




Exploring self expression and femininity in food photography: the artworks of the women photographer community "Kompakers Jogja"



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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze of the expressions of femininity in food photography as carried out by *Kompakers Jogja*. Photography has historically been established inside male-dominated domains. Unlike the historical context where photography has consistently been associated with male-dominated, *Kompakers Jogja* presents a contrasting perspective that questions the established norms of male dominance. This research explore the diverse viewpoints of ten individuals using a combination of photovoice and photo-elicitation. Through the application of qualitative content analysis within the thematic framework of femininity in photography, categorized as Theatricality, Tactility, Softness, and Hybridity. The analysis reveals that community members infuse distinct feminine sensibilities in their photography, as corroborated through visual scrutiny and validated during photo-elicitation. Prevalent among these manifestations are theatricality and hybridity, exemplified by strategic prop placement and digital enhancements aimed at augmenting the aesthetic allure of the captured images. In addition, tactility becomes important, especially when carefully choosing angles to elicit gustatory wants. Although the works of the members exhibit some softness, they serve more as supporting element. In summary, the *Kompakers Jogja* depict motifs that subtly and intricately symbolize femininity in their photography. This research shows the distinct characteristics linked to the facets of femininity as expressions of women's self-identity.

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1. Introduction

Food is now recognized not just as a tool to satisfy our basic physical needs, but also as a means to express our social and cultural identities. Food has its foundation as a human necessity, shifting into a process of encoding and interpretation. Food is an organic system intimately connected and integrated with specific types of civilisations [1]. The emergence of food photography as a distinct genre within the digital realm constitutes a noteworthy development. Photography encompasses diverse genres, spanning journalistic photography, emphasising news coverage; landscape photography, highlighting natural beauty; Human Interest photography, focusing on human subjects; and still life, wherein food photography finds its categorisation. One distinguishing aspect of the food photography genre lies in recognising its potential artistic value, particularly within social media platforms [2]. The advent of the digital and social media platform has presented female photographers with numerous avenues to creatively showcase their artistic talents in the realm of photography, namely within the domain of food. This study focuses on the Instagram online community known as @upload. The virtual community's Instagram account was created on September 9, 2014. Echi Sofwan, the instigator, began documenting complex scenes and urged fellow Instagram users to share their own images. As of February 25, 2024, the account has accumulated over 247,000 followers and

shared more than 16,000 photographs, solidifying its position as one of the most active accounts in the virtual photography community. Most of the members are female, and for women, food often assumes the attributes of photographic subjects. Another consideration in choosing the @uploadcommunity is its significance in discussions on photography communities in Indonesia. Despite the male-dominated nature of photography, the existence of female photographers is not completely eliminated. The *Kompakers* of Jogja have officially established themselves as a collective of female photographers.

The virtual Instagram community @uploadkompakan comprises members throughout Indonesia, with a presence in many places abroad, all overseen by their administrators. The individuals who are part of the virtual community @uploadkompakan, residing in different cities within and outside the country, identify themselves as "*Kompakers*," using the name of their respective city of residence. Some examples are regional groupings like *Kompakers* Jakarta, *Kompakers* Bogor, and *Kompakers* Jogja. Each of these regions has a unique structure and local government that adheres to the regulations established by the central authority. *Kompakers* Jogja is a well-established regional community that originated in Yogyakarta. The decision to choose Yogyakarta as the venue is based on the reasoning that Yogyakarta is one of Indonesia's cultural cities. Moreover, Yogyakarta is widely recognised as a melting pot where diverse cultures intersect and blend inside one urban centre. *Kompakers* Jogja is distinguished by the fact that all of its members are women. While no specific age limit exists, most members are 40 or older. These individuals come from various professions, such as homemakers, public servants, entrepreneurs, and office workers, showcasing various occupations. The presence of exclusively female individuals in photography is a captivating phenomenon, particularly in light of the prevailing male domination. Women employ distinct methodologies in food photography compared to males. The underlying hypothesis of this study posits that the artistic creations of *Kompakers* Jogja members will exhibit distinct elements of femininity, namely within the domain of food photography.

