


Representation of Women in Indonesian Horror Movie Posters: From Victims to Iconic Mystical Figures

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history:</p> <p>Received May, 2025 Revised May, 2025 Accepted May, 2025</p> <hr/> <p>Keywords:</p> <p>Posters Horror Films Women's Representation Discourse Analysis Gender's Stereotype</p>	<p>The study focuses on the representation of women in Indonesian horror movie posters, particularly those depicting women as victims of violence or supernatural beings. It aims to analyze how these posters reinforce gender stereotypes and patriarchal ideologies that shape societal perceptions of women. The research employs Van Dijk's discourse analysis method, encompassing three levels: text structure, social cognition, and social context. Four Indonesian horror movie posters from 2023 were visually and narratively analyzed. The findings reveal that most posters perpetuate gender bias by depicting women as passive or vulnerable figures, thus reinforcing dominant patriarchal narratives. Notably, the poster for <i>Suzzanna: Malam Jumat Kliwon</i> presents a contrast, portraying the female figure as powerful and threatening. Although this depiction still operates within the supernatural framework, it suggests a shift toward a more active and empowered female presence. Overall, the study highlights the complex dynamics of gender representation in horror media and its implications for broader cultural discourses.</p> <p><i>This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.</i></p> 

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1. INTRODUCTION

Horror films in Indonesia have a long history that has established their position as one of the most popular movie genres. From the 1980s to the present, horror films have continued to evolve, attracting audiences from both domestic and international circles [1]. During the period from 1981 to 1991, Indonesian horror films reached their peak with 84 titles released. However, only Suzzanna's horror films received widespread acclaim. After 1991, the genre declined due to

stagnant storytelling and Suzzanna's withdrawal from the horror film industry [2].

The golden age of horror films during that era began to fade due to several factors that contributed to the decline in their popularity. From the 1990s to the early 2000s, Indonesian horror films were saturated with elements of sexuality that blurred the sacredness of their narratives. The inclusion of adult film stars, emphasizing sensuality, worsened the situation and sparked rejection from society and organizations, as these films were considered to violate social norms [3]. Despite experiencing fluctuations, Indonesian horror films have remained popular, with an

increasing number of productions to this day encompassing a variety of genres [4].

This phenomenon illustrates that horror films have become an integral part of the national film industry and Indonesian popular culture [5]. Horror films are favored as popular culture because they provide a safe thrill for audiences, allowing them to explore dangerous situations, manage emotions, and express abstract experiences through visual narratives. These aspects contribute to making horror films a significant part of popular culture [6]. The connection between mystical elements in the stories and the traditional beliefs of Indonesian society offers a unique appeal that sets Indonesian horror films apart from those of other countries.

Indonesia rich with culture, and filled with folklore, myths, and legends about supernatural beings, serves as the primary fuel for the national horror film industry [7]. Stories about *kuntilanak*, *pocong*, *tuyul*, and various other supernatural entities have deep roots in the culture and beliefs of society. This makes horror films not merely a form of entertainment but also a profound expression of cultural and spiritual beliefs [6]. In a society that continues to uphold traditions, horror films become a medium for expressing collective fears passed down through generations.

In recent decades, Indonesian horror films have experienced a revival. In the early 2000s, movies such as *Jelangkung* (2001) and *Bangsai 13* (2004) marked a new milestone in the revival of this genre [8], [9]. Their enormous success in the market encouraged many producers to revisit horror themes, tapping into audiences' desire for thrilling experiences rooted in everyday life. With advancements in filmmaking technology and directing, the quality of Indonesian horror films has also steadily improved in terms of storytelling, cinematography, and visual effects [10]. Movies like *Pengabdian Setan* (2017) by Joko Anwar have even successfully entered international markets and garnered praise from foreign film critics.

Although often labeled as a genre with repetitive and formulaic storytelling, horror films continue to hold their unique appeal

[11]. Audiences seeking intense emotional experiences often choose horror films as an escape from daily routines [12]. Additionally, the elements of surprise and fear, delivered through visual and auditory instruments, provide a unique and distinct experience compared to other genres [13]. In the context of the national film industry, horror not only makes a significant contribution to box office revenue [14] but also creates opportunities for young filmmakers to experiment with rich aesthetics and visual narratives.

