

Career-mother in Indonesian Soap Opera: A Counter-stereotype Representation

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Abstract

Motherhood becomes one of the major representations in television by the fiction program stories and narratives. Based on this phenomenon, it is important for television built and portrayed the figure of mother via their program. There are several researches about the portrayal of women on television. But, still few study that exposes the portrayal of the mother and her career, especially in Indonesia. This research will expose the mother and work culture representation in the television soap opera, using the Gamson and Modigliani framing scheme. This research takes three of the popular soap opera in Indonesia from 2015-2019. For the result, there are several depictions of mothers and her career in soap operas. Plot, text, and framing scenes affects or negotiates the ideal value of career mother with counter-stereotypes representation and new value representation. But, these soap opera seems only use the counter-value representation to differentiate their serial with others.

Keyword: *Mother's role, Career, Representation, Soap Opera*

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Ibu Karier di Sinetron Indonesia: Representasi yang Melawan Stereotip

Abstrak

Sosok ibu menjadi salah satu representasi yang banyak ditemui di sinetron yang ditayangkan televisi. Berdasarkan fenomena ini, penting bagi televisi untuk membangun dan menangkap sosok ibu melalui program mereka. Telah banyak riset mengenai representasi ibu di televisi, namun hanya sedikit yang mengekspos bagaimana ibu karier ditampilkan, terutama di Indonesia. Penelitian ini akan melihat bagaimana representasi ibu dan pekerjaan dalam sinetron di Indonesia. Menggunakan skema framing yang diperkenalkan Gamson dan Modigliani, penelitian ini akan melihat representasi melalui tiga sinetron paling populer sepanjang 2015-2019. Hasilnya, terdapat beberapa gambaran dari ibu dan kariernya di dalam sinetron. Plot, teks, dan pembingkai dalam tampilan akting turut mempengaruhi nilai ideal dari sosok ibu karier. Sinetron juga turut menampilkan representasi yang melawan stereotip serta nilai baru terkait peran ibu karier. Hanya saja, sinetron tampak menampilkan representasi tersebut untuk membedakan ceritanya dengan sinetron lain.

Kata Kunci: Peran ibu, Karir, Representasi, dan Sinetron

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian society belief that mother and wife has central role in the family (Khoo & Yeoh, 2018; Spagnoletti et al., 2018). But, the ideal value of “mother’s role model” is measured using unequal standards or indicators in the society. For example, mother in the family will be valued as “success mother” if she always supports her husband’s career and brings their children to get the highest education degree (Dewi, 2012). This standard shows that mothers still portrayed under the dominance of the husband and behind the border of domestication: the taming, segregation, and de-politicization in women’s roles (Suryakusuma, 2011, p. 8).

The “importance” of mother’s roles in Indonesian society also does not reflect that their status is highly valued. Research showed that it was almost taboo for the wives (especially who has public role or career) have higher position than her husband (Dewi, 2012). This phenomenon emphasizes more towards the economic role (example: wife’s employment status is higher than her husband, such as a doctor with a private company employee) or the social role (example: it is a taboo woman with high social strata family that marry with a man from a lower social strata level).

The issue of motherhood is always related to women’s issues in Indonesia. It has changed a lot from year to year, since issues of gender equality, development of a gender-oriented country, to more liberal issues. This gender discussion also entered into many aspects of society, especially politics. However, the norms and values regarding motherhood have not changed

much. One of the most classic issue is regarding the dominance of men in the household with the enactment of the law that places the husband or father as head of the family, based on Law number 1/1974 about Marriage, article 31/3. Also, there are still many social organizations such as Dharma Wanita (organization of civil servant’s wives), Dharma Pertiwi (military wife organization), and PKK (Family Welfare Organization) which have a big role to define the women roles in society. Through the organization, women has been influenced to be domesticated, and they just care about how to support their husbands, in case to picturized the role of “good” housewives (Suryakusuma, 2011, p. 17).