The photographic imagery created by the members of *Kompakers* Jogja encompasses various elements, including self-expression. The self-expression of this female photographer is closely tied to the concept of femininity, which is particularly significant given the predominance of male photographers in the field of photography, especially in Indonesia. The expression of femininity is essential for a wrestling photographer, as it is typically innate to the female gender. The primary research question of this study is: How is femininity portrayed in the food photography works produced by the *Kompakers* Jogja community? This research seeks to uncover the distinct characteristics linked to the facets of femininity as expressions of women's self-identity. In order to address the previously mentioned research issue, the paper will employ the theoretical framework of Femininity in Photography. The emergence of photography can be traced back to a patriarchal framework, but the feminine side also had a significant role in its development. Photography, formerly dominated by males, was closely tied to the intricate, extensive technology of early photography, which demanded substantial labour and involved demanding chemical procedures. Gradually, feminine characteristics began to appear in photography, despite its predominantly masculine nature. The presence of the "feminine" values observed in nineteenth-century photography in contemporary photography is uncertain due to the ongoing evolution of gender.

The preferences of femininity in early photography are evident in the aspects of Theatricality, Tactility, Softness, and Hybridity [4]. Theatricality encompasses multiple definitions, such as the formal study and practice of drama, one's aptitude for performing in dramatic works, and engaging in different forms of role-playing. Performances, whether official or informal, frequently incorporate costumes. The focus of this research is on the use of digital alteration to enhance food images, specifically by incorporating theatrical elements. During the initial stages of photography, the emphasis on theatricality was mostly on the visual features seen in the photographs. This was affected by the rudimentary technology and the limited powers of photo processing during that time. Due to technological developments and the accessibility of photo editing, the range of dramatic components has greatly expanded. However, this research will analyse the use of digital editing tools to improve the outcomes of food photography. In the realm of digital photography, the utilisation of software is essential

because of the convenience and efficiency provided by digital processing tools. The utilisation of filters will also be examined in the food photography pieces created by community members.

The second element in the femininity of photography is tactility, which is interpreted as a sense of touch or a variety of manifestations [4]. In this article, tactility refers to the manipulation of textures showcased in food photography, as well as the organisation of food to enhance its visual appeal and desirability. Softness, as the third aspect of femininity, encompasses the ability to evoke dreams rather than being grounded in reality. The smooth textures, faded focus, and the softness of a child's skin serve as manifestations of the essence of gentleness [4]. In this article, in the context of food photography, softness refers to the chosen depth of field, clean photo presentation, and colour choices shown in the selection of food colours photographed by community members. The fourth element, hybridity, is related to mixing, mating, or combining. In the early days of photography, hybridity was perceived as something "impure or contaminated" [4]. In the early era of photography, photographers regarded femininity as a blemish that required concealment. The research explores the concept of Hybridity by manipulating and merging things in photography artworks. Properties that were originally non-existent are "generated" and may even become an obligatory element in certain food photography techniques. The research seeks to investigate the degree to which hybridity has evolved in modern photography techniques.

The method selected to investigate femininity in photography is through photovoice and photo-elicitation. These approaches are particularly appropriate for the *Kompakers Jogja* group since they are already well-versed and strongly associated with photography, and therefore, they seamlessly integrate into their everyday routines. The expert's function is to rely on the informants to obtain information, prioritising their input over the researcher's. Utilising the photo-elicitation technique during interviews is anticipated to yield a more significant amount of information than traditional interviews. Photo-elicitation, particularly when employing visual materials provided by the participants, is a valuable method for investigating the ordinary and sometimes overlooked parts of the life of research participants. An extensive literature review on photovoice and/or photo-elicitation methodologies, categorizing past research into three distinct categories for analysis: (1) methodologically, (2) associated with food, and (3) related to gender. Several scientific findings were uncovered during the exploratory process as follows: The first is about Photovoice and/or Photo-Elicitation as Methodological Approach. Prior research extensively delves into the methodological nuances of photovoice and/or photo-elicitation, addressing various facets of the human experience [5], regarding community needs [6], about disaster and hazard preparedness [7], regarding tourism [8], and research on health [9]–[11]. This body of literature underscores the versatility of photovoice and photo-elicitation methodologies, particularly within the domain of health research, wherein photography serves as a potent tool for gaining novel insights and deeper comprehension of the research subject.