Movie posters are one of the key elements in film marketing [15]. As a visual promotional medium, posters play a vital role in shaping audience expectations of a film, including horror films. Through visual elements such as images, colors, typography, and layout, movie posters reflect the essence and tone of the film to be watched [16]. In this matter, movie posters serve as an initial representation of the story to be told, as well as a tool to capture the audience's attention. In the context of horror films, posters are often designed to evoke feelings of fear, anxiety, or discomfort in viewers. Beyond being a visual medium, movie posters hold a crucial function. They not only convey information about the film but also communicate hidden messages through the signs and symbols embedded within them. In this case, horror movie posters frequently incorporate mystical or supernatural symbols to reinforce the film's theme [17].

The study of women's representation in Indonesian horror films is considered substantial, given that Indonesian horror movie posters often portray women in vulnerable roles, either as victims or supernatural beings [18]. Such portrayals frequently perpetuate discriminatory gender stereotypes, where women are rendered as objects of suffering or visual exploitation (Mukti and Asriadi, 2023), including through the commodification of their bodies as a film's appeal. This reality highlights how Indonesian horror films contribute to reinforcing patriarchal ideologies that discriminate against women. A particularly concerning issue is that the representation of women in horror films can influence societal

perceptions of women, especially in the context of fear, violence, and control. This can impact the formation of women's identities in real life.

This study uses the framework of performative gender theory [20] which offers a fundamental approach to understanding how gender is constructed and maintained through various social and cultural representations, including media such as movie posters. This theory is relevant for analyzing how movie posters, particularly in horror films, shape and reinforce gender stereotypes, especially concerning women's representation [21]. Gender is not a fixed biological characteristic or an innate trait of an individual. Instead, gender is understood as performative, meaning it is constructed through repeated actions, behaviors, and language, which eventually appear "natural" in society. Performative gender refers to the idea that gender identity is constructed through social performance, rather than being something essential or fixed [20]. In the context of horror movie posters, the theory of performative gender can help in understanding how women are depicted visually and narratively, as well as how these posters contribute to reinforcing or challenging existing gender norms.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 First Literature

A discussion regarding the Indonesian horror film poster was previously conducted by Isnaini (2022) "*Citra Perempuan dalam Poster Film Horor Indonesia: Kajian Sastra Feminis*" in the journal *Dialektika: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra dan Budaya*, Vol. 9. This article explores the image of women in Indonesian horror film posters from 2010 to 2015, portraying them in a sensual manner through poses, clothing, and other visual elements. Women's bodies are used as symbols to represent women as a whole, indicating the

exploitation of the body within the context of capitalism and patriarchy. The study employs a qualitative descriptive research method, utilizing literature study and documentation. The similarity with this thesis lies in the discussion of women's representation in Indonesian horror film posters. However, the difference lies in the approach used—namely, feminist literary criticism and Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics. This article is used as a reference for analyzing the representation of women in Indonesian horror film posters.

2.2 Second Literature

A previous study on the representation of women in horror films was conducted by Annissa and Adiprasetyo (2022), titled "*Ketimpangan Representasi Hantu Perempuan pada Film Horor Indonesia Periode 1970-2019*", published in *ProTVF Journal*, Volume 6. The study found that women are almost invariably depicted as the main characters in horror films, often represented as ghosts or monstrous figures. The predominance of female ghosts in Indonesian horror cinema serves to reinforce patriarchal norms by limiting women's roles and behaviors. Female bodies are exploited through sexual imagery, violence, or as symbols of vengeance, thereby positioning the female ghost as a paradoxical figure—simultaneously a victim and a source of fear. The similarity to the current thesis lies in its examination of the representation of women as victims in Indonesian horror. However, the key difference is in the object of analysis: while

Annissa and Adiprasetyo focus on the main characters in horror films produced between 1970 and 2019, this thesis centers on Indonesian horror film posters released in 2023. Their study provides a critical reference for analyzing the portrayal of women as victims within Indonesian horror culture.

2.3 Third Literature

Another relevant study on the representation of women in film posters was conducted by Sutanto (2020), titled *"Deconstructing the Representation of Women in Hollywood Superhero Film Posters"*. The study employed an empirical research method with a semiotic approach, analyzing the representation of female characters in posters based on the concept of gender equality. The findings indicate that women in the superhero genre are increasingly portrayed as independent individuals with strong personalities. They are depicted as having their own dreams, ambitions, and desires—separate from serving as objects of male affection. The narrative and character development in these films are clearly reflected in the visual representation of the characters and the promotional materials, particularly posters. The similarity with the present thesis lies in its discussion of the representation of women in film posters. The key difference, however, is in the subject matter, which focuses on Hollywood superhero film posters, as well as the theoretical framework employed. This article serves as a reference for understanding how female figures are visually

constructed as a point of attraction in film posters.

