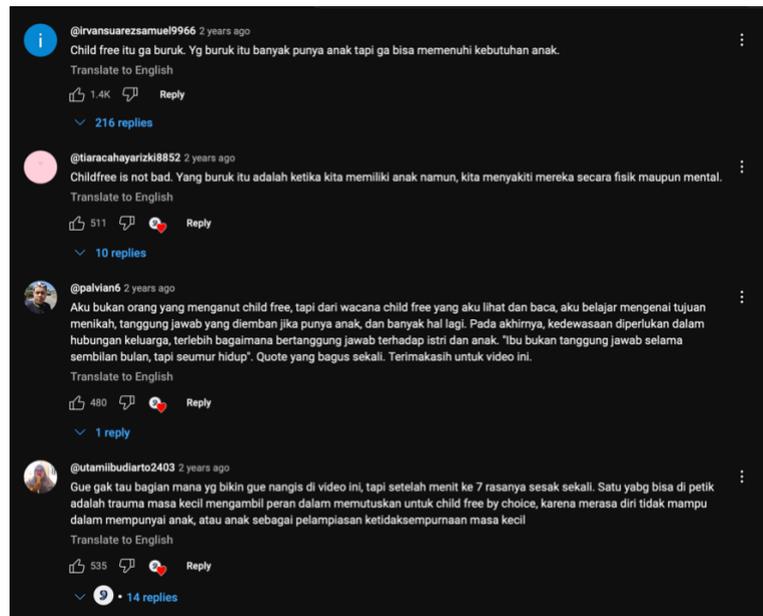
Picture 1.3: Homepage Channel YouTube Menjadi Manusia

Source: YouTube @MenjadiManusia



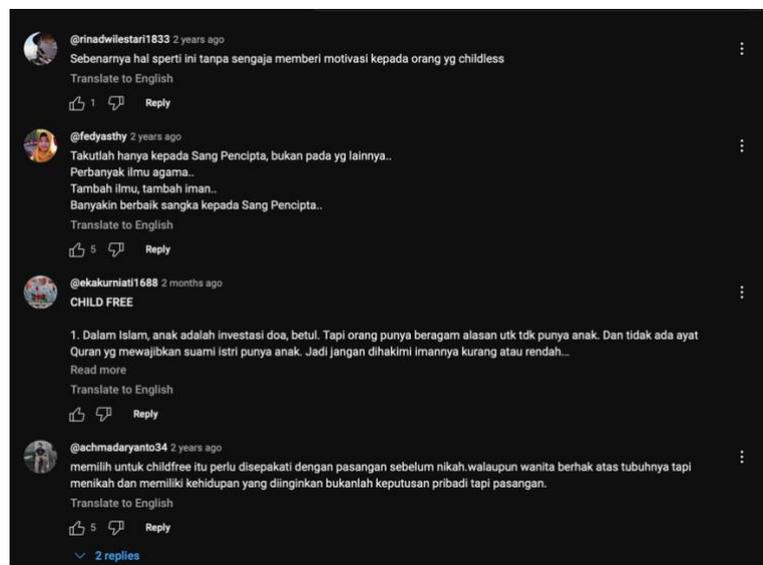
Picture 1.4: YouTube Video 'Childfree by Choice: Semua Hal Itu Egois'

Source: YouTube @Menjadi Manusia



Picture 1.5: Comment Section of ‘Childfree by Choice: Semua Hal Itu Egois’
Video

Source: YouTube @Menjadi Manusia



Picture 1.6: Comment Section of ‘Childfree by Choice: Semua Hal Itu Egois’
Video

Source: YouTube @Menjadi Manusia

Researchers see that observing the audience's response to this YouTube video is interesting to study further. In this study, the focus will be on how the audience of the YouTube channel *Menjadi Manusia* interprets and responds to the content about childfree presented in the video by analyzing the comment section of the video content. The narrative presented in the *Menjadi Manusia* content is so rich, with the four women sharing their views and opinions about childfree based on their respective experiences and individual backgrounds. In other words, this content presents a multi-perspective and in-depth discussion about the choice of a childfree life. The richness of this narrative is woven from various personal stories shared by the informants, as well as representations from the four women with different backgrounds that also provide a more comprehensive picture of the complexity of the decision to become childfree.

Based on the explanation of the childfree issue and its controversy above, the author wants to explore the narrative through an analysis of the comment column about the issue on the YouTube channel *Menjadi Manusia* entitled 'Childfree by Choice: Semua Hal Itu Egois' to be able to explore the dynamics of meaning related to the topic of childfree among Indonesian netizens who are still considered taboo. By analyzing the comment column, this study will enable a better understanding of the public's perspective on the childfree lifestyle choice, as well as the trends and patterns that may emerge in their views. In addition, this study can also help in identifying contextual factors that influence public opinion, such as cultural values, social norms, and personal experiences. This will make an important contribution to the scientific literature on childfree.

