



# Audience reception of infidelity in the Film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan*

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## ABSTRACT

### Keywords

Dominant-hegemonic position  
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Negotiated position  
Oppositional position  
Reception

Film is a medium that can be used to convey messages to the audience. The development of film media comes by presenting shows related to social events, problems in everyday life, including the issue of infidelity. *Noktah Merah Perkawinan* is one of the films that shows various household tempests. This study aims to find out how the audience's reception of infidelity in the film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan* by Rapi Films. Stuart Hall's reception divided the message into three groups of audiences: dominant-hegemonic position, negotiated position, and oppositional position. The method used in this study was qualitative using Stuart Hall's reception analysis technique. The data collection method is carried out by observation, interviews, and literature studies. The subjects in the study were 5 people who watched the movie *Noktah Merah Perkawinan*. The results show that from the film there are three groups of positions in the reception of Stuart Hall. The first one is the dominant-hegemonic position where there was one informant who agrees with the content of the message in the film. There were three informants who were in the negotiated position, namely receiving messages and then being negotiated because they had different views. The third group is the oppositional position, which one informant disagree with the content of the message conveyed by the creator of the message. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the majority of the audience is in a negotiated position with the message in the film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan*.

## 1. Introduction

The phenomenon of the presence of a third person in the romantic relationship of Indonesian society is rife. Infidelity is often a source of problems in family life. Cases of infidelity are easy for everyone to find and commit, regardless of age, position, social status, education level, and sex. The phenomenon of infidelity, disharmony in the family, making a household mess. If a person has decided to settle down, the seeds of infidelity or betrayal should not be carried out according to the marriage vows. The marriage bond is something that is considered sacred or sacred. According to Law no. 1 of 1974 article 1 concerning marriage that, "marriage is an inner birth bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife with the aim of forming a happy and eternal family based on the One and Only Godhead". In marriage arise rights and obligations between husband and wife, both individual and joint rights and obligations in the family (Indonesia, 1974). Marriage is a transition or life cycle from the level of adolescent life to the level of family life of all humans in the world. Humans will experience changes in living standards throughout their lives called the life cycle, namely childhood, adolescence, marriage, old age, and death (Koentjaraningrat, 1977). One of the stages of human development reaching adulthood is related to marriage, where individuals have grown up and are ready to change their status in the social environment with other adults. This stage is a transitional period in determining a partner and plays a very important role.



The current modernization era not only has an impact on social progress, but also provides changes to society itself, especially domestic life. Problems in the household cause many changes in attitudes and become a big challenge that requires community attention. Changes in social, economic, and cultural elements can cause social disorganization, which is interpreted as the process of erosion of social norms and values in society affected by social change. The emergence of social problems refers to the emergence of social chaos due to deviations from the rules (Pangkey, Patiknjo, Femmy, 2021). Problems that arise in the household not only make the household become disharmonious but, can lead to divorce. Domestic conflicts can occur in married couples both young and mature, with various kinds of problems faced in their respective households (Musaitir, 2020). The biggest problem of infidelity that can lead to divorce is the disconnection of communication between husband and wife. Husbands who work outside the home are easier to communicate with the opposite sex than wives who are more often at home (Sabri & Adiprabowo, 2023). Divorce in the household has many other factors, such as economic problems, domestic violence, infidelity, offspring etc. Infidelity is one of the factors that is often encountered, divorce in 2022 reached 516,334 cases with a fairly high jump of 15.31% compared to 2021 which amounted to 447,743 cases. The number of divorce cases last year was even the highest in the last six years. Divorce data throughout Indonesia in 2010 was ranked second as the cause of infidelity in Indonesia, with 20,199 cases (Annur Cindy, 2023). The results of research on the factors that cause divorce in Indonesia refer to several aspects of domestic life, namely economic factors, poor communication between couples, and infidelity (Manna, Doriza, 2021). Cheating is the main reason for the separation of lovers and husband and wife. Infidelity is an act like a legal husband and wife with another person who is not a legal partner, more in nature to fulfill the desire for pleasure for the perpetrator who has an affair (Kosasih, 2009). Infidelity is not just established because of a close emotional connection, but sometimes involves sexual relations. Emotional infidelity has three factors namely, emotional intimacy, confidentiality, and sexual intercourse. Sexual relationships do not always occur in infidelity, but illicit relationships still have the potential to cause divisions in the marriage. One of the causes of divorce in the household is the presence of a third person (Nugraha, 2021). Infidelity is a breach of trust, a betrayal, the final decision of a relationship. In addition, infidelity is equal to a crime based on the fact that it violates the rules of the couple or the norms of the relationship, this violation generates feelings of jealousy and sexual rivalry; (Al Mansur, M., Saim, & Riyaldi, 2021). There are many forms of infidelity, from simple to intimate relationships. Whatever the reason, infidelity cannot be justified, whether committed by a man or a woman. So many factors can trigger infidelity, but it all starts from the disharmony of a family (Zainuddin, et al, 2022).