3. METHODS

This study analyzed Indonesian horror movie posters from 2023, recommended by the Indonesian Film Artists Association (PARFI) as the scariest films. Out of 13 recommended horror films, four were selected based on their depiction of female figures as the central visual focus. The four posters analyzed were titled *"Siksa Neraka"*, *"Aku Tahu Kapan Kamu Mati: Desa Bunuh Diri"*, *"Suzzanna: Malam Jumat Kliwon"*, and *"Waktu Maghrib."* The study used Van Dijk's discourse analysis method as a critical approach to visually analyze the movie posters, focusing on the relationship between discourse, power, and ideology. Van Dijk argues that discourse analysis is not limited to the structure of the text, as the structure of discourse itself conveys various meanings, opinions, and ideologies [22]. This approach is used to understand how the representation of women and gender bias are constructed in the four posters. Van Dijk outlines discourse analysis in three main dimensions: text structure, social cognition, and social context. Among the many elements in Van Dijk's text structure analysis, one notable element is the graphical component. Graphical elements have a cognitive impact by intensively capturing attention and interest, highlighting the importance of certain information through imagery, and indirectly shaping ideologies that appear [22].

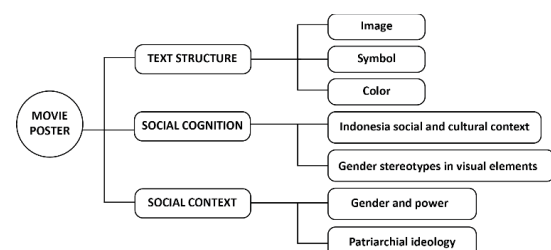


Figure 1. Analysis Model

[Source: Nanda Putri Andriani, 2024]

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Visual Elements of the "Siksa Neraka" Movie Poster



Figure 2. Movie Poster of Siksa Neraka
[Source: <https://www.deecompany.co.id/movie/siksa-neraka>]

This poster features a woman as the central visual focus, with long, disheveled hair, a blood-covered face, and a terrified expression. She is depicted in a state of extreme suffering, with a saw positioned above her protruding tongue, as if about to cut it, emphasizing a sense of extreme torment. In terms of visuals, the woman can be associated with a victim of torture, with clear elements of violence, while still presenting a horrifying image. The dominant colors in this poster are red and black, which are often associated with danger, death, and violence. Red symbolizes blood and violence, while black adds a gloomy and mysterious atmosphere. Mystical elements are evident in the fiery background, symbolizing the torment of hell, as well as the chains binding the figure, which enhances the narrative of suffering and cruelty. The disheveled long hair and her facial expression reinforce the stereotype of women as objects of suffering in Indonesian horror films.

1. Visual Narrative of the "Siksa Neraka" Movie Poster

The visual clearly portrays a woman in the position of a victim trapped in brutal physical torture. However, rather than appearing entirely passive, her expression conveys fear, giving the impression that she is not merely a passive victim but also embodies an element of threat. The poster delivers fear and physical torment in a direct and

unambiguous manner, emphasizing themes of horror and cruelty in the realm of hell.

2. Social Cognition of the "Siksa Neraka" Movie Poster

Indonesian horror films often focus on female figures who endure suffering until their death, subsequently becoming the main attraction in the form of "wandering ghosts" depicted in their movie posters [23]. In the context of Indonesian culture, audiences often interpret the image of women in horror movie posters as symbols of suffering and supernatural power. The "Siksa Neraka" poster portrays a woman with a blood-covered face, trapped in extreme violence, which can be associated with the depiction of eternal torment in hell. The image of the woman in a state of torment can be viewed as a representation of societal beliefs about female ghosts or spirits, which are central to local horror narratives.