1.2. Problem Formulation

In recent years, the childfree phenomenon has become an increasingly discussed topic on various media platforms, including social media. In Indonesia, discussions about the choice not to have children are still often considered taboo and have caused various reactions from the public. The issue of childfree has not been widely accepted and is considered counterintuitive in Indonesia, where traditionally and the ties of Indonesian society with its own religion still refer to the

order that places men as the main figures in the family environment to the social environment, as stated by Syahputra, Bangun and Handayani who stated that in Indonesia there is still an assumption that men are considered stronger, more potential, and more productive, so they play an important role in society (Syahputra et al., 2023). On the other hand, women are considered to have limited room to move because of their reproductive organs. In other words, in Indonesia, patriarchy refers to a social and cultural system in which men have a dominant role in various aspects of life, such as politics, economics, family, and culture. Although there are many cultural and ethnic differences in this country, patriarchy is still common in many places. Society's view of normalized patriarchy reflects the complexity of traditions, religions, cultures, and social structures that have been passed down from generation to generation.

Communities around the world, especially Indonesia, consider patriarchy as a natural part of the value system that cannot be separated, because in their daily practices, patriarchal culture that emphasizes men as the main figures in this environment is reflected in society's perspective on gender roles, distribution of power, and family structure. The development of technology has also resulted in society as a whole considering patriarchy as something commonplace through how media technology that distributes information depicts the figure of men as a symbol of strength in news or its distribution. Media and popular culture can reflect society's views on standardized patriarchy. Conventional gender stereotypes in advertising, film, and television often depict men as strong characters and women as weak or dependent on men. This not only reinforces patriarchal views, but also influences the way society sees and positions itself in the current social structure.

This is supported by Scheufele and Tewksbury's framing theory, which suggests that media not only influences what the public thinks about but also shapes how they interpret those issues (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2006). Therefore, the reality in the media is a symbolic reality. Along with the patriarchal cultural and thought system that has been passed down from generation to generation, an increasingly strong movement has emerged to change society's perspective on patriarchy in the context of globalization and rapid social transformation. Gender

activist groups are trying to raise awareness of the negative effects of patriarchy and encourage change towards gender equality. Steps towards gender equality can provide space for individuals to articulate their needs and challenge norms that limit women's potential, one aspect of which is self-sovereignty. The movement for women's sovereignty emerged in response to the patriarchal system that has long existed in many societies around the world, including in Indonesia. The women's self-sovereignty movement seeks to change society's perspective and overhaul the patriarchal structure by focusing on gender empowerment and equality. This movement challenges customs and social structures that place men above and limit women's rights and freedoms in society. With women's perceptions submitting to the existence of this system, it seems as if their sovereignty over themselves has been taken away, one of which is the right and sovereignty to concentrate on reproduction, which became the forerunner to the birth of the childfree movement.

The childfree movement itself is seen as an act of self-empowerment of women over their sovereignty over their bodies by making the decision not to have children. Women who choose not to have children claim full control over their bodies and lives by rejecting the traditional role of motherhood presented by the patriarchal system. On the contrary, the expression conveyed in this decision-making emphasizes that the identity and value of women is not solely seen from their ability to reproduce or their contribution to raising children, where the idea that is upheld about women themselves is that women do not have to play certain roles in order to be considered individuals with value. Popular culture and the media that have raised the issue of this change itself have begun to receive public attention, one of which is the efforts of the childfree movement which has recently become a hot topic on social media. One of them is influencer Gita Savitri who is present with her opinion about her life decisions and couples who decide not to have children.

“Gue juga kalau misalnya ditanya kayak gitu, solusinya gimana ya karena itu misogini iya, berarti kan si cowoknya melihat perempuan itu sebagai objek gitu loh kayak baby making machine aja gitu, oh gue gak dapet nih dari ini ya gue cari yang lain gitu iya iya”

Translation: “If I'm asked something like that too, then what's the solution? Because that's misogyny, it means that the guy sees the woman as an object, like a baby making machine, oh, I can't get that from this, so I'll look for something else” -Gita Savitri (Puspitasari, 2023)

This study seeks to understand how audiences interpret and respond to narratives about childfree presented in the YouTube video content of the Menjadi Manusia channel entitled ‘Childfree by Choice: Semua Hal Itu Egois’. Specifically, it analyzes the comments section of the video to explore the interpretations, opinions, and perceptions expressed by viewers. By examining the discourse in the comments, this study aims to gain insights into how cultural values, social norms, and personal experiences shape audiences’ views on the childfree lifestyle choice. The findings are expected to provide significant contributions to the scientific literature on childfree and enrich social discussions on this topic within the Indonesian context.

1.3. Research Objectives

This study aims to examine and understand how the audience interprets the childfree phenomenon by analyzing the comments section of the YouTube video from Menjadi Manusia titled ‘Childfree by Choice: Semua Hal Itu Egois’.

1.4. Research Significances

1.4.1. Theoretical Significance

This research is important because it enriches the literature on the childfree phenomenon in the Indonesian context, becoming a reference for further research in the fields of sociology, anthropology, communication, and gender studies. By providing insight into the representation and perception of the childfree phenomenon, this research helps understand the social and cultural dynamics related to the choice of a childfree life that is still taboo.