The reality of infidelity that occurs in society has not escaped the attention of the media, including film creators. Film is one of the mass media whose plot and story are often inspired by phenomena that occur in society (Asri, 2020). Film is also a medium for delivering good messages because it can represent the reality of life. One of the films that shows the reality of life is a film entitled *Noktah Merah Perkawinan*. How household problems are shown in the film cannot be separated from household problems that exist in society (Sahuddin et al., 2023). The film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan* directed by Sabrina Rochelle released in 2022 is a film that tells the story of the issue of infidelity in a household. The film explores how infidelity often occurs in people's domestic relationships in Indonesia. The film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan* is based on the legendary 90s soap opera of the same name. Departing from the issue of infidelity, the media makes messages for the audience by forming the same perspective as the media so that it can be understood by the audience.

Researchers are interested in the film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan* for their research because the film that tells about how the conflict of infidelity life in the household strongly illustrates the reality of people's lives. In addition, researchers also intend to find out the audience's meaning of infidelity in the film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan*. Researchers will take 2 previous studies that are very relevant (Oki & Ridwan, 2022). The first study was conducted by Muhammad Amirul Hanif in 2023, a study entitled "Analysis of Couple Reception to Domestic Conflict in the Film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan*". The results of the research obtained were due to the interference of in-laws and the existence of communication that was never completed so that there ended up being a third person who made one party comfortable. So that the majority of informants in the dominant-hegemonic position agree that unhealthy communication scene will damage the overall domestic relationship. The second study was conducted by Theresia Riska Widiyanti in 2022. The study was titled "Reception Analysis of Cheating Youtube Content *There Will Be No Cure - Catwomanizer Real Talk 3*". The result of the study is that

all informants are on the oppositional code that is to refuse in terms of whatever infidelity is shown. Because the Reception Analysis research in this film is not the only research that has been done, then, with the research that discusses the reception of infidelity in the film "Noktah Merah Perkawinan" is expected to close the gap to previous studies with the discussion of reception in a film, especially with the object of discussion of infidelity.

Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in researching further about how the audience's reception regarding the meaning of an infidelity conflict in the film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan* using the reception theory proposed by Stuart Hall. Stuart Hall modeled reception like an encoding-decoding model process, messages are encoded according to the perception of the maker, transmitted and then captured and translated by the receiver according to their own understanding or perception. The reception process will certainly be more diverse, segmented and depending on the condition of the audience. This is what then causes a difference between the sender of the message and the recipient of the message. Reception analysis method with a focus on how the audience interprets the content of the media (Baran in Hadi, 2009). There are 3 categories of encoding-decoding concepts when viewed from the meaning of the sender and the understanding of the recipient, namely the first category is people who receive messages without refutation called hegemonic-position. The second type of message recipient is negotiated-position that agrees with the content of the message but is rejected. This happens because there are several socio-cultural differences. The third position is opposition-position, in this position the audience does not agree with the content of the message and even tends to deny the content of the message conveyed by the communicator.

The issue raised in the study was how the audience's reception in viewing the problem of infidelity in the film. The goal is to describe and analyze how the audience responds to the content of messages in the film that show the conflict of infidelity in the household after seeing the film "Noktah Merah Perkawinan". Based on the explanation, it can be known that researchers will specialize in researching "Audience Reception to Infidelity in the Film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan*".

