

REPRESENTATION OF URBAN WOMEN AND THE LOYAL FRIENDSHIP IN *BEBAS* (2019)

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ABSTRACT

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Bebas (2019) narrates about a women's friendship that consists of Vina, Kris, Jessica, and Gina, who have been friends since high school, must face the reality that they are from different socio-economy backgrounds when they are adults. This difference may bring them into a latent problem that causes them to compare and rely on, but they unite. The study's objective is to explore women's representations in an urban Indonesian context film. This research applies Cultural Studies approach using several theories such as Stuart Hall's representation, film's *mise-en-scène* elements, and the girlfriend gaze theory. The analysis will be based on financial ability and family. The result is that there are three constructions about women: women are constructed to be financially stable from being dependent on men, professional women are striving for independent finance, and women are independent but still depend on other women. When women empower each other, there is an indication that they help according to their social class. Vina and Kris seize the highlight because they are wealthy to be dominant as the protagonists for their friends. It can be concluded that the women's friendship in *Bebas* (2019) was formed because of the powerlessness of women to stand alone, but they are strong together. When they are in a group, women from the upper class has a significant position. Women are constructed powerful when they are in a group. *Bebas* (2019) can be a form of patriarchy affirmation that forces women to negotiate their positions to empower each other.

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1. Introduction

Women friendship groups have been made into the big screen in Indonesia and depict either critical or comical narratives such as *Pinky Promise* (2016), *Belahan Jiwa* (2005), *Mama Mama Jagoan* (2018), and *Ali & Ratu Ratu Queens* (2021). The representation of characters in friendship films varies in terms of the number of characters, ages, and socio-economic background. The diversity is deliberately displayed to create the interaction dynamics between characters, and the audience can establish an emotional connection by identifying with the character. One of the women friendship-themed films, *Bebas* or *Glorious Days* (2019), directed by Riri Riza in Miles Films, highlights how Indonesian women empower each other to survive in an urban context. *Bebas* (2019) narrates Vina (Marsha Timothy), who reunites with Kris (Susan Bachtiar) when Kris is being treated as a cancer patient at the hospital. After twenty-three years apart, Kris asks Vina to gather all her old best friends, the Bebas gang.

While searching, Vina recalls her experience when she was a transfer student from Sumedang in high school twenty-three years ago. At the end of the story, Kris, who was severe with cancer, passed away and gave a will to distribute her inheritance to the Bebas gang. After they all danced to fulfil Kris' last wish, Suci (Salvita Decorte) unexpectedly came to Kris' house to attend her funeral. There were two-time settings in *Bebas* (2011) when the female characters were young in 1995 and when they were adults in 2019. The adult version seems to be separated from happiness and freedom compared to teenagers. They forget their identity as empowered women because they are subject to patriarchal and economic repression. Amid various social backgrounds and repressions, the women are united. Ironically, adult female characters define happiness based on social expectations that women can handle domestic and career successfully.

In this situation, repressed women tend to strengthen their subjectivity in a women's coalition. However, it does not mean that internally they are free from the shackles of patriarchal repression. As in *Bebas* (2019), when they were teenagers, their aspirations are notably inspired and influenced by patriarchal constructions such as Jessica, who dreamed of being a successful and beautiful plastic surgeon, Kris as an activist who protected women so men cannot underestimate women, Gina dreamed of being a mother as well as a wealthy businesswoman. Lastly, Vina wanted to become a famous painter who could travel the world. Their dreams can be defined as women's freedom and happiness. Their dreams are left behind as time goes by they have separated away. Living individually, they are all in contrast. For adult women, dreams are regarded as empty hopes. Their grown-up versions have constructed their happiness based on their teenage dreams without a solid support system as what they get from their friendship. Their teenage dreams have become a boomerang for themselves as adults to compare their success for being independent and successful. Understanding their real-life difficulty, they help each other in some cases.