The second is related to Photovoice and/or Photo-Elicitation associated with food. Past research has applied photovoice and/or photo-elicitation methodologies to explore various aspects of food-related phenomena. This includes investigations into sociocultural influences on eating disorders [12], Research on the motivations underlying foodstagramming [13], Research on the cooking process and meal preparation situations at home [14], Teenagers' eating routines [15], Young people's perspectives on food in their lives [16] and the importance of food in students' lives [17]. This body of literature underscores the suitability of photovoice and photo-elicitation for examining food-related subjects, as evidenced by diverse research endeavors. The third is about Photovoice and/or Photo-Elicitation related to gender. Gender-focused research utilizing photovoice and/or photo-elicitation methodologies has burgeoned in recent years, covering a spectrum of topics. Studies delve into mapping femininities and masculinities, shedding light on gender dynamics [18], interventions for survivors of human trafficking and gender-based violence [19], The gender identity in one of Netflix's *Sense8* episodes [20], anxiety in men [21], sexual and gender minority [22], Harassment of low-income women [23], and the identity of female farmers in Australia [24]. This literature underscores the efficacy of visual methodologies in elucidating nuanced facets of gender relations and experiences. There is currently no research that specifically investigates femininity in food photography, even though photovoice and photo-elicitation have been used in many research

projects. Therefore, the aim of this research is to thoroughly analyze the portrayal of femininity in the food photography produced by the *Kompakers Jogja* group, which is highly relevant.

2. Method

This study utilized a combination of photovoice and photo-elicitation methods. Photovoice and photo-elicitation are visual tools that have the potential to elicit of how informants view their world more broadly. The choice of these two visual modalities is also influenced by the informants' daily lives, which are strongly tied to photography, with many even possessing cameras. Furthermore, the utilization of visual tools possesses the capacity for profound investigation, however in a nuanced manner, in comprehending social connections and acquiring fresh insights into daily existence [25]. The selection of photovoice and photo-elicitation methods is predicated on the participation of the *Kompakers Jogja* community members who possess an extensive knowledge with photography in their daily lives. The employing of this visual methodology is very suitable for exploring further into the informant's perspective. Modified photovoice is used in this study to record the members' photographic expressions of their feelings. Due to the members' frequent use of cameras, researchers find it simple to just advise them on how to take pictures rather than providing training like they would with a traditional photovoice. Instead of using disposable cameras, the camera that was used belongs to the *Kompakers Jogja* members. The photography session was conducted on November 25, 2023, as part of *Kompakers Jogja's* 9th anniversary celebration. The approach entailed presenting community members with photo subjects made up of different menu items, including traditional snacks, marble cake, fried rice, rendang rice bowl, and chicken broccoli quiche. Each participant is given 3 hours to freely take photographs in the birthday celebration area, both indoors and outdoors. Several lighting settings and props are also provided in case participants want to add objects that support their photography. The selected photos are the best choices from the members of *Kompakers Jogja* among the many photos produced. Photo-elicitation is conducted by asking several questions related to the visual photography produced by the participants. Participants met individually with the researcher to discuss the photos they had taken. This meeting took place in a private area or online meeting to discuss their opinions about photos more freely. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to reveal more potential compared to other interview types, as they enable researchers to gather a greater amount of information and evidence from informants while also addressing the study's focus [26]. The diagram of the method can be seen as Fig. 1.