The emphasis on this “old standards” of mother roles is also seen in television shows from the 1990s until now. In the soap opera titled “Si Doel Anak Betawi” and “Tersanjung” as the two most popular soap operas in the 1990s to early 2000, also emphasized woman and mother roles by representing domestication. These two serial dramas also showed a “social punishment” if the character does not become an ideal mother in the family.

On the other hand, all of these portrayals are not always representing reality. Media organizations have a selection in content production according to their goals and interests (McQuail’s, 2004: 329-330). This media representation is a project that needs professional skill to built, but it often follows the audience’s behavior for reasons of high ratings. Thus, several values that believed in common as the dominant (or popular) value are often chosen by media, rather than presenting a non-dominant point of view in the media content production.

There are some development and change in how Indonesian television represents a mother. Many kinds of television drama appear and some of it offers a new concept of mother role representation. Before the reformation era in Indonesia (before 1998), two television serials booming in Indonesia, titled *Keluarga Cemara* (1996-2006) and *Si Doel Anak Sekolahan* (1994-2006). These two television serials have a similar story-concept, about “a happy and struggling family”. Then, television offers some alternative models of the family in the serials: reconstructed families (separated couples, divorcees and married again and bring children to the new relationship) (*Bidadari*, 2000-2005), Single-mother (*Si Entong*, 2005-2008), a childless family (*Tetangga Masa Gitu*, 2014-2017), a polygamy family (*Surga Yang Ke-2*, 2016-2017), and a “stay-at-home husband” family (*Dunia Terbalik*, 2017-2019). Last, in its development, Indonesian soap operas adopted many family themes. And the mother becomes the representation of the main character or the main supporting character. The family theme penetrated the good drama series that raised the genre of a slice of life, religion, even romance. With the emergence of family types as previously explained, the role of mothers which appears in Indonesian television drama series is even more diverse. This can be a more subjective representation of the role of mothers with several variations such as housewives, career mothers, single mothers, stepmothers, foster mothers, and others.

Mother is a character who is often represented as the main role or the main supporting role. The depiction of mothers in Indonesian soap operas

is an interesting research object for the researcher. Indonesian television drama series have shown the role of mothers in several narrative categories and story or script. In the 2010 era and above became a different era with more variations in the role of mothers on television. This study will look at whether the representation of the role of mothers in the family, especially in economic and career sector, also related on social perspective. This study is also expected to show whether there is a change or development in the mother’s role and her career inside the soap opera that follows the understanding and new imperatives in society, or there is still a stagnation of old values to describe the ideal mother. This research is driven by cultural media and interpretative studies. This study also isolates the elements of these narratives that have a connection with socio-economic realities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on the longest soap opera list in Indonesia, five of the seven longest soap operas that have more than 1000 episodes adopt a small family as the main setting. This shows that the mother figure is quite important to be featured in the soap opera narration. This depiction will also show how the mother’s role can be shown in one episode and another in soap opera. This research will focus on mother roles, her career, and how it reflect Indonesian value about the family.

The commodification of family is one of the most mainstream formula used by television series. In the development of television shows, especially in the second golden age, the family became a popular

narrative that was displayed full of drama, intrigue, and fantasy in shows (Thompson, 1997, p. 11). Starting in the second golden age, television fiction shows also became the main television station and continued to grow. In America, television also developed family themes, developed representations of a family in television dramas, sitcoms, and cartoons (Croteau & Hoynes, 2013, p. 232).

In United States, research shows that there are two classifications on family and social construction that appears in television fiction programs. The first group showed that television fiction program represents the real families and their problems, such as the multi-formation of family, including foster family and same-sex marriage (Wadsworth, 2015). This first group represents more non-traditional value and contemporary conflict in the family. In contrast, the second group has a stressing point to maintain traditional family values in the United States such as the husband role as a breadwinner or about the American dream in the family (Wadsworth, 2015) or even blame a fiction stories format to a certain extent for the disresolution of United States traditional family models (Novoa-Jaso, 2017).