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Stuart Hall's Reception Theory

The word reception comes from *recipere* (Latin) and *reception* (English) meaning "reception". If interpreted more broadly, namely the processing of text and how to give meaning to impressions or messages from the media. Reception theory was raised by Stuart Hall through his writing entitled *Encoding and Decoding Television Discourse* in 1973. Reception theory refers to the decoding process carried out by the audience where when the audience in relation interacts with the content of the media, the audience carries out reception activities through the meaning of the content of the message conveyed by the media (McQuail, 2004). Reception theory focuses on the way audiences give meaning to the content of media messages. Audiences have freedom in interpreting the meaning of the content of messages conveyed by the media (Littlejohn, 2009). The sender of the message is positioned as an absolute source of information who has full responsibility for the message or information he makes. Message delivery is considered complete if it has reached the recipient of the message (Fathurizki, A., & Malau, 2018).

#### 2.1.1 Encoding and Decoding Process

The reception theory proposed by Stuart Hall was influenced by two processes, namely encoding and decoding. Encoding is the process when a message is created with codes presented to the audience. The decoding process is the code that the receiver uses in giving meaning to the message captured from the creator of the message (Gunawan, A. L., 2022). The main focus of analysis on reception theory is the process of decoding, since the process is carried out in depth (Briandana, R., & Azmawati, 2020). Encoding is the meaning of ideas that are in the communicator's mind to be changed in the form of messages that can be understood by the communicant.

Decoding is the process by which a person receives a token from an encoder and translates it into a meaningful message (Ardiansyah, 2020). In the process of decoding factors such as age, gender, education level, and also experience can influence the audience when interpreting the message (Littlejohn, 2009). When the audience receives a message from the other party and tries to make sense of it, the audience is decoding. (Morissan, 2014) explained that in cultural studies carried out by Stuart

Hall, the process of decoding messages is divided into three, namely perception, thinking, and interpretation.

### 2.1.2 Classification of Audience Meaning in Reception Theory

According to Hall (in Ghassani & Nugroho, 2019), the decoding process of messages conveyed through the media is carried out through three possible positions, including:

a. Dominant-Hegemonic Position

The position of dominant hegemony is a situation when the audience receives a message that matches what the media wants to convey. Dominant-Hegemonic Position can occur if the recipient of the message or audience does not provide a refutation or rejection to the media of the content of the message that has been delivered. This position is a situation where the media conveys messages using the dominant cultural code in society.

b. Negotiated Position

Negotiated position is a position when the audience accepts the dominant ideology and content of the message but rejects its application in certain cases or issues. The negotiating position allows the audience to be willing to accept the dominant ideology of a general nature. However, they will make exceptions to some things and applications that are adapted to local cultural rules.

c. Oppositional Position

Oppositional Position is the position of the audience receiving the message that does not agree with the content of the message. This position positions the audience as individuals who have an understanding or knowledge of the content of the message conveyed. The audience is positioned as individuals who have a point of view opposite to the content of the message.

## 2.2 Audience Reception

Reception analysis is a research method that examines the audience. This method positions the audience as a subject who is active in generating meaning. Reception analysis focuses on the content of media messages and audiences, how audiences can interpret media based on their cultural background. According to (Cangara, 2002) An audience is a group of people who are the target of communication from a media message. Audiences are commonly referred to by the terms receiver, target, reader, listener, viewer, *Audience*, *Decoder* or communicant. The audience element should not be ignored, because the success or failure of a communication process is largely determined by the audience.

Audiences become one of the important elements in the communication process carried out by mass media (McQuail, 2011). Along with the development of the study of media, audiences that were originally passive turned into active audiences. Each audience differs from one another in terms of dressing, thinking, responding to the message he receives, his experiences and also his life orientation. However, each of the individuals can reduce the message they receive to each other. This research focuses on active audiences. In the process of communication through mass media, audiences are considered active in producing meaning. Audiences have diverse ways of producing meaning, so audiences are important and should not be ignored. The way to measure the audience is to do audience research or *audience research*. *Audience research* is an attempt to find data about audiences (as mass media users). Audience research using acceptance studies departs from the assumption that the relationship with this research is because the informants involved in this research are audiences who have different backgrounds so as to produce different meanings from each informant.