1.4.2. Practical Significance

This study describes how the childfree issue is received and discussed by Indonesian netizens on the YouTube platform, which is important for the study of behavior and attitudes in the digital context. This information is useful for content creators and media in presenting sensitive issues in a more empathetic and informative way, and helps design effective communication strategies.

1.4.3. Social Significance

This research contributes to social and cultural discourse in Indonesia by providing insight into the representation and perception of the childfree phenomenon. This helps understand and support the diversity of life choices in society, reduce stigma, and promote inclusion of childfree choices.

1.5. Theoretical Framework

1.5.1. Research Paradigm

In this study, the paradigm that will be used is constructivism. The constructivism paradigm in social sciences highlights that social reality is not static and objective, but rather the result of complex interactions between individuals and groups, and the experiences they experience. Research based on this paradigm aims to understand how individuals and groups give meaning to social phenomena in their daily lives. In the constructivist view, social reality is understood as a construction that is formed through a continuous process of social interaction (Willim & Miller, 2017). Constructivist researchers believe that every individual and group has an important role in creating and shaping the social reality they experience. In this context, constructivist research provides deep insight into how meaning and understanding of social phenomena are created and developed. Constructivist research opens a window to understanding how

individuals and groups create meaning from their own experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this approach, every way an individual views the world is considered valid, and needs to be appreciated (Patton, 2010).

1.5.2. State of the Art

“Stigmatisasi terhadap individu childfree dalam komentar Youtube: analisis wacana kritis” by Tsalits Syafa’atun Nashiroh and Aprillia Firmonasari (2024). With reference to the YouTube account Menjadi Manusia, this study explores the discourse around the stigmatization of childfree individuals from the perspective of Indonesians. This study combined a critical discourse analysis technique from van Dijk's standpoint with a descriptive qualitative methodology. The Menjadi Manusia YouTube account's childfree by choice discussion video's comments section served as the data source. Reading and note-taking served as the method for gathering data. Aspects of speech techniques, discourse structure, and social cognition were examined in the data analysis. The findings clarify how the theme embodies the macro text structure. In this sense, the statements are consistent with neutral, pro, and anti-childfree views. Speaking against childlessness is more common than speaking in favor of it or remaining indifferent. Using a variety of techniques, such as persuasive language, rhetorical inquiries, analogies, and quotes from religious texts, counter-childfree speech employs several methodologies. People who choose not to have children are stigmatized because they are seen as going against the religious and cultural norms of Indonesian culture. It suggests that pronatalist views, which demand that women have children, frequently dominate the conversation.

“Reception analysis of childfree issue in Gita Savitri Devi’s Youtube content ‘Childfree: all wrong in the eyes of netizens’” by Ayu Sulastris and Taufiqur Rahman (2022). This study uses a descriptive, qualitative

methodology to investigate audience response. This study attempts to determine how the public reacts to Gita Savitri Devi's personal Instagram video reels about a netizen's remarks in the video and her husband's explanation of it on YouTube under the title "Childfree: All Wrong in the Eyes of Netizens" segment Pagi-Pagi Eps. 32. The research's participants, five informants, were chosen through the use of the purposive sample technique. In-depth interviews, documentation, and literature research are used to gather data for this study, which employs reception analysis as its research methodology. The focus of this study is to examine how audiences interpret Gita Savitri Devi's childfree declaration from different perspectives or in different ways. One informant falls into the dominant position group, three informants fall into the negotiating position category, and one informant falls into the opposition category, according to the findings of in-depth interviews conducted with five informants who satisfied the requirements.

RECEPTION ANALYSIS TERHADAP KONTEN YOUTUBE 'SELINGKUH GAK BAKAL ADA OBATNYA! - CATWOMANIZER | REAL TALK #3'' by Theresia Riska Widyanti (2022). The research method uses a qualitative approach to Stuart Hall's reception analysis to understand the public's reception of the Catwomanizer YouTube channel content about the existence of an affair. Data collection techniques were carried out through forum group discussions and in-depth interviews. The results of the study show that the public does not want any cases of infidelity, for various reasons. From the research according to Stuart Hall which is classified as (Dominant Hegemonic Code), there is not a single informant who wants what their partner has done if their partner has an affair. However, informants do not agree with the arguments in the YouTube content. There are those who accept but with reasons (Negotiated Code).

“The Students’ Reception of @Lambe_Turah’s Gossip Account Posts in Public Relation Students at Mercu Buana University” oleh Lintang, N., & Jamil, A. (2021). This study uses a reception analysis approach to determine the reception of students at Mercu Buana University regarding Lambe Turah's Instagram account posts about information about artists and other public figures by conducting in-depth interviews with ten informants to categorize them into three according to the stages of analysis in the reception, namely dominant hegemony, negotiation, and oppositional. The results of this study indicate that out of ten informants, six informants are in a negotiation position. This means that most informants still underestimate the information from the Lambe Turah account and do not immediately believe the information from the account.