Research in the US also shows that the role of women in the family on television comes with significant changes. In the last decade of the 20th century, the status of many women was described only to be at home or the socio-environment around the house changed dramatically. Miller (2011) and Moss, (2018) found in his research that the role of fathers from the 1960s to the 2000s, the father's roles are not too dominant in the family, compared to the mother's roles as a problem solver inside the family.

On the other portrayals, Research shows that women are more independent than men in the family and more often seen to have several activities such as having career or a social role (Scharrer et al., 2020). Research by Stiffler et al. (2013) also showed that mothers have several professional job representation and fathers are more caring and not dominant in the family.

Turchi & Bernabo (2020) noted that the mother's representation looks more independent in economic from situation comedy portrayals. Mothers have pictured that she can work outside of their home and make decisions without having to talk to their husbands first. While fathers are depicted more involved in domestic affairs than in previous decades. This is very different from the period before, especially in the 1960s. In general, fathers had prestigious jobs (policeman, businessman, or lawyer) and even captured glamor in this period, which guaranteed a comfortable life for their family (Butsch, 2017). The concept of super-father is seen in this era, also the dominance of father (or husband) in the family. While some mothers become obedient housewives and even become the weak character. Even if there is a working mother, she was organized for professional reasons (a brilliant career since before marriage, or came from a rich family) than to raise the family economy status (Butsch, 2017).

Several studies on gender construction in the early 80s also revealed the dominant role of mothers in the family, including two studies of the flow of feminism carried out in the late 1980s. Maria Mies (on Suryakusuma, 2011, p. 13) introduced the concept of housewifization. Then, this concept was developed by Madelon

Djajadiningrat (on Suryakusuma, 2011: 15) who introduced the concept of Ibuism. Both of these studies also show that these concepts relate to femininity in Indonesia. These two studies show how women defined their roles in society.

Mies defines the housewifization as a process whereby a woman is defined as a housewife who depends on her husband's income, regardless of whether she is a *de facto* housewife or not, or without seeing their real contribution to the family (on Izzati, 2016). Housewifization illustrates that wives and women are bought unproductive labels and show the male proletariat which is based on the comfort of women's household (Izzati, 2016).

Madelon Djajadiningrat (on Dwyer, 2012) saw that housewifization was not fully reflected in Indonesian society. She developed the "local version" called Ibuism, defined as an ideology that supports every act of the mother to take care of family, group, class, and country, without demanding power or prestige in return. This concept of Ibuism is more than just biological motherhood. Julia Suryakusuma, in her research titled "the State of Ibuism in Indonesia", saw that women had an important and respectable social position in Indonesia, even though she was a wife who did not have children. The ideology of Ibuism that appears in Indonesia has a striking difference, that is not only based on the role in the economic sector as introduced by Mies through Housewifization idea (Suryakusuma, 2011, p. 4).