Fig. 1. Research workflow

Photovoice suggests utilizing photos taken by community members themselves as a means of responding to capture their views about some issue [27], [28]. Collecting data in a participatory and inclusive setting enables participants to communicate their viewpoints using their preferred visual and verbal methods. Photovoice is currently benefiting from the advancement of modern technology, which has led to the widespread availability of equipment such as cameras and smartphones. This method enables individuals to contribute distinctive perspectives on their community. The term photovoice originated used in health research, so to build a bridge to communication research there are need to attached photo-elicitation to social research [29]. The primary advantage of photovoice that sets it apart is that both the researcher and the informants become more focused on addressing the research objectives. This is because data collection is based on a specific context and balanced with the informants' perspectives, which serve as the primary foundation, rather than the researcher's perspective. The second method, known as photo-elicitation, involves integrating photographic pieces into an interview [30]. The interview may contain photos from the researcher's collection or external sources.

However, in most photo-elicitation studies, participants are typically instructed to snap photos under certain conditions and subsequently describe the outcomes of these photos during the interview. Photo-elicitation is centered around four key aspects: social organization/social class, community, identity, and culture. This approach has the advantage of obtaining more detailed information through a photo by combining visual and verbal elements produced by the informant [31], [32]. In addition, it entails storytelling and narratives to reflect informant experiences. This research employs dialogic approach. It centers on examining the spoken or written contemplation regarding the substance of photographs and their symbolic significance. This approach is essentially constructivist, emphasizing visual meaning as a cornerstone in the social construction of reality [33]. The initial data is categorized according to the food type and lighting conditions. Afterward, the analysis is performed by attentively examining the photo-elicitation interviews and connecting them to the theory of Femininity in Photography, which encompasses four aspects of femininity proposed by Nicole Hudgins, while reassessing the findings of food photography from the informant.

3. Results and Discussion

A total of 30 individuals took part in the birthday celebration, with around 20 participants engaging in the photovoice process. The *Kompakers Jogja* community selected and requested the meal menu for the 9th-anniversary celebration. The researcher gathered the photos produced during the photovoice technique using a virtual drive. For this inquiry, a group of the top 10 individuals with the most adeptly crafted photos was selected. The referred to ability pertains to the caliber of a photograph, encompassing elements such as exposure, angle, and lighting. In addition, the selected members are willing to allocate their time for the subsequent photo-elicitation operation, as not all members have the availability to do so. All ten volunteers selected were already actively involved in the *Kompakers Jogja* community, with ages ranging from 37 to 50 years old. Regarding membership in the *Kompakers Jogja* community, individuals who are chosen have an active period ranging from 2 to 9 years, see Table 1.

Table 1. List of Participant

Informant number	Period in community	Age	Occupation
Informant 1	7 years	48 y.o	Entrepreneur
Informant 2	8 years	47 y.o	Housewives
Informant 3	5 years	37 y.o	Civil Servants
Informant 4	4 years	49 y.o	Entrepreneur
Informant 5	4 years	48 y.o	Housewives
Informant 6	6 years	49 y.o	Housewives
Informant 7	9 years	48 y.o	Housewives
Informant 8	2 years	50 y.o	Housewives
Informant 9	2 years	49 y.o	Lecturer
Informant 10	3 years	49 y.o	Housewives

The combined number of photographs generated by these ten participants was 109, with each individual choosing their most exceptional shot to represent themselves personally. The resulting ten photographs are as shown below:

3.1. Type of Food and Lighting

Based on the results of the photovoice, all the provided objects were utilized by all informants, with marble cake and chicken broccoli quiche being the most frequently chosen. The majority of food types selected by the informants were modern-style foods. Although there was fried rice, which is a daily food, it was important for the informants to see the food presented in a modern visual style. Only one informant chose traditional market snacks with a traditional presentation. The selection of food types to be photographed was a personal choice for the informants. Despite several foods being arranged together, this did not significantly affect the informants' exploration during the photovoice. Based on direct observations by the researcher during the photovoice sessions, 8 out of 10 informants used artificial lighting. Meanwhile, two informants used window lighting as their light source.