“Audience in Reception Analysis Persepctive” by Amin Aminudin (2018). The intent of this study is to ascertain how the audience interprets and comprehends the hashtag #2019GantiPresiden. This study combined a method of reception analysis with a qualitative approach. An in-depth conclusion was obtained by using reception analysis. Ten audiences are involved in this investigation as informants. To get the representative statistics, the ten informants were chosen based on their diverse backgrounds. In order to complete the data, in-depth interviews and documentation were used. The research focused on understanding how audiences from various backgrounds interpreted the hashtag #2019GantiPresiden. The findings revealed a total of fifteen opinions, five of which were from informants who acted as the dominant reading, five of which were negotiated readings, and five of which entered the oppositional reading. Divergences in the informant's social affiliation background contributed to disagreements over the #2019GantiPresiden topic. However, a person's ability to convey his social membership in how he perceives #2019GantiPresiden may not last forever.

“ANALISIS RESEPSI PENONTON ATAS POPULARITAS INSTAN VIDEO YOUTUBE ‘KEONG RACUN’ SINTA DAN JOJO” by Any Suryani (2013). The phenomenon of Jojo and Sinta’s “Keong Racun” instantaneous popularity began with a YouTube video. The fame of the video creator stems from the reaction of viewers who see their lip-synch performance of the song “Keong Racun.” A semiotic examination of the video's reception using Pierce's Triangle Meaning Theory—consisting of the sign, object, and interpretant—was conducted. The meaning of the chosen interpretation, which demonstrates the narcissistic expression of the video maker to grab viewers' attention, is the outcome of the semiotic analysis. To obtain their acceptance, the research also conducted in-depth interviews with four informants who were chosen at random using predetermined criteria (purposive sampling). Three positions of reception analysis resulted from the categorization and comparison of the interview data with the desired reading of the video: oppositional-hegemonic reading, negotiated reading, and dominant-hegemonic reading.

Based on the six previous studies, it can be concluded that many studies use reception analysis to find out how the audience interprets a social phenomenon or news delivered through new media. However, there are still not many studies that explore the discussion of childfree in Indonesia, considering that this topic has been a hot topic of discussion in recent years and has an urgency to be explored more widely and deeply.

Apart from that, the study entitled “Stigmatization of childfree individuals in YouTube comments: critical discourse analysis” also uses the content of the YouTube channel *Menjadi Manusia* video entitled ‘Childfree by Choice: Semua Hal Itu Egois’ as its data source. However, what distinguishes it from the research to be conducted by the author is that the study is a qualitative descriptive study with a critical discourse analysis approach by van Dijk (2008) with the comments column on the YouTube video as a data source.

Meanwhile, this research distinguishes itself by incorporating the latest comments that have emerged on the video in question. The inclusion of these new comments ensures that the analysis is not only current but also reflective of evolving audience perspectives. This temporal update is critical, as it allows for the capture of more diverse and nuanced opinions that may not have been present in earlier analyses. Furthermore, this study enhances the depth of understanding by employing Netnography and a grouping method with the help of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) by Norman Fairclough, which systematically categorizes the comments into thematic groups. This approach not only provides a more organized and structured analysis but also enables the identification of subtler patterns and emerging trends in audience reception. As a result, this research is poised to yield more varied and detailed findings, offering a richer insight into how different segments of the audience interpret and respond to the content. Such an approach ultimately contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the ongoing discourse surrounding the video, reflecting the dynamic nature of online audience engagement.

1.5.3. Theory

1.5.3.1. Feminism

Feminism is a social, political, and intellectual movement that aims to achieve gender equality and empower women in all aspects of life. Historically, feminism has experienced various waves and changes in thought and strategy, but the core remains the effort to fight gender-based injustice and discrimination. This statement is supported by Hidayati (2018) who stated that this movement was initially a movement carried out to equalize an inequality that refers to a community culture and also religious understanding. This inequality arises because there is a sense of superiority in the community environment, where women tend to be side-lined compared to men. This results in the flexibility of women

in obtaining the essence of life that should be the same and equal to men, instead being eroded so that this understanding that has been traditionally passed down from generation to generation becomes something that is repressive for women. The existence of feminism itself is to challenge and try to change the patriarchal structure that dominates various parts of society, including culture, economy, politics, and social. Reproductive rights, equal pay, the elimination of gender-based violence, and fair representation in the media and politics are some of the many issues discussed in this movement, as conveyed by Ilaa (2021) that the scope of this movement is how women's rights can be fought for as one of the spectrums of justice for women.