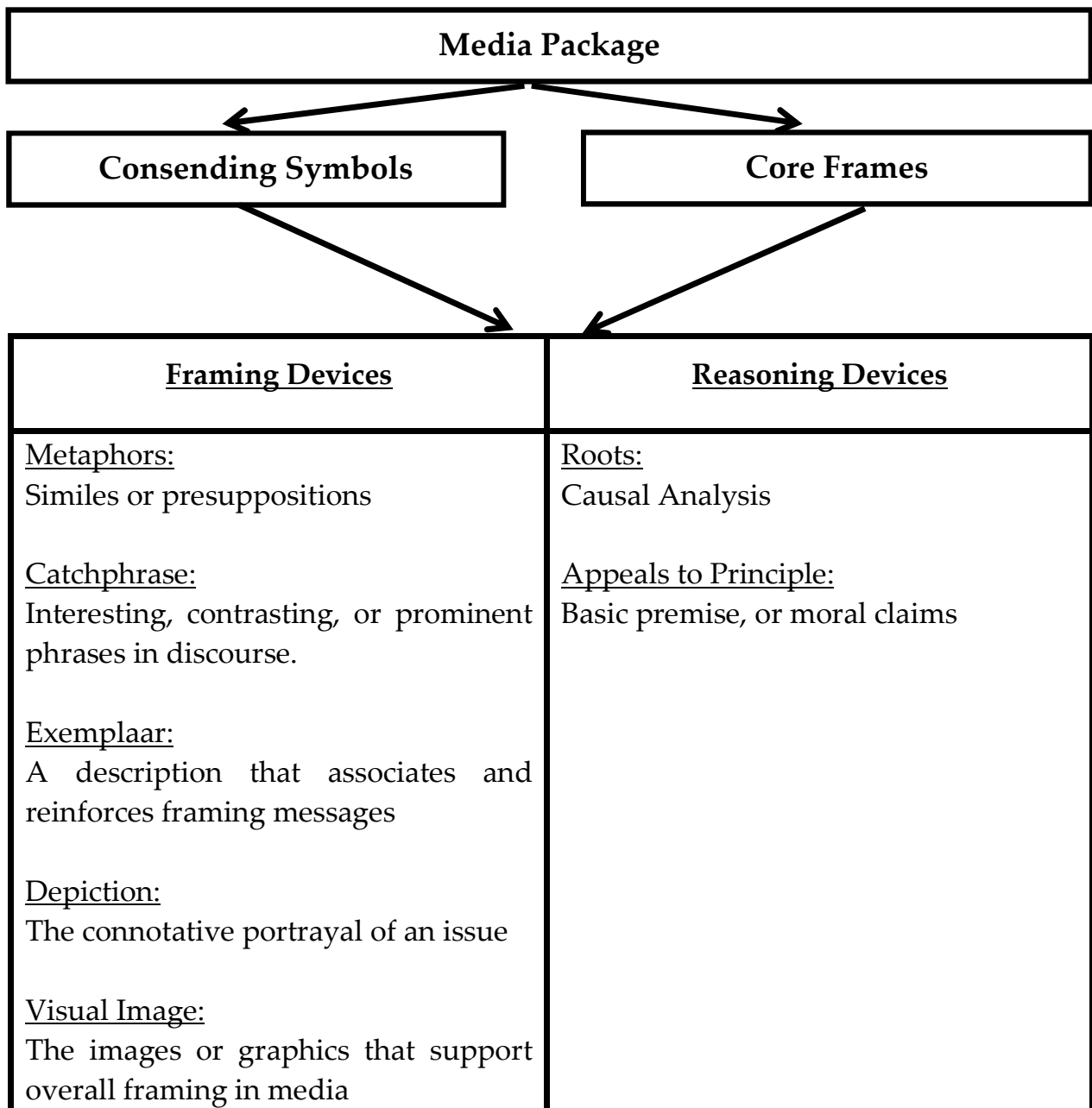
METHODOLOGY

This research combine the ethnomethodology perspective and gender studies. Ethnomethodology hold the value

that society will form the continuity in human action, including the family value (Hester et al., 2004, p. 55; Watson, 2016, p. 33). This human action carried out unconsciously and ethnomethodological perspective analyze the constellation of value that frames it. From a gender perspective, the framing of value and social order can be seen as a part of inequality in society. Related to the constellation of value, gender perspective believe that it is a result form hegemonic value that developed among society, offered by some social classes (Ryder, 1999).

Concerning on the soap opera analysis, the regularities can be observed with framing analysis by Gamson and Modigliani. Gamson and Modigliani define a media framing as a "central organizing idea or storyline that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of the event..." and the frame suggests what the controversy is about, the essence of the issue (Samsudin, 2019). This analysis consists of interpretive packages containing certain meaning constructions. In the package, there are two elements: the core frame and the condensing symbol. These two elements are the first structure that organizes elements of ideas and shows the substance of the issue being discussed. Whereas the second structure contains two substructures: framing devices and reasoning devices. The framing analysis developed by Gamson and Modigliani showed that media discourse (media package) as a group of interpretive perspectives when interpreting and giving meaning to an issue.