3.2. Femininity Aspect

The researchers examined four aspects of femininity in food photography, specifically focusing on the identification of communication patterns and personal information conveyed through food images. Beginning with theatricality. The informer typically uses software to edit the photos after the shooting process, enhancing them to make them more visually appealing and captivating. Half of the informants also revealed that they use the software after taking food photos, especially if they desire to upload them to social media. However, editing is not mandatory and is only done for simple adjustments such as clarity, contrast, cropping, and saturation. Some explanations from informants (photo-elicitation interviews) can be seen as Fig. 2.



Fig. 2. Photos by Informant 1,2, and 3

"...When editing, I usually make improvements. It's just that more often it's like... um, the picture is already good but slightly tilted, that's all. And sometimes just adjusting the color a bit..." (Informant 1, interview January 30, 2024)

"Actually, editing is more about highlighting what already exists, not adding to it. Or maybe even removing, healing. That's what I often do. So what I usually use is masking if using a brush, brush healing, if there's this then white balance because my camera's WB is a bit off with the Tone in white, black, highlight." (Informant 2, interview January 18, 2024)

"...Usually, when I edit, it's to increase contrast and saturation, that's the main idea. Contrast, saturation, and also texture... that's it. I don't really go into complicated editing techniques..." (Informant 3, interview January 22, 2024)

According to photo analysis, Informant 1 utilized editing software to rectify the tilt of the previously captured photographs. Additional aspects are also unveiled through the utilization of editing techniques employed to enhance color vibrancy and to aesthetically arrange photographs. The photo from Informant 2 demonstrates the utilization of modifying software for assistance. The informant utilized Lightroom software for the modification process, which involved the constant insertion of the photo and the use of brush healing and white balance adjustments. The editing performed by informant 2 is extremely limited, as they only adjust specific elements of the cut. Informant 3 utilizes editing software to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the presented photos. The informant's editing style typically lacks minimalism, as they tend to increase the saturation, contrast, and apply amusing textures to the shots they make. Additionally, one can utilize a color mixer tool on the photograph to enhance its visual appeal and make it more captivating to look at. The photo-elicitation interview findings underscored informants' propensity for employing editing tools to augment the aesthetic appeal of their photographs. In the contemporary digital milieu, the imperative of preserving the pristine integrity of images has waned, owing to the accessibility and versatility of digital editing

software. Notably, Informant 1 opts for minimalistic editing, primarily adjusting color balance and orientation, eschewing superfluous digital embellishments. Conversely, Informant 2 predominantly focuses on rectifying white balance discrepancies and fine-tuning tonal elements such as black, white, and highlight tones. Informant 3 emphasizes editing techniques centered on enhancing contrast, saturation, and texture, accentuating the visual dynamism of the photographs. Informants uniformly opine that theatricality, akin to makeup enhancing facial features, serves to augment the inherent quality of photographs rather than obfuscating their essence. Furthermore, the visual orchestration of food photography, particularly regarding prop utilization, assumes prominence within the purview of the fourth element, hybridity, accentuating the symbiotic relationship between props and primary subjects. The second element in the femininity of photography is tactility, which is actualized through the manipulation of textures presented in food photography, as well as the arrangement of food to make it look more enticing and appetizing.

According to the analysis conducted by photo informant 4, the tactility factor is demonstrated by the depiction of the texture of the marble cake in the portrait. The purpose of including a photo of the marble cake is to evoke the sensory experience of tasting chocolate in the cake. In addition, the element of tactility serves to demonstrate one's enthusiasm for food to others. The utilization of tactile hand texture in slicing enhances the appetite-inducing element, while also signifying that the finished photograph possesses a narrative. Similar to the previous informant, Informant 5 shows a sense of tactility by emphasizing the existence of the texture that will be displayed. The informant desires to capture several perspectives of the marble cake, presenting it as a complete entity, a piece, or any other composition. Its purpose is to reveal the inside composition of the marble cake, see Fig. 3.