Previous research examining *Bebas* (2019) as a research corpus has mainly focused on the themes of women and friendship. *Bebas gang* describes the variety of representations of women with different backgrounds and characteristics. *Bebas gang* is still attached to the stereotype of femininity compared to other films such as *5 CM*, which is dominated by masculine males based on a comparative study conducted by Karim (2020). However, femininity in the *Bebas gang* cannot be interpreted literally because the leader, Kris, presents a strong woman, good at taekwondo, and looks masculine with long hair. The leader has a different character and character among the female representation. However, it is not only from appearance. Vina, who comes from Sumedang, also enlightens the diversity of the *Bebas gang* because she has the Sundanese accent and has to adapt to the *Bebas gang*, which consist of urban teenagers in Jakarta (Habibah, 2020). There is also social class diversity. Vina, who does not come from a wealthy family, has become a new colour for the *Bebas gang* (Aini, 2020). Apart from Vina, the diversity of *Bebas gang* figures can be seen from the figure of Jojo. Jojo is the only feminine male character in the *Bebas gang* who loves dancing and taking care of his appearance (Fachrezzy, 2021).

As *Bebas* (2019) narrates a group of female friends, many previous studies analyzed *Bebas gang* representation with friendship values. The representation of friendship in this film is conveyed through characters who play a role by presenting a dialogue between characters, behaviours, and events (Amalina, 2020). From the surface, it can be identified that *Bebas* (2019) contains the values of friendship based on Davis, such as enjoyment, acceptance, mutual assistance, trusting, understanding, and respect, and spontaneity (Karim, 2020). In addition, the quality of *Bebas gang* friendship is also analyzed based on the friendship concept from DeVito, which includes utility, affirmation, ego support, stimulation, and security (Amalina, 2020). *Bebas* (2019) thick elements of friendship make this film more dominant with the value of friendship than kinship (Novianto et al., 2020). The dominance of the value of friendship makes this film timeless. *Bebas* (2019) context that shows the youth of the 1990s attracts the interest of adult audiences who experienced the process of adulthood in that year and for young audiences of today. The wide variety of languages used in two generations is interesting to study (Aini, 2020). It is not only able to harmonize the time difference but also

gender. Bebas gang accepts Jojo—the only male—amidst a group of women. Jojo is not in line with other heterosexual men who are patriarchal, homophobic and often underestimate him, mocking him as if he were a woman, even to the point of getting sissy slurs. Even though Jojo is a secret homosexual, he does not explicitly tell his friends. However, he feels comfortable with them (Fachrezzy, 2021). In addition to Jojo, who made friends for security, Vina also did it. The meaning and purpose of friendship for teenage Vina are to protect her from external attacks, even though the reality is that in the gang, she faces verbal abuse conflicts from Suci. Nevertheless, the problem was resolved, and they reconciled (Habibah, 2020).

However, no research criticizes the women's problems in a friendship group regarding their context in an urban society highly affected by capitalism. This study investigates the urban female friendship in *Bebas* (2019) by exploring Vina, Kris, Jessica, and Vina formulated two research questions: (1) How are women's representations regarding their relations with financial stability and family—two elements that are considered as the significant standards for women to live in a patriarchal society? (2) How women can support each other? The representations of women's solidarity are essential to explore, specifically to comprehend Indonesian women's issues in the urban context, which is not entirely liberal but is also limited to traditional gender expectations. Their friendship representations urge only coming from women who feel a similar position.

The purpose of the study is to analyze the representation of a female friendship group that looks unproblematic from the outside, but internally its members face social conflicts due to patriarchal repression and capitalism. Most importantly, they are strong together. Women living in urban spaces are expected to balance between professional and domestic affairs. Only with their best friends; women can be strong but still convey the internal social class gap. *Bebas* (2019), the uniformity that appears in the friendship group obscures the perspective of women personally so that they seem closed and vulnerable to being judged from the surface.

2. Method

This research is qualitative research with Cultural Studies approach. The theory used is the representation of Stuart Hall, the theory of film and *mise-en-scène* elements, and the girlfriend gaze. The analysis focuses on adults versions of Vina, Kris, Jessica, and Gina in *Bebas* (2019) through dialogues and the film's *mise-en-scène*. Specifically, the research will investigate the social conflicts in female characters in the loyalty of a friendship group. Film analysis theories and methods are applied to extract data substantially from films because films are works of art that reflect society and culture in real life. The primary data source used was *Bebas* (2019). It was collected by watching it on www.catchplay.com several times, recording film sequences, observing each part of the film, identifying character representations and patterns of events built, classifying the data, analyzing data using the concepts, and drawing a conclusion. Secondary data were obtained from the literature study to explore the context of the film. The research corpus used is *Bebas* (2019), produced by Miles Films with the duration of 02:00:01. The researcher's notes in film scene classification are the primary sources, and literature studies are secondary sources to explore the context of film production and Indonesia.