Picture 1: The Gamson and Modigliani Framing Scheme



Source: (Alex, 2009, p. 162)

Three of the most popular soap opera during 2015-2019 is selected as the unit analysis of this study. These three soap opera have a high television rating-share get several achievements. Besides that, the selection also based on this following criteria: 1) Representation of more than one character of

the mother. 2) There is one character (or more) of a mother that becomes the main character. The three of soap opera are Dunia Terbalik (broadcasted by RCTI since 2017), Tukang Ojek Pengkolan (broadcasted by RCTI since 2015), and Orang Ketiga (broadcasted by SCTV since 2018).

This research also digs the concept of representation in the soap opera. Representation is a way of producing meaning that works through a system of representation (Kidd, 2015, p. 4). In representation theory explains that there are two processes in two systems of representation. The first is mind representation, a system that is grouped both objects, people, and events that correlate with a concept that affects the perception in our heads. Without this grouped system, people cannot interpret something meaningfully. It can be said, that meaning depends on all the conceptual systems (the conceptual map) formed in our minds, which people can use to represent the world and enable us to interpret objects both in the mind and outside of our minds.

The second system of representation is language (Kidd, 2015, p. 4), which involves all processes of meaning construction. The concept that is in people minds must be translated into a universal language so that people can silence their ideas with written language, body language, oral language, and visual photos (sign). These signs represent the concepts that people carry everywhere in their heads and together form the meaning systems in culture.

Film (also serial drama) brings ideological elements that give inspiration and insight, which are interpreted by its audience (Danesi, 2010, p. 134). It means that every drama theme displayed presents an ideology that presents reality itself, including how social roles are in daily life.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Representation of Migrant Worker

The first analysis is to see the migrant worker as part of mother and work relation. Migrant workers became one of the characters who built the drama series "Dunia Terbalik". The main premise of the story is about the life of household of migrant worker family. The wives character work as a domestic worker abroad. So, in this soap opera, female characters does not have much screen-time.

The mother character who works as migrant worker is the breadwinner. But they are not the head of the family. Legally, as long as he still has a husband or male figure in this family, then he is the head of the family. Based on plot, the husband does not carry out his role as the main worker for the family. Even so, social culture in Indonesia places men above women in the family.

Outside the family, this soap opera shows that the choice to be a female worker is a collective choice because being a migrant worker is a culture in Ciraos Village. Only four female supporting characters are still in the location setting of Ciraos Village, only the daughters, Mak Suha (elder representation), Ceu Yoyoh (worker's agent), Ceu Atih (worker's agent), and Entin (single women in Ciraos. Households as the smallest economic unit still support the separation of public and private responsibility among the parents. Majorly, mothers are charged with the private domain, which is related to non-formal or semi-formal work, and her job should not interfere their role for caring the household. Whereas the figure of the father is related to public domain, as the

main breadwinner and also as the “face of the family” in the middle of society.

However, we still found a role segregation on the *Dunia Terbalik* plot. Stay-at-home dad character still hold the public roles in the family, but the domestic role became the husbands dan wives responsibility. Mothers who are the main breadwinner to support the family is not the face of family. Still, her husband is the “face of the family” among community.

As we know that lot of family believe on the dichotomy of private sector, divided for dad/husband responsibility and wife/mother responsibility. The “unpaid” work in the domestic realm, such as teaching the child to do homework then managing family financial, are still represented as mother responsibility even though they are not at home.

The Representation of Executive-women

The second representation is the executive-women. Many female executive-workers are described as unmarried or rarely seen by their husband in the soap opera role. The female executive worker became a symbol of independent or independent women in the drama series, especially in the drama series “*Orang Ketiga*.” Yuni is the character of executive women, single parents, and divorced. These three things illustrate that in Yuni’s first circle there were no men, except Aris, the boss and also his affair in the office. Yuni was also more often depicted leaving the office and returning home by public transportation alone, although in some scenes, Aris also drove Yuni home. However, at this moment, Yuni did not ask Aris to drive her home but was offered.