1.5.3.2. Patriarchy

As previously explained, the feminist movement cannot be separated from the pattern of patriarchal understanding that is repressive towards women, where the presence of the feminist movement as an antithesis of patriarchal understanding in community life, this understanding becomes a specter for women to get justice for the rights that they deserve. In a social system called patriarchy, men hold the main power and dominate in various aspects of community life, such as politics, economics, family, and culture. Women are often in a lower or marginalized position, with limited rights and opportunities compared to men. Patriarchy not only regulates the power structure, but also influences the way people see and build cultural norms about women and their relationships with men. This understanding is rooted in community life because of the thoughts passed on by human predecessors to subsequent generations, that men in the family are a symbol of leadership in the family when viewed from the perspective of family relationships (Israpil, 2017). Thus, patriarchal understanding

becomes more organized and embedded over time. Men are considered as leaders and women are seen as complements to leaders, making women's rights often limited to household roles such as taking care of the household and raising children. Men's positions are often reinforced by laws and policies in patriarchal societies, while women's rights are eroded by systems and policies that are based on this understanding. The erosion of women's rights makes the presence of the feminist movement a very essential thing in women's efforts to be able to process in community life on an equal footing with men. This can be said to be essential because the practice of the patriarchal concept that emphasizes the symbol of male power can result in social problems such as Domestic Violence (KDRT), sexual harassment, early marriage, and self-sovereignty (Sakina & A., 2017).

In a society whose mindset is already embedded in patriarchal beliefs, women often lose their self-sovereignty for various reasons due to cultural practices that support male dominance. Self-sovereignty also refers to a person's ability to have full control over their body, mind, and decisions without being influenced or controlled by others.

"Due to the physical image they have, women are portrayed as imperfect creatures (the second class), unimportant creatures (subordinate), so they are always marginalized (marginalization), exploited, and they are positioned to only take care of domestic and household problems (domestication/housewifization), such as kitchen problems, mattresses, and wells, even though in taking care of domestic problems, women still do not have full sovereignty because they are controlled by men in patriarchal cultural conditions,

so they often face acts of physical, sexual, economic violence, and harassment." (Nurhayati, 2012, p. xxvi).

One aspect that is robbed by the understanding of the concept of patriarchy that is passed down from generation to generation is how women indirectly appear to have no sovereignty over the control of women's bodies and sexuality, where the projection of patriarchal thought construction shows that this aspect is under the power of men, as stated by Susan Brodo (Nursyifa & Hannah, n.d.) who said that women have been subjugated mainly through their bodies and how this subjugation involves gender ideology and sexist reasons that come from biological differences or gender.

Women's sovereignty over themselves is eroded by patriarchal practices that often limit women's reproductive rights. This can include limited access to contraception, health services, and the desire not to reproduce or what we know as childfree, where the childfree phenomenon often conflicts with patriarchal norms that establish traditional roles for women as mothers and housekeepers. There is a belief that the role of mother is inherent in women in a patriarchal society. Social norms often consider having children an important part of a woman's identity and that choosing not to have children is against their nature, where women as a complement to the figure of the head of the family have an obligation to have children because they are bound by marriage (Ana Rita Dahnia, Anis Wahda Fadilla Adsana, & Yohanna Meilani Putri, 2023). These expectations can increase social pressure. Women who express their desire not to have children can be criticized or judged by family, friends, and the general public, where women will be considered selfish or unfeminine, and their decisions may be considered deviant from social standards. Patriarchal social constructions often lead to social stigma against women who choose not to have children.

Women who choose not to have children face additional pressures from social structures that view motherhood as an essential part of a woman's identity.

1.5.3.3. New Media

Information consumption patterns are one of the pillars of humans in shaping human mindsets towards something. The intensity of information presented to an individual can influence the individual's perception and understanding of a social phenomenon that occurs. Massive globalization allows the process of disseminating information to develop rapidly, in contrast to ancient times where the dissemination of information was still carried out by utilizing newspapers. The phenomenon of the development of this communication exposure process is known as the concept of New Media. The term "new media" refers to various types of digital media that have emerged as a result of advances in information and communication technology, especially after the emergence of the internet. This term includes various platforms and technologies that allow users to interact, participate, and create their own content, where New Media itself refers to what we know as the dynamics of communication technology (Mubarok, 2022).

The development of technology that drives the movement of communication systems that we can currently identify as new media has several characteristics in how the use of this media as a source of information can convey the actuality of the message and its contents that are to be conveyed. Therefore, new media has characteristics that destabilize its presence as a communication bridge. McQuail (2010) maps the characteristics of new media itself.

The first characteristic is the digitalization process, which allows the information processing process that will later be delivered to be formulated in a system that allows the manipulation process,

storage and message transmission process to be more efficient, as stated by McQuail (2010, p. 63) "The key to the immense power of the computer as a communication machine lies in the process of digitalization that allows information of all kinds in all formats to be carried with the same efficiency and also intermingled." Digitalization changes the process of producing, storing, and distributing information, making it more efficient and more interactive, as well as making it more accessible. This process plays an important role in the development of new media and digital transformation in many fields.