## 2.3 Infidelity Conflict

The term "conflict" in the original language means a "fight, war, or struggle", which is a physical confrontation between several parties. But the meaning of the word then develops with the presence of "sharp disagreement or opposition to various interests, ideas, etc.". In other words, the term now also touches on the psychological aspects behind the physical confrontation that occurs, in addition to the physical confrontation itself (Soetjpto, 2009). Broadly speaking, the definition of conflict is mutual defense at least between two groups, which have different goals and views, in an effort to achieve one goal so that they are in a position of opposition, not cooperation (Khoiriyah, 2015). Infidelity is a form of infidelity committed by a husband to his wife or vice versa a wife to her husband if a marriage fails due to the third condition, therefore the presence of a third person in the household

indicates infidelity. There are causes of some infidelity, namely feeling dissatisfaction in marital life, the presence of emotional emptiness in the couple's life, personal problems that occurred in the past, the need to seek variety in sexual life, anger towards the partner, frequent separation and the urge to make the partner jealous.

#### **2.4 Film in Social Criticism**

Movies are an entertainment medium that can influence audiences when compared to newspapers and radio. This is due to the audio-visual effects on the film that affect the emotions of the audience such as, anger, crying, laughing, sad and others. So it will be easier for the audience to understand the message and meaning in the film (McQuail, 2004). Social criticism is a way of deep communication to communicate new ideas in addition to disseminating those that can create social change. Social criticism is used as forms of communication that serve as social control in society towards the functioning of a system or a social process (Oksinata, 2010). Social criticism can be conveyed through a variety of means, ranging from the most traditional means, ranging from interpersonal ironic expressions and social interactions, through various public communications, literary arts and through mass media. It is this last vehicle, the mass media is by far considered the most effective, popular, rational (Sakdiyah, 2018). With this definition, critical social media is a form of criticism, satire, input, refutation or a reaction to something that is considered deviant and violates the values that exist in social life hereby means with symbols, words, images, and abnormal behavior in the form of rhythmic, sarcasm, input, refutation or responses contained therein.

### **3. Method**

#### **3.1 Types of Research**

This study used descriptive qualitative research. According to (Moleong Lexy J, 2005) Qualitative descriptive research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written and spoken words from the people observed. Furthermore, the type of research used in this study was qualitative using the Stuart Hall reception analysis method. According to McQuail (2011), reception analysis emphasizes the use of media as a reflection of the sociocultural context and as a process of giving meaning through audience perceptions of experience and production. Reception analysis views the audience as a producer of meaning capable of creating meaning. The audience in reception analysis is not only accepted as a consumer of message content in the media (Fathurizki, A., & Malau, 2018). The analysis in this study will be described descriptively which means the researcher will make a systematic, factual, and accurate description of the facts and properties of the population or object. This research tries to reveal the reality that occurs in social life (Kriyantono, 2009). In this study, researchers will examine how the audience's reception to infidelity in the film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan*.

#### **3.2 Subject and Object of Research**

The subject of study can be objects, things or people. But the subject of research is generally human or whatever is human business (Arikunto, 2007). The subjects of this study were people who had watched the film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan*. The number of informants in this study was 5 informants. The object of research is something that becomes a focus on research activities, or in other words everything that is the target of research. Therefore, the object of this study is the reception of infidelity in the film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan*.

#### **3.3 Data collection techniques**

The type of data obtained is divided into two, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews while secondary data in this study were through observation and literature study. Data collection techniques in this study are in the form of in-depth interviews, observations, and literature studies (Ardianto, 2010; Sugiyono, 2008). Data collection was carried out by means of in-depth interviews with resource persons who had watched the film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan*. This type of observation technique is used using participatory observation, so that researchers are directly involved by viewing film as material in making interview questions. Literature studies are conducted by taking information from books, scientific papers, theses, the internet and other sources.

