

## Conference Paper

# Film and Culture Consumption of Mass Media: A Case Study of Urban Communities in Indonesia

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**ORCID:**Karkono: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3776-2725>**Abstract**

Urban society is a society that always tries to improve its quality of life and is open to receiving influences from outside, especially those from the media. The media and the use of information technology in all fields significantly increases the quality of people's lives. Film as a part of media can reach various groups, in terms of age, education, socio-economic status, cultural background, and religion. Film becomes a strategic media for transforming ideas. It is one of the commodification products that is popular among the people. It is important to monitor the culture of media consumption in urban society from the films. This study aimed at finding out how far films can affect human life. The films that were sampled were two Indonesian films. The problem was solved using questionnaires. The sample community was the community living in the city of Jakarta. The results of the study showed that the majority of respondents (80%) stated that they were watching films not just for entertainment but also to gain insight. Films are produced not only for profit orientation but can also be used for educational purposes.

**Keywords:** culture of mass media consumption, urban society, films

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## 1. Introduction

In the past decade, we can say we are used to living in media culture or the media community. Various events that occur throughout the world, reach us through the media. Most of the events that occur every day we see and know from the media. Purwasito (2015) explains that the logical consequences of technological progress have changed the concept of the world, which dynamically shifts the concept of space and time. Evidence is evident, technological advances are driving accelerated human activity.

If further elaborated, that basically changes and shifts in the concept of space and time have given birth to the acceleration of history. The complexity of the progress that has been achieved by humans is certainly inseparable from the rapid development of

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technology. Historical acceleration is characterized by products of popular culture that are increasingly piling up and growing every day with a variety of types and meters. One phenomenon that is present as a generalization of events that occur is the existence of commodification on various sides.

The representation of something in the media is understood to never come out of the reality of society. If the representation does not represent reality, it is still a reflection of the way of thinking or the arrangement of values and norms of society (Habsari, 2010). That statement is right. The next implication in the construction of reality in the media is often distorted, difficult to be neutral. The mass media, with its various variants of form, is the conveyor of the interests of the owners of capital. The character to gain profit is always inherent because media is one of the products of capitalism.

Urban society is a society that always tries to improve its quality of life and open to receiving influences from outside, especially those from the media. The media and the use of information technology in all fields significantly increases the quality of their lives. The above explanation strengthens various parties to always criticize what is conveyed through the media. What appears on the outside is a little of what is still hidden. Already, if you do not swallow what is visible from the media and make an effort to dissect it. One of the media in question is film media. The issues raised in the film are always interesting to criticize. It can be said that film is a medium that can be consumed by various groups, film is a strategic medium for transforming ideas and thoughts. Film is one of the commodification products that are popular among the people. Films can be consumed by various communities of diverse backgrounds. Isomaa (2016) states that, "Films, as cultural products, transcend national borders. Films are co-produced by production companies from different countries, internationally distributed, and filmmakers are influenced by other filmmakers from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds. In this sense, the film is a transnational medium." That according to Isomaa, as a cultural product, films can transcend national borders. Films are exemplified by production companies from various countries, internationally distributed, and filmmakers influenced by other filmmakers from various cultural backgrounds. In this sense, film is a transnational medium.

An interesting and important thing to explore further is to see how much influence the media has for urban society. In this case the media in question is film. See how a portrait of a society from a film is consumed. Whether these films play a major role in changing the order of thinking or behaviour of urban society is something that needs to be investigated.

The selected film is an Indonesian film about women. This theme is assumed to have a great influence on the reader. Two films were chosen, namely *Cinta Suci Zahrana*, and *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck*. An interesting thing to explore further is how the two films talk about women from their respective perspectives. How romantic love is wrapped beautifully without having to dry the meaning in the film. *Cinta Suci Zahrana* is able to present reality related to the issue of gender bias in society, especially those relating to the image of women. The film, directed by Chaerul Umam, is based on a novel of the same name by Indonesian literary writer Habiburrahman El-Shirazy. This film frames the views related to the image of women in the eyes of society through film. This film tells a woman named Dewi Zahrana who procrastinates marriage for the sake of education. Zahrana, who has many of these achievements, is well known for his writings published in the scientific journal MRIT Melbourne. Not only that, but the many awards also won by her, especially the international level award in architecture given by Tsinghua University Beijing made her increasingly known in the world of architecture. However, Zahrana's parents did not feel comfortable, because they were worried about Zahrana who had reached old age and had not yet fostered a household. This can be seen in the number of proposals that subtly rejected by Zahrana. Conflict arising from this film when Zahrana faced with the choice of continuing education or getting married. Parents' insistence and their desire to continue their aspirations are the points highlighted in this film.