The emphasis on the representation of women working in the office shows that there is a role in the public sector for women. Yuni’s character is described as a staff with a professional position, with formal and neat clothes. Yuni is a symbol of the expansion of the mother’s role, even though she is described as a single parent, who not only deals with things in the house.

The career-mothers who work as a executive women are also described as more professional. In the dialogues, Yuni talked a lot about her work assignments in the office. Yuni shows capability as a professional, a value that is quite different from the assumption that the role of the mother is never to be a professional worker, also about the emotional value that related to women in general as described in the cultural and social environment.

Representation of Mother with Semi-formal Job

Mother with semi-formal job become the third figure that analyzed on this study. In the “*Tukang Ojek Pengkolan*”, some mother characters are described as semi-formal workers. The reason for the mother’s character, especially Denok, to take a freelance job is to help the husband meet the family’s needs. Denok is depicted doing her job as a private tutor and has several students.

Besides, Denok and Yuli were also described as a snacks seller in the “*Tukang Ojek Pengkolan*” Ramadan series. The snacks market is booming in the month of Ramadan in Indonesia. This moment became one of the plot-settings in the *Tukang Ojek Pengkolan* and represent the working mothers character.

Denok as a mother cannot represent her independence compared to the mother's role as an executive woman. Denok still need their husband to help her. Only Rozak who could help Denok to deliver and picked up the package from client's house, or assisted her to sell the snacks.

Her role as an "additional breadwinner" to help her husband does not make it equivalent to their husbands. Denok who works as snacks seller and also a private teacher still had to teach her children at home after work. On the other hand, the husband does not appear in the scenes when Denok accompanies the child to study.

DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis, this research found some values that framed oppose stereotypes of common representation or dominant patriarchal values. As the background, gender relation in family majorly picturized the dichotomy of the public and private-sphere responsibility. Women are associated with the private sphere and this subordination is shaped by culture, also raises women's dependence on men in the family. But, through the modernization, the social construction of gender roles in society has also changed a lot. In Indonesia (Toersilaningsih, 2010), there is a change in family structure from large families to nuclear families.

The career-mother representation also become one of effect of family structure shifting nowadays. Although there are other problems that arise from the role of working mothers, such as the double burden in reproductive and productive activities and inequality on salary, leave permits, etc (Sumilat & Wahyuni, 2020),

the representation of working mothers becomes a counter-stereotype framing related to the role of mothers.

This counter-stereotype arises because television has full rights in controlling its content. Counter-stereotype representation is not a new value introduced by the media, but another perspective that is trying to be displayed to the audience. This counter-value always has an incision with a dominant or hegemonic value (Feasey, 2015, p. 8). Soap opera themes with feminist values often airing and succeed in attracting quite a large audience, one of them is one of the most popular Netflix series, *Orange Is the New Black*, which shows a lot of counter-stereotype values on women's and racial issues (Enck & Morrissey, 2015).

One that seems obvious in this study as counter-stereotype value representation of single mothers' independence compared to single fathers. Research involving PEKKA (Toersilaningsih, 2010) shows that single mothers have higher independence than single fathers. In *Dunia Terbalik* soap opera, the figure of Single Mother (Ceu Yoyoh and Ceu Atih) choose to focus on raising her biological child or her adopted daughter rather than marry for the second time, different from the single-father who was described with their second marriage (Idoy's or Uwa Sain's). Also, in *Tukang Ojek Pengkolan* soap opera, with character Ratna as a single mother representation, compared to Rozak as a (male) widower. On the other hand, in the *Orang Ketiga* soap opera, Yuni characters represent a (women) widower who is not married again and still has a brilliant career.

