

## **ABSTRACT**

*The phenomenon of men wearing makeup on social media has become a topic that generates diverse responses, particularly among university students. This study aims to explore how the message of male grooming, as presented on the TikTok, is received by university students. Using a qualitative approach and Stuart Hall's reception analysis theory, this study identifies three positions of message reception: dominant reading, negotiated reading, and oppositional reading. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with ten key informants from different academic backgrounds. The results show that most informants are positioned in the dominant reading category, in which they maintain the view that men wearing makeup deviate from religious norms, cultural values, and family teachings they have upheld since childhood. Meanwhile, some informants fall under the negotiated reading category, showing conditional acceptance, and a few others belong to the oppositional reading category, fully accepting male grooming as a form of self-expression. These findings indicate that social media, as part of new media, has created a space for diverse gender representation. However, traditional value constructions that have long been internalized still strongly influence how audiences decode such messages.*

*Keywords: TikTok, male grooming, beauty influencer, reception analysis, gender stigma*