Film is one of the communication media that represents the reality of people's lives. Effendy (2003) states that film is not only as a communication medium that functions as entertainment, but as an educational media. Bazin (1967) considers that a film aims to capture the reality of life. The aesthetics of a film are judged by creativity in presenting reality. A good film is a film that is able to present a story in accordance with reality, both social and cultural reality. One example of a film that elevates social and cultural reality is the film *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck*. This film is an adaptation of a novel entitled *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck* by Buya Hamka, published in 1938. The film talks about Minangkabau tradition issues and the love story of a couple who is stymied by differences in social and cultural backgrounds. *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck* tells the story of a man named Zainudin, an orphan with a Bugis mother and his Minangkabau father. Zainudin migrated from Makassar to his father's hometown in Batipuh, Padang Panjang to study and strengthen his brother's family ties with his father's family. Zainudin met with Hayati, a beautiful woman who was a descendant of the Minangkabau tribe. Both are in love. But the customs and culture that bind the love of both are not condoned.

Research that discusses films and culture of mass media consumption has indeed been carried out by many other researchers. However, most are more inclined to discuss how the issues in the film, rather than discussing the impact behind the film screening for the community and what are the motives of the public to watch the films. The purpose of this research is to see the extent to which film shows and cultural consumption to mass media can shape the mindset and behaviour of urban society. Research conducted by researchers promises to be different from previous studies. There is something new that has never existed before. That this research not only reveals how women's issues are discussed in films, but how public acceptance of women's issues is made a commodity in a film and what other things can be seen from the culture of consumption of these films.

## 2. Methods

The research object is the culture of media consumption in urban society from two Indonesian films. Significant material objects are comments or opinions from the community that have been categorized according to research needs and taken through prepared instruments. Data in the form of information from informants who have been categorized according to research needs, both written and recorded as a result of oral interviews.

These data are taken by observing, copying, and collecting them according to the classification needed in this study. In addition, to collect data in the form of opinions from informants, there are several collection techniques.

Informants were taken from the community in the city of Jakarta. The reason for choosing the city is to fulfil the representation of the type of urban society, according to the place of residence and fulfil certain qualifications. In terms of age, selected informants are those who have an age range of 17-40 years. The reason is the age range for marriage, marriage and post-marriage groups (widower or widow).

The data collection techniques by distributing questionnaires is to use facilities on Google form. This is so that the distribution of questionnaires is more efficient and can easily reach all informants who are domiciled in various regions in Indonesia. Data collection can be done practically, informants feel that they are not disturbed, and various types / categories of informants can be obtained.

### 3. Findings and Discussion

Two Indonesian films chosen to find out about the culture of media consumption in urban communities certainly have several criteria. The criterion is the first, the film is about women's issues. This has reasons to attract respondents to comment because women's issues are one of the interesting issues to be discussed. The second criterion, this film is the result of an adaptation of the novel. In addition, another criterion is success in terms of the number of viewers in the cinema. This criterion is determined certainly not without reason. Both films meet the criteria of how urban people choose films to consume. First, films are produced based on the adaptation of the novel. Before it was filmed successfully, the film came from a best-selling novel. This shows that the people of the city are people who have adequate information knowledge. Most film viewers are also novel readers.

Most respondents, 38 people (95%) stated that the issue of women raised in the two films is the reality of the people in Indonesia that need to be known. The respondent watched the film not only to seek pleasure, but also to have other motives, namely, to add insight and open dialectics. So, from this it appears that when watching a film, a person does not just go to the cinema without knowing what film to watch. However, when it comes to cinema, they already have provisions related to the film to be watched and have the purpose of assisting to watch the film.

On the other hand, the theme of women's issues is actually a risky theme, has the potential to attract controversy, but in reality it attracts people to watch films. The issue of women can be said to be a topic of conversation that is always interesting. This is because discussions about women, especially in the position of women in the family or women's emancipation still leave much controversy. This reflects if urban communities are more open to issues that cause debate. They are actually interested in talking about it in order to get enlightenment.

The two films that were used as objects in this study can be said to be successful in terms of getting an audience. The two films managed to get above one million viewers. This shows if the movie is consumed by many people, especially urban society. Urban society is always in touch with the media, one of them is film. After economic needs are met, enjoying entertainment in the form of movies is a necessity that is also important. Religious-themed films and the results of ekranisasi quite attractive.

Urban society is more open to differences. This can be seen from the results of the analysis when the respondents were asked questions related to the locality of the condition of women in a particular area, the respondents did not really matter. For

example, in the film *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck*, the focus of the story is the story of women from Minangkabau. The portrayal of the Minangkabau female portrait was represented by the Hayati figure who was the main character in the film. Hayati is an orphan who was later raised by her mother. Living as a Minangkabau woman is never separated from her customs and institutions. The Minangkabau traditional ideal arrangement regulates the role of women in such a way in the social life of the community. Hayati must follow and keep the customs in her tribe. She tried to put aside her personal interests above the interests of tradition and institutions. A Minangkabau woman will become an independent woman after becoming a *Bundo Kanduang*. Therefore, Hayati still has to obey orders and regulations from her *mamak* because she has not become a *Bundo Kanduang*. Making Hayati a woman who is not independent of her decision.

