



# Representation of Women in Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap Film (2022)

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## ABSTRACT

### Keywords

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Gender  
Patriaki

This research is entitled Representation of Women in Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap Film (2022). This research aims to find out how the representation of women in film Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap (2022). Film is a form of electronic communication in the form of audiovisual media capable of displaying words, sounds, images, and their combinations. Film is also one of the second modern forms of communication to emerge in the world. This research uses a qualitative method that refers to Roland Barthes' Semiotic Theory, researchers will carefully select from each scene or piece of film that depicts women's gender in it, then will be described and analyzed for denotation, connotation, and mythical meanings. With observation and documentation techniques in the form of screenshots of each scene of the film Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap (2022) which indicates the representation of women. Researchers used six scenes to analyze with the results obtained by researchers, namely the character Ms. Domu represents a woman who must obey all decisions from her husband. Ms. Domu even follows choices that are not in accordance with Ms. Domu's heart. Sarma represents a woman who is considered less important than her brother by her family. Sarma is considered not to have the right to speak out as a daughter in her own family. In fact, Sarma's character has big dreams of becoming a chef, but she has to follow the will of a family that is different from her dreams.

## 1. Introduction

In a movie there are male characters and female characters (Fabianti & Putra, 2021). These differences are not only seen physically but also in the behavior of the characters in the story (Ekeleme, 2023). This makes the male and female genders have their own stereotypes (Pressler, 2019). Therefore, it is not uncommon for media, including movies, to bring out these stereotypes in their characterizations of the sexes (Gebhard et al., 2021). JT Wood in the media often portrays men as active and strong, while women tend to be passive and often incompetent. Because women are portrayed as passive, this gives rise to feminist ideologies that are used to break stereotypes about women (Et.al, 2021).

Women in the media have evolved over time. In the beginning, women were often represented in limited traditional ways, they had limited access and careers and had little control over their choice of life partners (Bhandari, 2018). Gender stereotypes portrayed women as weak and dependent on men. They also have limited control over their bodies (Schimmelpfennig, 2013). As in the movie "Tabula Rasa", this movie tells the story of a woman named Sari who experiences oppression and violence in her household. Sari struggles to free herself from the cycle of life and regain her freedom and dignity (McGiveron, 2018).

The development of movements for gender equality and feminism influenced this change. Women are now portrayed with strength, and independence. The media industry offers greater opportunities

both behind the scenes and in front of the camera. Perceptions of women in the media are also changing, as audiences become more aware of the importance of inclusive representation. Strong, positive representation can empower women in the real world and influence wider world opinion. As in *Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts* (2017), the film follows the journey of Marlina, a female farmer who fights robbers and tries to fight for justice herself. Marlina is portrayed as brave and strong in frightening situations (Alola & Alola, 2020).

Women are often associated with culture, within the culture playing various roles and according to the social norms that exist in the society of their culture (Oki & Ridwan, 2022). In many cultures, women are often considered the pillars of the family, responsible for childcare, housework, and emotional support for family members. In addition, culture can also influence social norms governing the dress, behavior, and social roles expected of women. In some cultures, women may have broad access to education and careers. One movie that raises women's issues to cultural traditions is *Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap* (2022).

*Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap* (2022) tells the story of a Batak family that adheres to the patrilineal system, a social custom that regulates the flow of descent from the father's side. In this movie, the leadership of the clan and the house is entirely controlled by male characters and the female characters are mostly silent. Ms. Domu is a Batak female character who must obey her husband's decisions. The figure of Ms. Domu is represented as a caretaker of children, as if raising children is only a woman's job. In addition to Ms. Domu, Sarma, the only daughter character in the Domu family, must sacrifice her dreams for her own family.

Bene Dion Rajagukguk, as the screenwriter of *Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap* (2022) displays a patriarchal culture where women's business is only cooking and bed, women must submit to men. The most important factor in the existence of gender ideology that causes injustice is the construction of patriarchal ideology that exists, develops, is believed and internalized in society for generations over a long period of time (Kasiyan, 2009). This study involves many female figures in the storyline. As mentioned above, women are often the object of patriarchy (male domination). On this basis, the author is interested in examining the representation of women in the movie *Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap* (2022).