Next, there is the characteristic of interactivity, which allows individuals to interact directly and actually with the content contained in the media or with other users in real time. Interactivity is one of the characteristics of new media because the communication process itself occurs through communication interactions called Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), as stated by McQuail (2010, p. 715) regarding CMC offering "...interactivity in situations where the participants are not physically together; and possibility for anonymity and concealment while communicating. CMC can transgress the social and physical boundaries that normally limit our potential for communicating with others." CMC allows communication not always to occur directly, where users can send and receive messages whenever they want. Very different from face-to-face communication or via telephone, which requires the presence and attention of all parties. CMC allows dynamic user interaction and fast response. For example, people can communicate instantly in chat rooms or instant messages, which are similar to face-to-face conversations. CMC technology also allows real-time collaboration and information sharing, such as document sharing, video conferencing, and collaborative applications, which allow multiple users to work on the same project simultaneously.

The next characteristic that shows the development of information dissemination to form what we know as new media is flexibility. McQuail (2010, p. 190) stated "...media are equally or better suited to producing change because they are more involving as well as more flexible and richer in information." This flexibility offered emerged with the development of technological devices that can be used by individuals to later interact in real time with other individuals online.

1.5.3.4. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

CDA is an interdisciplinary approach focused on how language and discourse reflect, shape, and sustain power and ideology within society. CDA doesn't just examine texts or conversations in isolation; it looks at how these texts relate to broader social contexts, including power relations, social structures, and social change. This approach is rooted in critical social theory, which views language as a form of social action that is not neutral but actively involved in the production and reproduction of ideological dominance and social inequality. As Fairclough (1995) notes, "CDA sees discourse as a social practice and focuses on how discourse both shapes and is shaped by social structures and power relations." This statement highlights how CDA perceives discourse as an active and dynamic entity within social contexts.

One of the leading figures in the development of CDA is Norman Fairclough. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) according to Norman Fairclough includes three dimensions: macro, meso, and micro. These dimensions focus on the relationship between text and power in society, and how meaning is produced and understood.

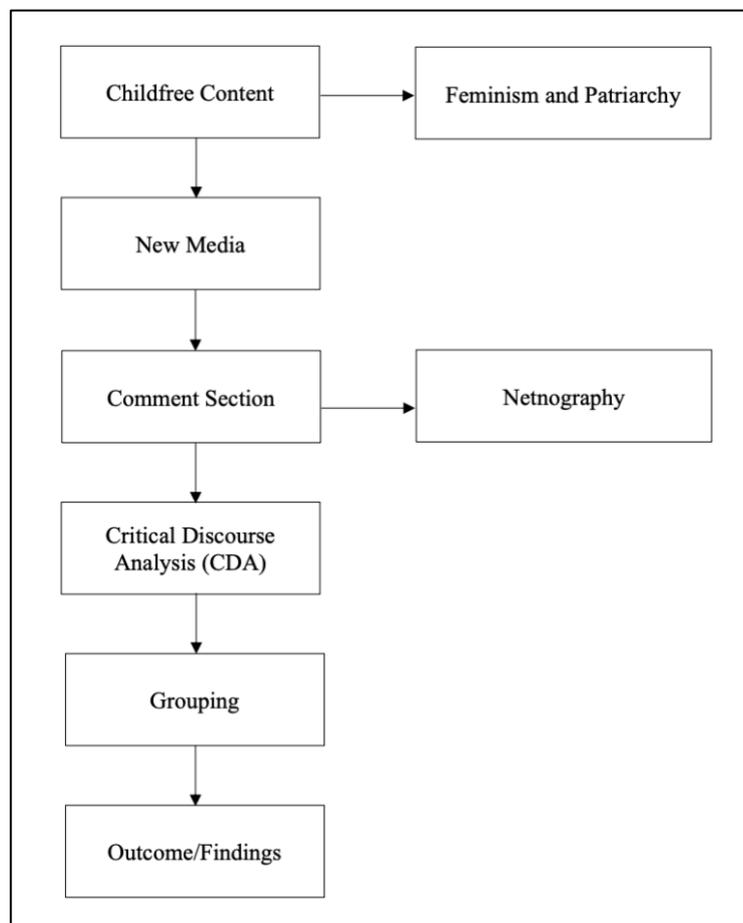
- Macro Structure: Involves interpretation and explanation that serves to reveal hidden power relationships in the

text. Fairclough (1989) argues that this analysis seeks to identify hidden assumptions or elements that are not obvious at first glance.

- Meso Structure: Acts as a bridge between micro and macro, looking at the social context in which the text is produced. CDA at this level seeks to reveal the complex power relations hidden in the text and how readers or listeners interpret them based on the social norms of their community.
- Micro Structure: Analyzes lexical items and grammatical choices. Fairclough explains that microstructure includes three values: experiential, relational, and expressive, which help describe meaning in the text. At this level, detailed analysis of words and language structures is used to see how discourse is constructed.

Fairclough's CDA also emphasizes that it is not only the text that is analyzed, but also the media environment that produces the text and the wider social context in which the media operates (Fairclough, 1992). This includes understanding how new media such as YouTube are not only platforms for expressing views, but also places where power dynamics and ideologies collide, often creating intense debate or argument.