Literary text as stated by Istanti (2008) is an art product created with aesthetic elements. A literary text before it is reached by the reader is still an artifact and only manifests itself as an aesthetic object through the active participation of the reader (including those seen in the forms of creativity). As Wolfgang Iser put it in his book *The Act of Reading* that meaning is lifted from the interaction between the reader and the text. "Can only come to life when it is read. It must be studied through the eyes of the reader" (1978). Iser states that the centre of reading all literary works is the interaction between structure and recipient. This indicates that acceptance of a literary work has the potential to cause different meanings. Iser stated that the phenomenological theory of literature draws attention to the fact that the study of literature must consider not only the actual text but also the actions involved in responding to the text.

The issues that are rolled out in the film can be used as material for dialogue by the audience in the urban community. They can talk with text, including in the discussion of the issue of the position of women. The women who are the backbone of their family are the images of women who rise up and fight for their lives and that of their families. This image illustrates that women not only have a weak side, but women can also be resilient for the sake of their families. The image of strong women is particularly visible from families from disadvantaged groups, as they try to fulfil their lives and that of their families.

However, according to Nasution (2018) the image of women that shows that they still adhere to culture and customs is also not completely erased. Women still accept their nature as prospective mothers for their children and companions for their husbands. The same thing was shown by Zahrana figures when he finally married his former student, in film of *Cinta Suci Zahrana*. However, what makes a little difference is that Zahrana

figures actually become a party that 'looks for' not what is 'sought'. Zahrana has her own criteria for the man she is going to marry. Zahrana does not look at it from the background, but rather from how the man to be married becomes a figure who can become a 'priest' in his married life later.

This is the difference with the image of Indonesian women. This difference is quite prominent because Indonesian women view all aspects of the prospective partner. Although both have goals for a good married life, but still have differences. The image of women today is not just looking at appearance, but also the background, this is because Indonesian women have an assumption to find men who are equal to themselves, although not all Indonesian women are like that.

The Zahrana figure depicted more or less reflects the image of Indonesian women today. Zahrana figure gives the effect of an independent woman and firm principles, like most Indonesian women today. Even so, the image of women who are gentle, kind, and motherly is not faded, both from the Zahrana figure itself and in the realities of life today.

Judging from the physical text, reception research can be done through intertextual research, the process of copying, adaptation, and translation. The object of literary study in reception aesthetics is the acceptance and welcome of readers or the public of readers towards literary texts (Chamamah-Soeratno, 1992). Literary reception theory is a discipline that views the role of the reader as important in giving the meaning of literary texts (Jauss, 1983). Hans Robert Jauss in his *Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory* states in his premise, namely: "to bridge the gap between the literature and history, between historical and aesthetic approaches that are both (Formalis and Marxist) school stops." Formalism flow requires the reader only as a subject who follows the directions contained in the text to distinguish his literary form or to find his literary procedures. The aesthetics of Marxists treat the reader, if not all, not different from the author (relation to his social setting). Both ignore readers in their own roles as perpetrators of reading. The relationship between literature and its readers has an aesthetic impact other than historical impact. The aesthetic impact lies in the fact that the first reception is a trial in comparison with the reading of previous works. Historical impact is seen in a series of historical readings from one generation to the next. So the premise of Jauss that bridges between Aesthetic Literature and historical Sociological literature. Jauss, in producing these seven theses, was influenced by Gadamer. The seven theses are reader experience, expectation horizon, aesthetic distance, the spirit of the times, literary sequence, diachronic and synchronous perspectives, and seventh is general history.

From data processing, 80% of respondents (32 people) stated that the configuration of the image of women in this film succeeded in photographing the conditions of reality that exist in society. Both films according to the respondents can give input or inspiration they see new for them. In the Filming of *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck*, for example, there is inspiration how one can rise from adversity and change the situation. This condition certainly gives its own impact on the audience. This managed to compensate for what was conveyed by other media which more often proclaimed matters such as heart-breaking which were less inspiring. When answering the question whether a film that gives positive inspiration needs to be produced, it is stated necessary and important that 95% (38 people) or 2 people answer that they don't know. Furthermore, based on data processing on the questions submitted, it is mentioned that the two films are generally useful and important to look at because a lot of information or other things that are safe are reported by the news media, which can be freely presented in this film.

#### 4. Conclusion

Urban society is always related to media and information technology. This causes their lives to be dynamic. The intensity of seeing films in theatres is higher than those in rural areas. Film is one form of mass media that has an important role to transform ideas. Films are produced not only for entertainment purposes, but also contain messages that are sometimes not realized by the audience. Films can reach various groups and diverse backgrounds. Urban society, which has been known as an open society and always improves the quality of its life, said that the film is not only for entertainment purposes, but also for discourse enrichment and enlightenment.

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