### **3.4 Data analysis techniques**

Data analysis techniques are a very important stage in a study, applied if not explained or only into raw data, then in this study researchers use reception analysis techniques from Stuart Hall, then grouping data according to the theory used with several stages. The steps of reception analysis according to Sulistyani (2011: 5-6) are as follows: Identification and consideration, Data collection, Data analysis, Audience categorization, Conclusion.

### **3.5 Data validation techniques**

To ensure validity and validation in this study, researchers used various data sources. The data used by researchers includes data obtained by researchers from the place of research and data obtained by researchers outside the place of research. In this study, the data validation technique that researchers used was triangulation of data sources. Triangulation is a technique of checking the validity of data that utilizes something other than that data for checking purposes or as a comparison to that data (Ghony, 2014). While source triangulation is a technique to measure and reverse examine the degree of confidence of an information obtained through different times and tools in qualitative research (Patton in Moleong, 2005). Researchers will confirm repeatedly before drawing data and conclusions for the validity of the study. The final result of this research will be related to existing theories and concepts to see the compatibility between the findings in the field with existing theories and concepts.

## **4. Result and Discussion**

### **4.1 Encoding**

Researchers carried out the encoding stage to find out in the film "Noktah Merah Perkawinan" the meaning of what message to convey in the show. Domestic conflict is one of the causes is infidelity, society's view of infidelity has been negative for a long time, but there are several things that cause someone to commit infidelity. Based on an interview conducted by Sabrina in youtube.com (2022). Sabrina Rochelle Kalangie as director stated that the message to be conveyed in this film is as Learning inspiring life values that can be applied to life partners. If in a relationship there is a possibility that you will not commit betrayal. Because the key to a harmonious relationship is to maintain communication with each other. In addition, this film can be a discussion material to assess how a relationship works (Maya luna, 2022).

However, he stated that the Red Stain of Marriage is not limited to selling tears and selling sadness. The problem can trigger discussion and reflection such as the importance of communication in relationships that are often underestimated. An important issue that feels close to our daily lives. "Silence is as dangerous as cursing at each other," reads one of the lines in the film. Although it captures the conflict of married couples, this film feels not distant from those who are not married. There are many valuable messages and lessons in this film for anyone who wants to learn to build better relationships with their spouses, children, parents, and friends. Even the medium of soap operas that are often underestimated can be a good film when it is in the right hands. With this consideration conveyed by Sabrina that no matter the relationship is dating or not, married or not, this film also exposes a reality that commitment to death is not an easy thing and marriage is not for everyone.

### **4.2 Decoding**

After selecting informants who meet certain criteria, research will be conducted using in-depth interview techniques on 5 selected informants. To get maximum results, the arrangement of questions emphasizes more on 3 aspects, namely perception, thought process, and interpretation. Because each individual has a different background, the process of interpreting a message will vary or vary between individuals. This division is done because in the process of receiving messages, someone describes the message received based on experience, thought and observation. To facilitate the analysis of this study, the researcher will create a table containing Audience classification data.

Table 1. Decoding process

No	Informant	Perception	Thought	Interpretation
1	Rahmanur Fadila	Shooting is not boring. The impression on the film is inspiring, the audio is very clear	This film has a very deep story message, where in married life must maintain good communication with each other so as not to arise communication misses that can potentially appear third people. Because every affair must have factors behind.	Speaker 1 stated that the film <i>Noktah Merah Perkawinan</i> is a film that contains domestic conflicts that are quite complicated
2	Main Tika Della	The shooting was quite good. The storyline is interesting, the audio is pleasant to listen to	The film is a little confusing, the conflict of infidelity presented is not conveyed clearly.	Speaker 2 agreed with the content of the message because the key to a harmonious relationship is complementarity and maintaining communication
3	Yudha Pradanto	The interviewee felt sad at the first impression of watching the film, in a good shot. The plot of the movie is boring. Audio is clear.	<i>Noktah Merah Perkawinan</i> is a film that can make the audience aware that communication here plays a very important role. After watching the film, the interviewee realized that domestic conflicts can occur if a problem is always left unchecked.	Speaker 3 stated that this film is enough to give a message that makes the audience hesitant in deciding to get married, but the act of infidelity must have its own reasons
4	Nur Ahmad Yulianto	Clear shooting. The plot of the film is a little monotonous and saturated. The audio is very clear.	The film does not set a good example for society because after watching the film, the interviewee feels afraid to establish a relationship.	Speaker 4 stated that he did not agree with the message of the film conveyed. Because any form of infidelity is not true
5	Luluk Kusrini	Good shooting. Very easy to understand flow. Good use of audio.	The source stated that the message conveyed by the film was very inspiring. The conflict aired is clear and not verbose.	Speaker 5 said he strongly agreed because the film represented the reality that existed in society.