1.6. Conceptual Operationalization



Picture 1.7: Research Framework

At the core of the study is the analysis of content related to the childfree movement, which refers to the choice by some individuals or couples to not have children. This content, as presented in the video "Semua Hal Itu Egois" by Menjadi Manusia, serves as the primary material for analysis. The video likely discusses various perspectives on childfree living, touching on themes such as personal autonomy, societal expectations, and the implications of this choice. The analysis of this content provides the foundation for understanding how it is received by audiences.

The connection to Feminism and Patriarchy suggests that the content is also interpreted through the lens of broader social and cultural frameworks. Feminist theory, in particular, may be employed to explore how the childfree movement challenges traditional gender roles and patriarchal expectations surrounding motherhood and family structures. This theoretical perspective helps to contextualize the content within ongoing debates about gender equality and the pressure to conform to societal norms.

The content is disseminated through new media, specifically YouTube, which plays a crucial role in how the message is shaped and received. New media platforms like YouTube offer a unique space for the creation and consumption of content, characterized by interactivity, user-generated content, and a global reach. The use of YouTube as a platform allows for a diverse range of audience members to engage with the content, making it an ideal site for studying audience reception. The new media context also influences how the content is presented and consumed. The affordances of YouTube, such as the ability to comment, like, share, and subscribe, create an environment where audiences can actively participate in the discourse surrounding the video. This participatory nature of new media is a key aspect of the study, as it directly impacts how audience interpretations are expressed and shared.

The YouTube comment section serves as the primary data source for this study, approached through netnography. This space is where viewers articulate their thoughts, reactions, and interpretations of the video content. Netnography, as an online ethnographic method, enables the researcher to immerse in this digital environment to observe and analyze the social interactions and cultural expressions within the comments. Comments are a rich source of qualitative data, providing direct insights into how audiences engage with and respond to the childfree narrative presented in the video. The comment section is an open and interactive forum where viewers can express agreement, dissent, share personal experiences, or pose questions.

These comments not only reflect individual interpretations but also the broader conversations and debates that the video content sparks, making the comment section a dynamic and complex site for analysis, where multiple voices and perspectives converge. The data collected from the comments will be systematically analyzed using CDA to uncover the dominant themes, sentiments, and patterns of interpretation.

CDA, which focuses on how audiences interpret media content, is the guiding theoretical framework for analyzing the comments. Through CDA, the writer will identify and interpret the various discourses present in the comment section, uncovering the deeper ideological battles and power structures related to the childfree narrative. This analysis will focus on key areas such as power and ideology, representation, and identity construction, offering insights into how language reflects and shapes societal values and beliefs. CDA will help the writer categorize the comments into different discourses, which will inform the understanding of how the childfree narrative is received by different audiences

The final step involves categorizing the comments into distinct groups based on their thematic content. These groupings will reflect the range of responses and interpretations that the video elicits. For example, groups might be formed around comments that express support for the childfree movement, those that critique it, those that discuss personal experiences, or those that engage with the feminist and patriarchal themes highlighted in the content. The process of grouping is iterative and data-driven, allowing for the emergence of categories that best capture the diversity of audience responses. This stage is crucial for organizing the data in a way that facilitates in-depth analysis and interpretation. By grouping the comments, the study can identify commonalities and differences in how viewers engage with the video, providing a comprehensive picture of audience reception.

1.7. Research Methods

1.7.1. Research Design

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research design using Netnography and CDA to explore the audience's reception of the video content 'Childfree by Choice: Semua Hal Itu Egois' by Menjadi Manusia. Qualitative research, as defined by Neuman (2011, p. 176), focuses on capturing and discovering meanings in context through in-depth, case-oriented approaches, making it ideal for understanding complex social processes and interactions within their specific cultural settings. Netnography serves as the primary method for collecting data, allowing the researcher to observe social interactions within the YouTube comment section, where audience members share their interpretations, reactions, and interactions regarding the video content. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is applied to examine the underlying structures in the text, uncovering power dynamics, ideologies, and social norms reflected in the discourse, as suggested by Neuman's emphasis on analyzing qualitative data in their cultural and social context (Neuman, 2011, p. 437). According to Creswell (2018), the strength of this qualitative method lies in the rich data derived from textual interactions and images found in the digital environment. This study integrates and interprets this data alongside relevant theories, as recommended by Creswell & Creswell (2018), to offer a multifaceted analysis. By viewing the data from various perspectives, the research meets the requirements for comprehensive, scientific, and systematic analysis, ultimately providing a nuanced understanding of how the audience receives and interprets the childfree narrative presented in the video.

1.7.2. Research Subjects

In this study, the subjects are the commentators of the YouTube video titled "Semua Hal Itu Egois" by Menjadi Manusia. These commentators represent a diverse and varied audience that engages with the content through the platform's comment section. Since the research focuses

on understanding audience reception, the subjects are not directly involved in the study through traditional means such as interviews or surveys. Instead, their publicly available comments on the video serve as the primary data source, offering insights into their interpretations, opinions, and emotional responses to the content.

1.7.3. Data Types and Sources

1.7.3.1. Primary Data

Primary data sources are those that directly provide information to the researcher, typically through direct interaction or observation (Neuman, 2011, p. 217). In this study, the primary data sources consist of the comments displayed in the YouTube video "Semua Hal Itu Egois" by the Menjadi Manusia channel.