Fig. 3. Photos by Informant 4 and 5

"...ah, mostly, so usually it's eye level, rarely do I shoot like flat lay. That's considered rare because the styling would be more understood. If it's eye level, because whatever it takes, people always see it at eye level first, right? So my hope is that whoever sees it agrees, with menu books, it's rare to have flat lay..." (Informant 4, interview January 31, 2024)

"The desire is to have some whole, some sliced, some hand-framed, so there can be various styles. Oh, okay. So, when asked about slicing, it's because I want to capture various angles and show the inner parts." (Informant 5, interview January 31, 2024)

Through the lens of photo-elicitation interviews, the element of tactility is manifested in the selection of shooting angles and the presentation of food, particularly in the manner of food slicing to reveal its contents to the viewers. As indicated by informant 4, the eye-level angle enhances the visual appeal of food by representing it from the perspective of human observation. Similarly, informant SA underscores the use of the eye-level angle as a common presentation perspective in culinary photography. For informant 5, the act of slicing food and arranging the pieces on a plate is perceived to intensify hunger and appetite in the viewers. These insights highlight the significance of tactility in food photography, where the tactile qualities of food, such as its texture and arrangement, are strategically employed to evoke sensory responses and enhance the viewer's engagement with the culinary subject matter. The

third element of femininity is softness, which captures dreams rather than reality. Softness in focus, expression, or narrative sentiment allows fantasies to be played out rather than facts. In this context, softness applies to the chosen depth of field and colour, manifested in the choice of colors of the food photographed by community members.

Informant 6 mentioned that the softness aspect in his shot might be observed by examining the composition pattern, namely the dead center. Placing objects in the center of the frame will provide a more organized and prominent appearance compared to other objects on the same table. The photo provided by informant 7 clearly depicts the presence of gender softness, as seen by the individual's preference for colorful food. Thus, the market is selected from a variety of meals that are offered with both contemporary and traditional elements. The color also exhibits its distinctiveness, enhanced by the interplay of light, which renders it captivating and prevents it from being monotonous, so effectively conveying the essence of the cuisine. According to source 7, color holds utmost significance in photography, thus making the selection of colored items a crucial aspect of the photographic process. Image captured by informant 8 showcasing the seamless nature of the shooting procedure. He has the belief that the width of an image will accentuate the primary subject, even when it is encompassed by a diverse array of surrounding things. However, when the photo is displayed seamlessly, the primary subject will become more prominent, and the viewer will experience greater ease in observing the food photograph. Informant 8 requires the photo to have an appealing appearance, which includes adhering to proper photo hygiene standards, see Fig. 4



Fig. 4. Photos by Informant 6, 7 and 8

"...because you see, when there's styling on one table, on one table, if there are other objects, this main object (quiche) will drown. So I prefer something clean. And on average, my photos are in the middle, dead center..." (Informant 6, January 15, 2024)

"It's colorful, nice... it's not common, right? I mean, it's just unique when it's made into a 'tumpeng' (stacked) and colorful." (Informant 7, January 17, 2024)

"...so I like photos that are neat. That's it, neat, not messy like that. Whether it's focused, highlighting the subject, with many props (properties), but if it's not neat, I don't like it. So the reason is kind of a bit weird, it means very aesthetic. But because for me, a photo is about beauty." (Informant 8, January 17, 2024)

As per informant testimony, the third element of food photography predominantly centers on aspects such as color vibrancy, cleanliness, and compositional tidiness. Informant 6 underscored the paramount importance of cleanliness in photographic compositions, citing a predilection for well-ordered and centrally aligned images. Conversely, Informant 7 prioritizes the selection of food objects boasting vivid and solid colors, with color serving as the primary focal point of attraction. Informant 8 accentuated the significance of visual harmony and aesthetic appeal in photographic representations, emphasizing the pursuit of compositional neatness and visual allure. Interviews with multiple informants elucidate a recurring thematic emphasis on cleanliness as a cornerstone of photographic excellence, juxtaposed with varying perspectives regarding the primacy of color in photographic compositions. Notably, while the concept of softness is invoked, its manifestation within this context diverges from conventional

interpretations, with an emphasis on the pristine cleanliness and vivid coloration of photographic subjects, rather than softness in its literal sense as delineated within the softness element. The fourth element, hybridity, is associated with the use of props that make the photo composition more lively, surrounding the main object to add beauty to a photo. Supporting props are used as complementary elements in the photography process. This has been confirmed by most informants who clearly use food props. Various props such as bowls, spoons, forks, leaves, and other items are placed around the main object. Researcher attempt to identify hybridity as a crucial point in femininity at the beginning of the world of photography to be actualized in the realm of food photography.