### 4.3 Audience Meaning Classification

Based on the analysis of the results of the decoding process, three informants were classified as negotiating, one informant was in the dominant-hegemony position group and one informant was in the opposition. The following is the distribution of research results based on the classification of audience meaning.

Table 2. Audience Meaning Classification

No	Informant	Dominant-hegemonic position	Negotiated position	Oppositional position
1	Rahmanur Fadila		√	
2	Main Tika Della		√	
3	Yudha Pradanto		√	
4	Nur Ahmad Yulianto			√
5	Luluk Kusrini	√		

a. Dominant-hegemonic position

The position of dominant hegemony is a situation when the audience receives a message that matches what the media wants to convey. The dominant hegemony position is one informant who has the same understanding of the concept of infidelity presented in the film "Noktah Merah Perkawinan". The informant in the dominant position of hegemony was Luluk Kusri. The informant accepted and fully approved what was contained in the film because the informant believed that the film inspired and represented the reality that existed in society. In addition, the informant had the experience of being "cheated".

b. Negotiated position

This position the audience accepts the dominant ideology in general but the audience will carry out its application which they adapt to what they feel. The informant who was in the negotiating position did not fully accept or did not agree with only part of the film "Noktah Merah Perkawinan". The interviews showed that three informants were in a negotiating position. The first informant is Rahmanur Fadila interpreting the concept of infidelity in the film "Noktah Merah Perkawinan" that is, if the film contains domestic conflicts that are very complicated and make feelings of anxiety, but it is undeniable that in relationships must maintain good communication so as not to arise communication misses that can potentially arise third people (Lukinbeal & Zimmermann, 2006). Because every affair must have its own factors behind it. Then the second informant is Tika Della Utama who agrees with the content of the message in the film that the key to a harmonious relationship is complementarity and maintaining communication with each other. But even though he agreed with the message conveyed in the film, the source did not really understand the events in the film Noktah Merah Perkawinan because according to him the story in the film was a little confusing, the conflict of infidelity presented was not conveyed clearly, supported by shooting did not look gloomy or even dark even though this film tells about the split of the relationship. The third informant in this position is Yudha Pradanto who agrees with the content of the message, if communication here plays a very important role because domestic conflicts can occur if a problem is always left and communication between spouses is interrupted. However, according to informants, the act of infidelity must have its own reasons.

c. Oppositional position

This opposition position is that the audience disagrees with the discourse and denies the content of the message. In this opposition position was informant Nur Ahmad Yulianto showing rejection of the infidelity factor in the film "Noktah Merah Perkawinan". This is because according to Yuli, any form of infidelity cannot be justified, so the meaning of the film has the effect of setting a bad example for the audience.

## 5. Conclusion

The results of this study show that each informant has a different meaning in interpreting infidelity presented in the film Noktah Merah Perkawinan. The meaning that occurs by 5 informants is different because each informant has different life experiences, genders, places of residence. So that the results of the meaning that occur become diverse. Referring to the Encoding-Decoding Model of Reception theory from Stuart Hall, the researcher found 5 informants including: one informant in a dominant-hegemony position agreed because the informant felt in accordance with the field of reference & field of experience so that the informant received full and there was no rejection of the media message. Then the results of the meaning of informants on average enter the negotiated position where there are three informants because they feel communication is very important but there are several strong factors so that infidelity can occur. And these factors depend on them and their respective partners. Finally, one informant who is in an oppositional position rejects any form of infidelity.



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