Facial expressions are part of body language that can convey a person's emotions and condition [24]. Through the portrayal of facial expressions filled with anger and suffering, this poster reinforces the notion that women, especially in horror films, are often associated with helplessness and mental fragility. The visual elements in this poster reveal a form of exploitation, where the female body is used as an object of suffering and fear. Although the poster does not portray the female body in a sensual manner, objectification occurs through the representation of brutal violence, where the female body becomes a tool to evoke emotional responses from the audience. The sadism displayed in this poster portrays women in a vulnerable and tormented state, positioning their bodies as subjects of extreme torture to capture attention.

3. Social Context of the "Siksa Neraka" Movie Poster

The "Siksa Neraka" poster reflects social dynamics where women are often portrayed in vulnerable and weak positions. Women are commonly associated with feminine and gentle traits, which make them appear susceptible to violence [25]. In this

poster, the woman is depicted as a victim of extreme physical violence, seemingly without any control over her fate.

This portrayal emphasizes gender inequality in power relations between men and women, serving as a representation of patriarchal ideology that associates women with fear, weakness, and suffering. Patriarchal culture places women in subordinate positions and positions men as the primary controllers who dominate and dictate women's lives [26]. The image of women suffering and being tortured within the context of visual violence creates a narrative of fear, portraying women in horror films as symbols of weakness and violence.

The woman in this poster is portrayed in a passive position, as an object of suffering with no ability to resist. This position highlights the lack of power or control women possess. This portrayal aligns with patriarchal views that women have limited agency in determining their own fate. They are often portrayed as subjects of greater forces, whether supernatural or social, that control their bodies and lives.

4.2 Visual Elements of the "Aku Tahu Kapan Kamu Mati: Desa Bunuh Diri" Movie Poster



Figure 3. Movie Poster of Aku Tahu Kapan Kamu Mati: Desa Bunuh Diri

[Source:

https://www.instagram.com/anggy_umbara/p/CwMijhTJ_LO/]

The poster portrays women as the central characters, with four female figures placed in the spotlight. They are portrayed as

victims, hanging by ropes tied around their necks, appearing as puppets controlled by a larger entity in the background (a giant hand made of straw). Their expressions convey fear, helplessness, and suffering. This visual reinforces the representation of women in vulnerable and powerless positions.

The dominant colors used are gray, black, and dark green, which create a gloomy and eerie atmosphere. The figure with glaring eyes and the giant hand made of straw serve as a mystical symbol representing a supernatural threat. The ropes tied around the characters' necks symbolize control and oppression, while the presence of the unclear, large figure signifies an unseen supernatural force that governs their lives.

1. Visual Narrative of the "Aku Tahu Kapan Kamu Mati: Desa Bunuh Diri" Movie Poster

The visual narrative of this poster portrays women in passive positions as victims of an unseen malevolent force. They are shown hanging helplessly, reinforcing the idea that they lack control over their own fate. This reflects the stereotype of women as weak beings who are always subjects of fear and suffering in the horror genre. Women are often depicted in horror films experiencing intense fear, such as harassment, violence, murder, or becoming vengeful ghosts [25].

The giant straw hand controlling the women in this poster symbolizes a supernatural threat. This visual implies that their lives and fates are entirely under the control of a large and mysterious malevolent force, aligning with the mystical horror theme often found in Indonesian horror films.

2. Social Cognition of the "Aku Tahu Kapan Kamu Mati: Desa Bunuh Diri" Movie Poster

In the context of Indonesian culture, audiences would interpret the depiction of women in this poster as a classic representation of the local horror genre, where women are portrayed as victims of supernatural forces. The poster shows several women depicted as puppets controlled by a giant hand made of straw. This reinforces the

stereotype of women as weak and vulnerable beings, both physically and emotionally. They are shown in completely passive positions, hanging by ropes around their necks, seemingly powerless against the malevolent force controlling their fate. This stereotype often appears in horror films, where women become objects of irrationality and emotionality, associated with helplessness in the face of terror. Women's feminine qualities, perceived as gentle and weak, make them more vulnerable as victims [25].

The female bodies are portrayed as passive objects of suffering, with no indication of resistance or the strength to change their fate. Although there is no explicit sexual exploitation, this visualization still demonstrates the objectification of women as "puppets" in a frightening scenario, where their helplessness is exploited to evoke emotional responses from the audience.