This research uses a qualitative approach by using semiotic analysis to analyze the object under study. The author uses a qualitative approach with Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis based on his study which is divided into three parts, namely denotation, connotation, and myth.

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Type of Research

This research uses a qualitative approach by using semiotic analysis to analyze the object under study (Vidiyawati & Wibowo, 2023). The author uses a qualitative approach with Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis based on his study which is divided into three parts, namely denotation, connotation, and myth.

### 2.2. Object of Research

The object of research is the point of attention of a study (Sobur, 2009). The object of this research is a scene that contains representations of women in the movie *Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap* (2022).

### 2.3. Data Collection Technique

Researchers conducted data collection collected through the internet and related sources that could be used. Observation is a method of collecting data by systematically observing and recording the symptoms under investigation (Wibowo, 2022). Researchers chose to make observations by observing things related to the research, namely watching and observing in detail the scenes depicting women in the movie *Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap* (2022).

According to Sugiyono & Lestari (2021) documentation is a method used to obtain data and information in the form of books, archives, documents, written figures and images in the form of reports and information that can support research. The data collection stage carried out by researchers is to collect secondary data or supporting data in the form of screenshots in the *Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap*

(2022) movie scene. In this research, how to collect information data obtained through various books, journals, reports, and previous theses that become references. Written data can be in the form of literature studies or literature related to the representation of women (Amalia, 2020).

#### 2.4. Data Analysis Technique

This research will focus on the representation of women in the movie *Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap* (2022) in the following way. Data reduction is a data collection that is done roughly to classify, organize and select the data needed and those that are not needed. It is also grouped according to the theory used by the researcher. After the data is selected, the data will be grouped for the needs of the researcher which will then be understood and analyzed using theory so that conclusions can be drawn. Drawing conclusions about the representation of women in the film *Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap* (2022) was carried out after the researcher made an identification. In this research data validity technique using triangulation techniques. According to Defitrika & Mahmudah (2021) the purpose of triangulation is to increase the theoretical, methodological, and interpretative power of qualitative research. In triangulation there are three different types, namely sources, techniques, and time. In this study using source triangulation. According to Sarifudin et al., (2020) source triangulation is checking data that has been obtained through several sources.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Result

Researchers use Roland Barthes semiotics to analyze a meaning through signs. Where the theory is used to explain how women in the movie *Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap* (2022). Researchers looked for denotation, connotation and myth through movie scenes and took snippets of movie images to find the representation of women in *Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap* (2022).

##### 3.1.1. Roland Barthes Semiotics Analysis

###### 3.1.1.1. Scene Mak Domu is ordered by Pak Domu to call his three children



Image 1. Ms. Domu was ordered by Mr. Domu to call her son to come home

Ms. Domu was ordered by Mr. Domu to call his three children, Domu, Gabe, and Sahat, to come home after many years on the road. Here, Mr. Domu doesn't want to do it himself because he thinks it's a mother's job, and a father only orders it.

##### Significant First Stage (Denotation):

In scene 1, the denotation is that Ms. Domu and Mr. Domu are seen calling Gabe in front of the porch of the house. Then Ms. Domu was ordered by Mr. Domu to call his three children, namely Domu, Gabe, and Sahat to come home after many years in his old country.

### Significant Second Stage (Connotation):

Based on the denotation above when Mr. Domu told Ms. Domu to talk to Gabe, the connotation is that Mr. Domu did not want to do it himself because he thought it was a mother's job, and a father only ordered it.

### Myth Stage:

The scene creates a myth, that in Batak families women must obey all decisions from their husbands, the position of men is higher than women in all aspects of life (Patmawati, 2021). According to Retno (2018), the injustice of the rights and obligations of husband and wife in monogamous marriage creates unequal gender power relations. Women experience restrictions on sexuality through marriage. Women no longer have rights over their bodies after they get married.

This happens because a woman's entire body belongs to the man who married her. The common view is that the husband's sexual freedom is normal. The husband is powerful, while the woman is ordinary. Women do not think about why they have to let their bodies be abused by their own husbands, who in fact, are the ones who should be able to protect and protect them. Women inevitably have to give themselves up even though it makes them painful and increasingly helpless. Women do not realize that they are actually capable of resisting oppression, until they are finally able to think and plan better for their future. Such discrimination has a serious impact on the fulfillment of the life needs of sexual minorities, because it limits their rights to actualize themselves in the economic, political, social, cultural, health, and in all aspects of life.