Hybridity element related to the presence of a property that supports the display of beauty in photographs. The presence of hybridity is evident in the majority of the informants, particularly in the artworks of members of *Compactors*. Informants 9, 10, and 3 provide examples of how this hybridity is expressed. Notably, 8 out of the informants utilize props to enhance their visual presentation. Informer 9 also disclosed the utilization of pre-existing assets to enhance the food photography created. Ethics involves the practice of strategically placing food props in order to get visually appealing photographs that effectively showcase the food items. Informant 10 demonstrates that the use of prop items such as a fork, cheese, and rosemary enhances the visual appeal of the food being depicted, making it appear more vibrant and lifelike, see Fig. 5. However, it has been seen that informants occasionally capture photographs with several components or attributes when they experience a strong desire, prompting them to use greater effort in their photography. Additionally, informant 3 provided information about the utilization of the property to enhance the outcome of the photograph, which falls within the category of hybridity, the fourth gender aspect. The informant achieves gender-hybridity by incorporating existing elements such as placing a fork next to the food quiche and using a small bowl for the sauce. The addition of cheese next to the food also enhances the resulting photograph. This aligns with the informant's preference for producing photos that are well-liked. Other aspects of the property also reveal a modern food impression, with the addition of a suitable photo background and the use of materials like wood and tables to enhance the colors. This creates a photo that is not just a typical informant, but rather contains three portraits that convey a story to the viewer. The fourth element, hybridity, is confirmed by most informants through their use of props in the photovoice process and daily food photography sessions. Props are crucial for enhancing the visual quality of the presented food, whether it is adding plates, knives, spoons, forks, or various vegetable slices and other ingredients that support the food.

The analysis of photo-elicitation interviews reveals the pervasive presence of femininity elements within food photography creations by members of the *Kompakers Jogja* community. Within this community, food photography becomes a conduit for self-expression, intertwining with notions of femininity. Implicitly, female photographers integrate femininity elements into their compositions, notably observed through the analysis of theatricality and hybridity. Members of the community that shoot food photography exhibit a theatrical quality in their work. The informants emphasized a tendency to manipulate images in order to improve their visual appeal. Because digital editing software is so readily available and user-friendly, there is less of a need to preserve the original integrity of photos in the modern digital world. Certain informants opt for minor processing, particularly modifying the color balance, to steer clear of very dramatic digital alteration. Certain informants prioritize the task of correcting disparities in white balance and fine-tuning tonal aspects such as black, white, and highlight. In order to emphasize the photo's visual dynamics, editing is also done with an emphasis on enhancing texture, saturation, and contrast. The entire case posits that theatricality, akin to cosmetics that accentuate face features, boosts the quality of photographic work.

The second aspect of portraying femininity in photography is tactility, which is enhanced by manipulating the texture of the food and arranging it in a visually appealing manner. Photo-elicitation utilizes the selection of angles in photography and the presentation of food to enhance the sense of touch, such as cutting food to reveal its contents to the audience. The third part of softness relates to elements such as color vibration, hygiene, and the harmonizing of composition. Informants highlight the significance of hygiene in photography