3. Social Context of the "Aku Tahu Kapan Kamu Mati: Desa Bunuh Diri" Movie Poster

This poster illustrates how women are portrayed in vulnerable and powerless positions. They are portrayed as victims entirely under the control of external forces, hanging by ropes held by a giant hand. This reinforces gender dynamics where women are placed in passive roles, lacking any control over their own fate. Patriarchal culture positions women as the weaker party who must comply [27]. This poster illustrates a patriarchal ideology that associates women with fear, weakness, and helplessness. In this context, women are portrayed as subjects entirely controlled by a powerful force threatening them. Their bondage to the ropes and passive positions reinforce gender stereotypes that women are easily victimized and lack the strength to resist.

In this poster, women are portrayed as entirely passive and powerless figures. They are shown hanging by ropes, indicating that their fate is controlled by another entity (the giant hand made of straw), which represents a force greater than themselves. Within a broader social structure, this reinforces the patriarchal view that women

lack control over their own situations and are often subject to the power of others.

4.3 Visual Elements of the "Suzzanna: Malam Jumat Kliwon" Movie Poster

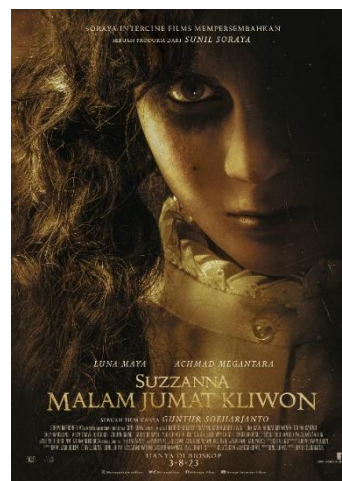


Figure 4. Movie Poster of Suzzanna: Malam Jumat Kliwon

[Source:

<https://www.instagram.com/sorayaintercinefilms/>

A woman (Suzzanna) is the central visual focus of this poster, depicted as the main character. The close-up pose of her face gives a mystical and eerie impression, with only half of her face visible and her eyes prominently highlighted. Her disheveled long hair and the dark shadows around her eyes emphasize her portrayal as a supernatural being (ghost), reflecting the iconic characteristics of Suzzanna in Indonesian horror films.

The dominant colors in this poster are dark brown, yellow, and black, evoking a vintage and mysterious impression. The dark tones serve to create a frightening atmosphere and symbolize a bleak world. The primary visual symbol is Suzzanna's piercing eyes, which enhance the sense of threat and supernatural control possessed by the character. Her long, disheveled hair and the shadows on her face are also visual elements that reinforce the stereotype of women as weak or distressed horror figures.

1. Visual Narrative of the "Suzzanna: Malam Jumat Kliwon" Movie Poster

The narrative conveyed through this image portrays the woman as a threat. Suzzanna's piercing gaze and dark expression suggest that she possesses power and control over her surroundings, making her not merely an object of suffering but a fearsome subject. This depiction reinforces Suzzanna's role as a terrifying supernatural figure, aligning with the tradition of Indonesian horror where women are often portrayed as powerful and vengeful ghosts. Female ghosts in horror films are characterized by their vengeance as if their death holds unresolved injustices or leaves something unfulfilled during their lifetime [25].

2. Social Cognition of the "Suzzanna: Malam Jumat Kliwon" Movie Poster

In the context of Indonesian culture, Suzzanna is widely recognized as a classic horror icon. Audiences interpret the depiction of the woman in this poster through a collective understanding of Suzzanna as a terrifying yet charismatic ghost. Her long hair, cold expression, and dark atmosphere reinforce the image of a woman as a powerful and mysterious supernatural figure. For Indonesian audiences, the character of Suzzanna brings to life local myths and legends about women returning from the dead to seek revenge. The depiction of women carrying vengeance, whether as spirits, supernatural beings, or psychotic characters is an almost constant and unchanging element in Indonesian horror films [4].

The visuals in this poster reinforce the stereotype of women in horror films as emotional and irrational beings, even in the role of a vengeful ghost. Suzzanna's large, piercing eyes and serious expression depict women as figures driven by emotions, particularly revenge and anger. This stereotype aligns with the portrayal of women in many horror films as entities not governed by logic or rationality but by intense emotions. In horror film narratives, women are often portrayed as victims of certain events,

whether physical or psychological violence, leading to a buildup of pressure and the emergence of revenge [25].