#### 3.1.1.2. Scene of Ms. Domu turning his back on Mr. Domu



Image 2. Ms. Domu turning his back on Mr. Domu

Mr. Domu will hold a Sulang-sulang Pahompu party for his mama. This will certainly cost a lot of money. Apparently, Mr. Domu did not discuss the matter with Ms. Mak Domu beforehand. Ms. Domu was very upset and felt disrespected for not being involved in the decision. This indicates that asking for women's opinions or views is not taken into account and is considered useless.

### Significant First Stage (Denotation):

In scene 2, the denotation is that Ms. Domu turned his back on Mr. Domu and was reluctant to engage him in conversation. Ms. Domu is angry with Mr. Domu's decision to donate money for opung's party without her knowledge.

### Significant Second Stage (Connotation):

Based on the denotation above, the connotation obtained is Ms. Domu's resentment towards Mr. Domu who was not involved in decision making. Mr. Domu decided to donate some of his money to celebrate the "sulang-sulang pahopu" party. However, this decision was made unilaterally by Mr. Domu without asking Ms. Domu for advice first.

### **Myth Stage:**

Women are considered emotional while men are rational beings, if a woman expresses her opinion or disagreement then it is considered "trivial" or considered as a woman who is too brave to exceed her nature. Meanwhile, if a man does the same, it is normal and is referred to as someone who is firm and has a leadership spirit. Second, women are considered weak so they are considered incapable of leading. Weak in the sense of physical, mental, thinking as well as economic. For example, women are not considered 'appropriate' to be a president or an official in certain government agencies. Third, men are the breadwinners and the main support of the household. In this context, religions have different interpretations, but regardless of religious interpretations regarding men as the main breadwinners, in daily reality today many women work outside the home (Jon, 2020).

### **3.1.1.3. Scene Mr. Domu asks Ms. Domu for help to get his children to come home**



Image 3. Mr. Domu asks Ms. Domu for help to get his children to come home

Mr. Domu is seen asking Ms. Domu for help in getting her children to come home and attend the party. Ms. Domu explained that she wanted to go to Java to see her children. However, Mr. Domu strongly forbade Mak Domu's intention. Suddenly, Mr. Domu had the idea to pretend to be divorced to get his children to come home. Ms. Domu initially refused, but Mr. Domu forced her to comply. Ms. Domu is a Batak woman who is forced to comply with all the decisions made by her husband. Ms. Domu even follows choices that go against her personal wishes.

### **Significant First Stage (Denotation):**

In scene 3, the denotation is Mr. Domu asking Ms. Domu for help to get his children to come home and attend the party. Ms. Domu suggested taking them to Java but Mr. Domu refused.

### **Significant Second Stage (connotation):**

Based on the denotation above Ms. Domu suggested taking them to Java but Mr. Domu refused, the connotation obtained is that Ms. Domu's opinion is not heard and is always denied by Mr. Domu. Ms. Domu explained that they had to go to Java to be able to take them home. However, Mr. Domu's prestige fulfills his anger if he has to pick up his children. Mr. Domu strictly forbids Ms. Domu's departure and asks Ms. Domu to do as he is told.

### Myth Stage:

Communication is the most important thing in marriage. The noble purpose of marriage is to build a happy, eternal family based on God Almighty, so there are arrangements regarding the rights and obligations of each husband and wife (Panjaitan & Harahap, 2021). Without an awareness of the unity of goals that must be achieved together, it can be imagined that the household will easily experience obstacles, which will eventually lead to a household rift that can have further consequences. Therefore, it is expected that every couple has the same vision and mission in living their life as a husband and wife. The goal is actually very noble if it is based on giving each other the best for their partner.

Agreement can be used as a solid basis for fostering a harmonious family life. The existence of differences has led to several conflicts of differences. If communication between husband and wife is smooth and goes well, then the marriage will also go well even though it is hit by several problems that occur in marriage. However, if the communication between husband and wife is not smooth and obstructed, the problems that occur cannot be handled properly so that the marriage will easily falter. Husband and wife must be good friends and companions. So, the happiness of a marriage does not only lie in the love factor, one of the important factors is interpersonal communication between husband and wife (Putra & Ochirov, 2020). Interpersonal communication relationships are the most important communication in a marriage.