1.7.3.2. Secondary Data

Secondary data sources are materials that do not provide data directly to the researcher but are analyzed to provide insights, such as archival records, books, or previously collected data (Neuman, 2011, p. 218). For this study, secondary data sources could include previous studies or reports on public opinion regarding the childfree phenomenon. This study will collect secondary data from journal articles, books, news, and website articles to support and complement additional information and data other than interviews. Secondary data is collected to support statements in the study that will discuss how the audience is received.

1.7.4. Data Collection Technique

For this study, the data collection process will focus on gathering audience reactions from the comments section of the YouTube video titled "Semua Hal Itu Egois" by Menjadi Manusia. This video has been selected because it directly aligns with the research topic and is likely to generate a

diverse range of responses from viewers. The selection of this specific video ensures that the data collected will be relevant and rich, providing valuable insights into how audiences engage with the content.

After selecting the relevant video, the first step is to gather comments from that video. The writer will select representative comments, such as those with a high number of "likes," those that have generated significant responses, or those that reflect a variety of perspectives. This ensures that the sample includes a range of views, including positive, negative, and neutral opinions. By doing so, the study ensures that the data accurately reflects the diversity of audience opinions, laying a strong foundation for the subsequent analysis. The selected comments will be saved in a text document or spreadsheet format, including metadata such as username, date, and time of posting. Once the data is collected, the next step is to organize the comments.

1.7.5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

With the comments collected, the analysis will begin with a detailed thematic analysis. Each comment will be read and reviewed to identify key themes, sentiments, and patterns that emerge from the audience's responses. This step is crucial in distilling the vast amount of data into manageable and meaningful categories. The thematic analysis will highlight the main topics of interest to the audience, such as agreement or disagreement with the video's message, personal experiences related to the topic, or broader social and cultural reflections inspired by the content.

The process of forming categories will follow an inductive approach, allowing themes to emerge naturally from the data rather than imposing a predetermined framework. This flexibility ensures that the analysis remains open to the nuances and complexities of audience interpretations. As themes and patterns become evident, they will be organized into distinct categories. These categories might include positive

reactions, critical feedback, personal anecdotes, or inquiries, among others. This dynamic and iterative process will continue until a clear and comprehensive categorization of the data is achieved.

Once the categories are established, each comment will be systematically sorted into one or more of these categories. This categorization process will be conducted with great care to ensure that each comment is accurately represented, taking into account the context and tone of the audience's responses. The goal is to create a structured dataset that reflects the diversity of audience interpretations and reactions, providing a clear picture of how different viewers engage with and perceive the video content. The final stage of analysis involves interpreting the data within each category. This interpretation will go beyond merely classifying the comments, aiming to uncover the deeper meanings behind the audience's responses. The analysis will explore what these categorized responses reveal about the audience's overall engagement with the video. For example, positive reactions might indicate widespread resonance with the video's message, while critical feedback could highlight underlying tensions or disagreements. The interpretation will also consider the broader social, cultural, and personal contexts that may influence how different viewers interpret the content. This contextual analysis is essential for understanding the factors that shape audience reception, offering insights into the complex dynamics of media engagement within the digital environment.

1.7.6. Data Quality (Goodness Criteria)

Forero discusses the application of Guba and Lincoln's Four-Dimensional Criteria, which includes credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability, as essential in evaluating the rigor of qualitative research. These criteria ensure that the research findings are reliable and applicable in various contexts, supporting the robustness of qualitative methodologies (Forero et al., 2018).

Data quality is corrected through several stages as follows:

1. Credibility

The credibility test will be conducted by obtaining input from informants, involvement in the field, and using various data sources. The credibility test was conducted to ensure the accuracy and truth of research findings based on the experiences and events studied. This study presents accurate transparency of research results accompanied by an analysis that will later be presented in Chapter 3 and 4.

2. Dependability

Dependability was conducted to maintain the consistency and stability of the research findings carried out over time. Researchers strengthened this stage by recording detailed notes about the research process, questioning the research process, and documenting research procedures. In this study, researchers have provided an attachment of informant interview transcript notes and conducted a coding analysis related to informant answers available in the transcript attachment section.

3. Confirmability

Confirmability is related to objectivity and neutrality in qualitative research. This aims to ensure that research findings are not influenced by the subjectivity and bias of the researcher. In this study, researchers used an analysis that was in accordance with the categorization of informant reception positions based on the themes in the coding to ensure confirmability and reduce researcher bias when interpreting the results of interviews with informants.

4. Transferability

At this stage, the research will be evaluated and assess the extent to which the findings can be applied to different situations. The researcher provides a detailed explanation of the research context so that readers can draw conclusions based on the

circumstances of each individual themselves. Therefore, the researcher in this study provides a conclusion at the end of the chapter to provide clarity of the research context clearly and concisely. In addition, the researcher is able to provide a description of the reception analysis model from the research findings in the form of novelty from the original model in detail.