Although no explicit sexual exploitation is present in this poster, the visual elements still highlight how women are objectified as symbols of fear. Suzzanna's frightening face is used to capture attention, with a close-up pose emphasizing her eyes as a tool to evoke fear. While the female body in this poster is not directly exploited sensually, her expression and physical characteristics are still utilized to manipulate the audience's perception of women as sources of horror and fear.

3. Social Context of the "Suzzanna: Malam Jumat Kliwon" Movie Poster

The "*Suzzanna: Malam Jumat Kliwon*" movie poster reflects societal gender bias, where women are often depicted as emotional beings connected to the supernatural world. In the context of Indonesian horror culture, women like Suzzanna are known for their mystical image as ghosts or supernatural entities returning to seek revenge. This reflects social dynamics that position women in powerless roles in the real world but grant them otherworldly power in mystical stories. During their lives, women are portrayed as powerless in the face of men, with their resistance against men only possible after becoming spirits [18].

This poster also represents a patriarchal ideology that associates women with fear and violence. Suzzanna, a female ghost character well-known in Indonesian horror pop culture, represents women as figures to be feared—not due to their physical strength, but for their vengeance or trauma rooted in the social injustices they have endured. Patriarchal ideology portrays women as fragile beings whose strength only emerges when they are marginalized or oppressed. Consequently, female ghosts in horror films are often portrayed as vengeful figures driven by the exploitation they endured within a patriarchal culture—where they are positioned as objects of male desire,

blamed as the source of problems, and ultimately targeted for violence [4].

Although the woman in this poster is depicted as a powerful supernatural figure (a ghost), her position of power is passive rather than active. Suzzanna is not portrayed in a physically dominant role but as a threat emerging from the darkness. This reflects a social power structure where women are rarely depicted as direct controllers of a situation but are instead portrayed as figures to be feared due to their mysterious and irrationally explained power.

4.4 Visual Elements of the “Waktu Maghrib” Movie Poster



Figure 5. Movie Poster Waktu Maghrib

[Source: <https://rapifilms.com/page/detail/444/waktu-maghrib>]

This poster features a young girl sitting cross-legged in the middle of a road, calmly holding a toy. However, the shadow beneath her reveals a terrifying figure with a pale face and frightening white eyes. This imagery suggests a duality within the character, balancing her human side with a supernatural one. The girl in the poster can be identified as a supernatural being, despite her outward appearance as a child.

Dark colors such as black and orange dominate this poster, creating an atmosphere of dusk with elements of horror and tension. The dark background adds to the intensity of mystery and fear. The distorted reflection in the water enhances the mystical element,

depicting the hidden dark side within the young girl. Symbols used in the poster, such as the horrifying shadow in the water and the traditional toy, reinforce the classic horror vibe often associated with themes of possession or spirits taking over a child's soul.

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2. Social Cognition of the “Waktu Maghrib” Movie Poster

In the context of Indonesian culture, audiences will process the image of the woman in this poster through a strong cultural lens, shaped by myths and beliefs about the Maghrib time as a moment full of supernatural danger. A well-known myth in society is that during maghrib, ghosts often abduct children, which is why parents frequently remind their children to return home before the maghrib calls to prayer [28]. The young girl sitting calmly at the top of the poster reflects the innocence of children or their helplessness in the face of supernatural threats. However, the terrifying reflection of her shadow in the water reinforces the belief that supernatural beings or evil spirits often

disguise themselves in seemingly harmless forms.

This poster reinforces the stereotype of women as irrational and emotional beings in the horror genre. Although portrayed as a seemingly harmless young girl, the transformation or reflection in the water reveals an uncontrollable supernatural side. This strengthens the notion that women, even in their innocent and youthful forms, can harbor dangerous and threatening powers due to their perceived instability or emotions [4].

The visual elements in this poster demonstrate the exploitation of women through the portrayal of the young girl. Although there is no explicit sensuality, the girl's body is presented as an object of fear. Her distorted and terrifying reflection shows how the female body is manipulated in the context of horror to evoke fear. The young girl becomes the focal point as an object of threat, with an emphasis on how her physical form can transform into something horrifying.

3. Social Context of the *Waktu Maghrib* Movie Poster

The "*Waktu Maghrib*" poster portrays a young girl as the center of horror, reinforcing gender biases in a society where women, especially young girls, are often associated with helplessness and vulnerability. Women, identified with feminine traits, are often seen as embodying passivity and non-existence, serving solely as passive objects in horror narratives [23]. In this context, women are portrayed as victims of supernatural forces beyond their control. This reflects a social dynamic in which women are frequently placed in passive roles and become objects of suffering, particularly in the horror genre that uses gender stereotypes as a narrative element.