In other representations, Single Mother is also shown that has self-confidence and

independence. Mulyono–Santoso (2014) described that the depiction of the figure of a single mother in the soap opera of the 2005-2009 era was depicted through antagonistic characters and liked to tease (or seduce) other women's husbands. In this research, we found that mother character portrayed as a figure that deviates from the old perspective. The Single Mother character in the soap opera that found on *Dunia Terbalik*, *Tukang Ojek Pengkolan*, and *Orang Ketiga* are described as having high self-confidence. A single mother is described as a resilient figure and also gets great social support, through the figure of Yuni in the office with her professional responsibilities, Ratna with her neighbors and friends in Rawa Bebek Village, and also Ceu Yoyok and Ceu Atih who are trusted by Ciraos Village residents.

This research also found that soap opera distributes an "unpopular value" related to women and work. This unpopular point-of-view is not challenging the dominant perspective, but only enriches the plot of soap opera. Different from the counter-stereotype point of view that tries to oppose the value of dominant hegemony, this model takes the possibility to show other values in social reality. As a media, Soap operas can be a medium for the media industry to arrange their propaganda and value, similar to film art, advertisement, and even a news production program (Park-Primiano, 2015; Richards, 2013). Media can insert the values that they believe into the programs and distribute it to the public.

The other portrayals that appears is the job variation for single mothers and career-women. Women associated

with informal sector or feminine jobs such as elementary school teachers or administrative staff. The appearance of migrant workers, lecturers, pediatricians, and also tailors on the soap opera was counter that dominant value. The jobs are still close on feminine value but shows a variations of jobs that related to career-mothers. This value could be the start of women empowerment in Indonesia media, same as recorded in the development of soap operas in South Korea which also began by displaying variations on career women representation (Lee & Park, 2015).

Beside the counter-stereotype that found on this research, the representation Old standard value still appears in the Indonesia soap opera. In describing the role of mothers in the career world, for example, the one who managing finances in the family, is women's job. Whatever character is described, as a formal, informal worker, or an executive woman, the main depiction is how a mother manages family financials. Thus, the mother and their career just to differentiate one television series from another. These values may be merely the commodification of the media, and not agendas against stereotypes and hegemony.

The depiction to appreciate career-women is a plus point that researchers found in this study. Yuni (*Orang Ketiga*) shows how she is very passionate on her job, even though there are many scenes involving him with the antagonistic character in her office. Similar to the figure of Rinjani, the wife who was pregnant in *Tukang Ojek Pengkolan* soap opera. Critics of neutral social values such as hard work are needed, so they are not regarded as masculine values. One of the concerns in research conducted by Scharrer

et al. (2006) saw that the mother's domestic role is not valued as a hard work, but when fathers become breadwinners is valued as hard work.

But still, this counter-representation has been seen just to "differentiate" a soap opera with another. The dramatization still majorly appears and depicted a misrepresentation related to mother and women career. The dramatic side is common in fiction television programs, according to Kenneth Burke (West & Turner, 2018, p. 33).

One of these misrepresentations that appears is the tendency of married women to leave their careers after marriage, such as the wives of the two main actors in "Tukang Ojek Pengkolan" soap opera. Both Yuni and Denok are two representations of workers who must leave their careers with formal jobs to the informal sector after marriage. Both of these characters are captured often, and the scenes related to domestic roles become the major framing in this soap opera.

However, in related research, the figures of educated Denok and Yuni, despite being trapped in the lower-middle socioeconomic status, mostly did not choose to leave their careers as formal workers. Ikawati (2018) describes that women from middle and lower-middle-class families choose to continue working if they have a career in the formal sector, even their children and husband want their wives to continue working. Sarwoprasodjo (2014) also said that women from the lower middle class did not want to lose their identity with better hopes, either as a career woman or as a woman with a higher level of education.

Also, career mothers still need to do their "obligation" inside the family. The mother's ideal role in caring for children still emphasized on the story. The character of Yuni, Afifah (Orang Ketiga) and Yuli (Tukang Ojek Pengkolan) are two characters who have toddlers. They captured in many scenes for caring their children.

Afiyanti (2003) describe four ideal value of mother that are believed in Indonesia. First, a mother is considered to be patient in caring for her child. Second, the ideal mother should have to take care of her children by themselves. The third value is they can manage their time well. Fourth, mothers must prioritize their children's needs. And this research also picturized that value, it appears in the three dramas which is analyzed.