compositions, often opting for photographs that are well-structured and meticulously arranged. The photographer's pursuit of composition and visual charm emphasizes the significance of visual harmony and aesthetic appeal in their representation, highlighting these as crucial components of softness. Conversely, informer 7 gives priority to choosing food items that have vivid and concentrated colors, being the main points of appeal. The fourth component, hybridity, is related to the utilization of features that around the focal point of the picture to enhance its attractiveness and give the composition more life. In photography, supporting qualities are employed as complimentary components. Most informants, who blatantly use food properties, have corroborated this. Cups, spoons, forks, leaves, and other objects are arranged around the central object. To bring femininity into the modern era of food photography, the researchers looked for signs of hybridity in early photography. Through the usage of the property in the photovoice process and the daily food photography sessions, the majority of informants validated the fourth element, hybridity. Whether it's the addition of plates, knives, spoons, forks, or different vegetable slices and other elements that complement the food shot, properties are crucial to enhancing the visual quality of the food provided. Theatricality manifests in dramatic presentation and meticulous arrangement of food items, while hybridity reflects the fusion of diverse influences and aesthetics. Through prop utilization and editing techniques, photographers enhance the aesthetic appeal of their works. Although elements of tactility and softness sporadically surface, they do not dominate the creative output of *Kompakers Jogja* members. Gender dynamics exert a significant influence on the expression of femininity in food photography within the *Kompakers Jogja* community. Female photographers, in navigating their artistic endeavours, subconsciously integrate elements of femininity, reflecting the intricate interplay between personal identity, societal norms, and creative expression. This holistic exploration provides valuable insights into the complex intersections of gender dynamics and visual culture within contemporary communities



Fig. 5. Photos by Informant 9 and 10

"When it comes to food photography, there are often many intricate details, particularly in the props used. So, for food like this, the atmosphere should be like this, there needs to be something supporting it." (Informan 9, interview January 15, 2024)

"This is simple, right, continuously simple, which indeed gives a somewhat monotonous impression. But because it's given elements like rosemary, it brings life to it. Because at that time, I actually got a bit of light, so it seemed more vibrant to me, more challenging, because the photo seemed monotonous, with pale colors, but then when there's light, and with this addition of fork, cheese, and rosemary by Nunung, it just... oh, that's it..." (Informant 10, interview January 18, 2024)

"Because I tend to prefer busy compositions in my photos, rather than minimalist ones, I enjoy it when a photo tells a story. So, typically, when I'm making bread, there are accompaniments like flour and eggs. When it comes to quiche, for instance, it feels more like something I made because it has cheese, and I also like to use skewers, not forks, those small cheese skewers on the side, I like to use those too... And at home, for garnishes, I grow rosemary, mint, anything really, because I enjoy adding something to the object. Like adding rosemary, that's typical of me, I can't leave things plain." (Informant 3, interview January 22, 2024).

4. Conclusion

To conclude, the influence of gender dynamics becomes a salient factor shaping the manifestation of femininity within the realm of food photography among *Kompakers Jogja* members. As female photographers navigate their artistic pursuits, their subconscious incorporation of femininity underscores the nuanced interplay between personal identity, societal expectations, and creative expression. By comprehensively examining these dynamics, researchers gain insight into the multifaceted intersections of gender and visual culture within contemporary communities. Although the research findings indicate that some *Kompakers* in Jogja express femininity, the authors acknowledge that this does not represent the expression of the entire group. The aspect that needs further expansion in the future is the sample size, as the current research only includes a sample of ten individuals. The *Kompakers Jogja* community members utilize food photography as a means of self-expression. An investigation into photo-elicitation interviews has revealed subtle aspects of femininity in food photography, namely among individuals in the age range of 37 to 50 years within the community. Unconsciously, female photographers in the *Kompakers Jogja* group incorporate distinct feminine characteristics into their food photography compositions. Future research should consider including younger individuals, as there is a possibility that their self-expression may differ. Finally, the feminine factor emerges as a potent influence in shaping the manifestation of femininity within the context of food photography among some of the members of *Kompakers Jogja*. The deliberate or subconscious inclusion of feminine elements, as evidenced by the nuanced interplay of theatricality, hybridity, tactility, and softness, attests to the profound impact of gender on the creative process and outcomes in photography within this specific community. This intricate interweaving of gender dynamics and artistic expression highlights the multifaceted nature of photography as a form of visual communication and cultural representation, wherein gender becomes a salient lens through which creative endeavours are consciously and subconsciously shaped. However, technological advancements consistently impact the field of photography. In the future, there may be a shift in how women portray the concept of femininity through their photographic work.

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