This poster can also be interpreted as a representation of patriarchal ideology, where women are associated with fear and weakness. The young girl in the poster appears harmless, but her reflection reveals a terrifying figure. In patriarchal culture, women are often seen as weak, yet their femininity is also constructed as a source of

fear, reinforcing the stereotype that women can become monsters or threats in certain situations [29].

The woman in this poster is illustrated in a passive position, lacking control over her own fate. Although her shadow presents a threatening figure, the main character herself remains helpless and becomes an object of a greater force. This reflects the idea that women have no direct power or control over their lives, particularly in the context of horror, where supernatural forces are portrayed as the primary controllers.

4.5 Representation Patterns

From the analysis of the four horror movie posters, several consistent and inconsistent patterns of female representation emerge. Almost all the posters portray women in passive victim roles, tormented, and under the control of evil or supernatural forces. For example, in the "*Siksa Neraka*" poster, the woman is shown with wounds and a fearful expression, reinforcing the image of women as powerless figures. However, in the "*Waktu Maghrib*" poster, there is a more ambiguous representation of women, where the main character appears calm but has a threatening shadow, suggesting that women can also be portrayed as a threat in horror narratives.

The exploitation of the female body in the context of fear is clearly evident in several posters. In "*Siksa Neraka*", for example, the woman is depicted in a state of severe injury and blood, positioning her body as a subject of torture and an object of fear. However, there is no explicit sensuality in these posters; rather, the focus is on the exploitation of suffering and fear.

Most of the posters reinforce the stereotype that women are emotional, irrational, and weak, especially in the face of evil forces. In the "*Aku Tahu Kapan Kamu Mati: Desa Bunuh Diri*" poster, women are portrayed as puppets controlled by a supernatural hand, reinforcing the image of women as those who lack control over their own fate. Overall, the patterns observed in these posters tend to be consistent in

portraying women as victims, both physically and emotionally, with the exploitation of their bodies used to create fear.

In the "*Suzzanna: Malam Jumat Kliwon*" movie poster, there are notable differences in the representation of women compared to other horror posters analyzed. This poster features Suzzanna (played by Luna Maya) as a strong and iconic central character. In the context of Indonesian horror culture, Suzzanna is known as a terrifying and dominant figure. Rather than being a victim, she is portrayed as a source of fear and a threatening presence, displaying power and control. Suzzanna, as a character, also carries elements of Indonesian myth and culture, making her representation more complex than a mere gender stereotype. She is not just an ordinary woman but a symbol of fear and supernatural power recognized in local culture. This contrasts with several other horror posters, where women are more often reduced to objects of fear or victims of greater forces.

On the other hand, Suzzanna as a horror icon in Indonesian culture reflects a shift in the role of women in horror films, where female characters are not only victims but also sources of fear [30]. Research on Suzzanna shows that women can play a more active role as threats, although their power is often derived from trauma or violence they have previously endured, which is still fundamentally rooted in patriarchal structures.

5. CONCLUSION

Performative gender theory by Judith Butler provides an important perspective in

understanding the representation of women in these horror movie posters. According to Butler, gender is not something essential or natural; rather, it is constructed and performed through actions that are socially and culturally repeated. Gender performativity occurs through a process of construction imposed by social norms, and this can be applied to analyze how women are represented in media, including in horror movie posters.

In the context of the horror movie posters analyzed in this article, the concept of performative gender is evident in how women are consistently represented within frameworks that reinforce existing feminine stereotypes, such as being victims or irrational beings. The visualization of women as passive, tormented, and powerless in the face of supernatural forces is an example of how this gender representation is performed and maintained through visual elements [20].

The "*Suzzanna: Malam Jumat Kliwon*" movie poster presents an interesting exception, where Suzzanna, as a female character, is portrayed not only as a victim but also as a figure with control and power. However, despite appearing powerful, this character is still shaped within the context of performative gender, where women's power is often derived from trauma or violence, reinforcing the patriarchal narrative of women being controlled by emotions and vengeance. Thus, while there is variation in the representation, the performative pattern that links women to irrationality and suffering remains a central theme in the representation of women in these horror movie posters.

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