As a housewife, Yuli takes full care of her son, Anto, who is under two years old. Yuli feeds him, bathes him, changes his diaper, and plays with him. Almost all of his time is spent on her son. Yuli still to clean the house, cook, and also shop the grocery beside caring for her son.

A similar activity also was shown by Yuni in the Orang Ketiga soap opera. Before going for work, Yuni gives her time to bathe her daughter, feed her daughter, then prepare for her works. Her daughter was cared for by Yuni's mother while she worked in the office. After returning home, Yuni immediately sought and interacted with her child. Besides that, Yuni still helps her mother to prepare breakfast and also prepare some agenda, like thanksgiving with her neighbor.

Afifah also has a similar depiction, although slightly different. Afifah was reprimanded by her husband, Aris, for not

giving full time to their daughter. Afifah is often described as a mom that choosing to go to the mall and left her daughter with a babysitter, but Aris made a rule that Afifah could no longer be given facilities to shop. After that, Afifah spent most of her time taking care of her daughter, like feeding her and bathing her.

Representation also appears in the form of stay-at-home dad family formation, as a part of the migrant worker family. Stay-at-home dad in Indonesian culture was originally formed in the informal sector workers' communities, especially the family farm workers. However, there were trends of stay at home dad family formation and increasing with the trend of female migrant workers in the late 1990s to the 2005s. (Pramanada & Dinardinata, 2020). *Dunia Terbalik* soap opera is a representation of the reality of stay-at-home dads as a part (or consequences) of the increase of female migrant workers in Indonesia.

Dunia Terbalik and *Tukang Ojek Pengkolan* soap opera also try to frame the representation of male domination as "the face of the family." The dominance of men, husbands and fathers, as "the face" of the family appears in the lower middle class in the Indonesia capital, Jakarta (Subianto, 2018) and also in the neighborhood of migrant workers' villages (Suciati, 2013). In the lower middle class of the capital, patriarchal dominance in the social environment is still followed by the majority even though there are no ethnic groups who dominate the demographic of a social environment. The figure of a man becomes important as part of social cohesiveness and as a form of family self-esteem. Whereas in the case of migrant

worker families, the role of the mother as a breadwinner is not a major factor in the dominant role of women in the family. In a case study in Tasikmalaya, which has a similar setting (place) with the *Dunia Terbalik* soap opera, men still have a higher status in the social environment despite being a stay-at-home dad.

CONCLUSION

This research showed the recent plots and characters in Indonesian soap operas construct the representation of mother roles. Career-mother character captured a complex and evolving relation between the media as an entertainment channel and their reflection on socio-reality condition. This research has shown that there are several discursive configurations in the identity and representation created in the soap opera.

Career choices and domestic roles are picturized as a dichotomy in the middle of society. Related to the ideal role of women, the domestic and reproductive values still widely explored in the soap opera.

We found some roles, such as the role of mothers to manage family financial, mothers who are the main breadwinners, and the character of businesswomen or executive women in this paper. However, we also found some misrepresentation regarding the role of mothers and their career choice. A picture of a mother who leaves her work after marriage cannot be generalized as a representation of reality.

Soap opera also displays counter-stereotype values that show the independence of a single mother character in her work environment which is against the community's judgment regarding

widows and their ambition on welfare. From this research, we found that migrant worker represents a collective choice of several mothers. Also, how the mother that work on informal sector to help her husband still represents the reality.

Criticism that can be shown in this study is regarding the social values that showed by the media. Amid the limited choice of the audience for free media access in Indonesia through national television channels, then there will be many of the values of the reality that could be found in Indonesia. But still, media captured the social life is seen from the perspective of the majority, not diversity. Also, criticism that can be shown is the commodification of social values which only for capitalization benefit of the media industry. We found that counter-stereotypes representation become just a media strategy to get a high rating and share of the program.

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