#### 3.1.1.4. Scene Mr. Domu persuades Ms. Domu to lie to his children



Image 4. Mr. Domu persuades Ms. Domu to lie to his children

Mr. Domu tried to persuade Ms. Domu to lie to his children by pretending to be divorced so that his three wandering children would be willing to come home.

#### Significant First Stage (Denotation):

In scene 4, the denotation is that Mr. Domu is trying to persuade Mak Domu to want to lie to his children by pretending to be divorced so that his three children who migrate are willing to come home.

#### Significant Second Stage (connotation):

Based on the denotation above, Mr. Domu persuaded Ms. Domu to lie to his children, the connotation is that Ms. Domu as a woman must submit to Mr. Domu. Here, Mr. Domu does everything he can to achieve his wishes even if he has to take bad actions, even though he also tries to manipulate his wife with sentences that make Ms. Domu obey him.

**Mythic Stage:**

In general, the husband is the head of the family and is responsible for the welfare of the family both morally and materially. Meanwhile, the wife submits to the husband's leadership while in some cases she can play a role in organizing household management with the husband's approval. As a consequence of the husband's position as head of the family, the husband has the greatest rights in the family institution. Obeying the husband is a consequence of marriage, whether we want it or not, we have to do it even if the husband's orders sound trivial. When we are married, we must be ready to accept all the consequences.

**3.1.1.5. Scene of Ms. Domu fighting back against Mr. Domu**

Image 5. Ms. Domu fighting back against Mr. Domu

Mak Domu fought against Mr. Domu when Mr. Domu did not feel guilty about what happened in his family.

**Significant First Stage (Denotation):**

In scene 5, the denotation is that Ms. Domu fights against Mr. Domu when Mr. Domu does not feel guilty about what happened to his family.

**Significant Second Stage (connotation):**

Based on the denotation above, Ms. Domu fights back against Mr. Domu when Mr. Domu does not feel guilty about what happened in his family, the connotation is that Ms. Domu as a wife feels unfairly treated by Mr. Domu because she does not have the opportunity to have a voice, make decisions, and do her own will. The situation is exacerbated by Mr. Domu who does not want to admit his mistakes and instead tells his wife to be silent and does not give her the freedom to express what is in her heart.

**Myth Stage:**

Women are portrayed as helpless beings who are victims of injustice from their environment. But with the power that comes from within her, the woman rises up and fights back to maintain her self-respect so that her fate does not become worse.

### 3.1.1.6. Scene of Sarma explaining what it's like to be a Batak woman



Image 6. Sarma explaining what it's like to be a Batak woman

Sarma told Ms. Domu that after seeing her fight back, Sarma also wanted to fight back. Like his brother, Sarma also has problems in his life that are no less important. Sarma also has conflicts with his family, especially with the figure of Mr. Domu as his father. He is willing to break up with his non-Batak girlfriend, leave his dream as a chef, and decide to stay in Batak to look after his parents. Sarma did this because of the will of his parents, especially Mr. Domu.

Unfortunately, Sarma's problems are not considered as important as his brother's by his family. Sarma is considered not to have the right to speak out as a daughter in her own family. Even at the end of the movie, Sarma's final decision is different from that of her brothers. Sarma is still told that she must sacrifice her dreams for the choices of her own family. Meanwhile, all of Sarma's brothers can go back to living their lives according to their own choices.

#### **Significant First Stage (Denotation):**

In scene 6 the denotation is Sarma telling Ms. Domu that after seeing him fight back, Sarma also wants to fight back.

#### **Significant Second Stage (connotation):**

Based on the denotation above, after Sarma saw Ms. Domu fight back, Sarma also wanted to fight back, the connotation is that as a daughter, Sarma felt that she had to obey Mr. Domu's wishes. Sarma also felt that she had succumbed and sacrificed more of her dreams for her three brothers so that her dreams had been taken away for the realization of their own desires.

#### **Myth Stage:**

The scene creates a myth, that women in women's families are "seemingly" subordinated in Batak customs. The presence or birth of a male child is more expected or far more important than the birth of a female child. This can be seen from the Batak umpasa that says: *Laklak ma di ginjang pintu singkoru ginolomgolom; Saimaranak manasida sampulupitu, marboru sampuluonom* (Simatupang, 2021). The above Umpasa is often heard during Batak wedding customs when giving ulos. However, there are things that need to be reviewed from the umpasa. "Having 17 sons, and 16 daughters", this unbalanced comparison assumes that the roles of women and men in Toba Batak custom are not comparable. The role of men is seen as greater than the role of Batak women.



### 3.2 Discussion

After conducting research using Roland Barthes semiotics, we can see the representation of women in the movie *Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap* (2022):

1. *Women Must Obey All Decisions of Their Husbands*, (Hermawati, 2007) argues that in Indonesia itself, the view that women must obey and submit to their husbands is still believed and practiced by the community (Hermawati, 2017). Therefore, women are difficult to get the right to have an opinion and have limitations in doing something they want. As in the film *Ms. Domu* as a woman must submit to Mr. Domu. Mr. Domu does everything he can to achieve his wishes even if he has to take bad actions. Mr. Domu also tried to manipulate his wife with sentences that made Mak Domu obey Pak Domu.

2. *Women's opinions are never heard* In a problem that requires an opinion, women are often not included in the forum, even if they participate usually only as a sweetener or just a breeze.

3. *Women's Resistance to Gender Injustice in the Family Issues* regarding women's issues have received attention, especially by people who view and consider women to be treated unfairly in the family and society (Keohane, 2020). The view of women as weak and not having potential in the public sphere has limited women's space. Women's rights are taken away and regulated by those in power. The strong patriarchal culture that is passed down to new generations makes these rules strong and difficult to eliminate. In the 19th century, the limited space for women to move, especially in terms of education, made them lack insight outside the domestic sphere. Women were assigned only to marry, reproduce, and take care of the household. This led to women being shackled from the rules that bound them. If women violate these rules, they are ready to accept the consequences, such as losing family members. The limited knowledge of women due to patriarchal culture makes the general human perspective that a woman is useless if they marry at an old age, cannot reproduce, and are unable to attract men with their bodies. Women's achievements are only seen from the direction of reproduction not from their intellectual abilities.

Johnson in *Women's Lives* (2006) says that women's silence due to not getting the opportunity to speak causes male domination to strengthen over them. According to Djajanegara in *Feminist Literary Criticism* (2000) states that the inequality that occurs between men and women raises the desire in women to develop and express themselves more freely. Not only to themselves, but also to show their existence as women in society.

### 4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research, there are signs that represent the female element performed by the actors Ms. Domu and Sarma in the *Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap* film. The process of analyzing this film was carried out using Roland Barthes Semiotics study. There are at least 6 scenes analyzed, the researcher found the interpretation of meaning based on Roland Barthes semiotic analysis. This scene is a picture of the various meanings that can be attributed to it, it is a representation of denotation, connotation, and myth. These elements are represented through signs and objects related to the patriarchal elements of Mr. Domu's cast such as in the form of communication, facial expressions, and so on. This meaning is the basis for analyzing the representation of women in *Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap* (2022).

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the film *Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap* (2022) has a variety of representations of women including unilateral decisions made by Pak Domu to Mak Domu, Mr. Domu who always denies Ms. Domu's wishes and forces her to obey him, Mr. Domu who imposes his will on Ms. Domu, and daughters who always obey their father's orders and sacrifice their feelings for their brothers and sisters contained in this film show the absence of equal rights for women in the family. Sarma in the movie is portrayed as a son who works as a civil servant in the sub-district in his area. While in one of the dialogues he confessed to his three brothers that he was accepted into a cooking school in Bali, he was forbidden by Mr. Domu to continue on the grounds that his three brothers had migrated so that he had to look after his mother and father in his hometown. Therefore, she felt that she did not get the right to achieve her dream while her three brothers could do it even if it was against their father.

The results of the analysis prove that through Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis, every sign in literary works, especially films, often has a certain meaning that can be studied to achieve a goal. This research focuses on the study of semiotic analysis in finding the representation of women in Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap (2022).

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