Several theories and concepts are needed to answer the problem of urban adult women's identity construction and how women's loyalty is in the film *Bebas* (2019), such as representation, film theory and *mise-en-scène*, and girlfriend gaze. Representation essentially comes from the meanings produced by humans and makes meaning something subjective—not stagnant and definite. The medium of meaning is language. There are three approaches to analyzing representation: the reflective approach, the intentional approach, and the constructionist approach (Hall, 1997). The theoretical approach that will be used is constructionist. The constructionist approach pays attention to concepts and signs that give birth to different meanings based on a social group's point of view and socio-cultural background.

The second point is a film theory and *mise-en-scène* elements. According to Boggs and Petrie (2013), ways to strengthen the character of a character in a film can be done and observed through appearance (face, costume, body shape, gestures), dialogue, action (external and internal), reactions of other characters, contrast, choice of name and caricature. The most important cinematographic aspect to note is the *mise-en-scène*. According to Cook (1990), *mise en scène* is everything arranged, shaped, and positioned so that it appears in the film's framing. Aspects that include *mise-en-scène* are (1) Decoration & Properties (2) Actors & Acting (3) Costumes & Make-up (4) Image Setting (5) Lighting.

Girlfriend Gaze is the gaze in films that positions women to monitor each other's femininity and body to define their similar identity. As cited in Hu and Wang (2021), Alison Winch stated that Girlfriend Gaze is "A gendered panoptical disciplining practice applies to women who actively watch each other to promote ubiquitous perfect body images." Indonesian women in urban context still affect conventional gender structure—men as dominant. In this context, women negotiate their position to be victims of patriarchy and capitalism. Considering their similar backgrounds, they gather and support each other to strengthen their women power.

These theories will help the analysis. The analysis helps unravel the persistent assumption that *Bebas* (2019) is merely about female friendship, essential to understanding postfeminism reality in Indonesia. This paper will break down the detailed information about women friendship's representation in a contemporary film.

3. Results and Discussion

Women Are Financially Stable From Being Dependent on Men

When she was young, Vina and her family depended on her father's job as a Civil Servant at the Ministry of Information. His father, a scholar, can be trusted to hold a civil servant position. Vina's family is not from the lower class society. Vina's dependence on male figures then continued as she grew up. In *Bebas* (2019), patriarchal supremacy is manifested in removing a male figure from responsibility. Because he is no longer a life supporter, Adi—Vina's husband—replaces the father's role as the breadwinner. In this case, women are objects that are the responsibility of men.



Figure 1. Adi gave some advices to Vina before going abroad to work

As the breadwinner, the husband is the economic support. Husbands who can work in large, high-paying companies are often seen as ideal figures in films. The representation of Adi, Vina's husband, is described as such. Referring to Picture 1, Adi ultimately handed over the affairs of the house and children to Vina as a wife. It shows the traditional gender hierarchy. Adi's concern as a husband is to be a breadwinner, so he needs to go to Europe for a business trip. In contrast, his wife stays at home. The representation of an established, handsome, and generous husband in Picture 1 becomes the dominance of the patriarchy. The money that a husband gives to his wife symbolises obedience, which a man buys to guarantee that he always has a woman who dedicates herself to him at home. The consequence of Vina's

strong financial ability that is relied on her husband is that Vina's identity is completely blurred. There is no information about Vina's latest educational status or other information about herself individually in the film. Her status as a wife eliminates her subjectivity as a whole person—a woman who has dreams and desires of her own.



Figure 2. Vina's mother shows off her expensive Louis Vuitton

The male domination also affects the relationship between Vina's mother and her son-in-law. When Vina visits her mother in the hospital, as in Picture 2, her mother is excited, announcing she has got an expensive Louis Vuitton pochette—the branded stuff that Vina's husband only affords. The women patients are attentive and full of appreciation for Vina's mother, indicating their sisterhood in the hospital.

Vina, affluent from her well-to-do husband, has the privilege of caring for her mother in the hospital. Vina and her husband's devotion to Vina's mother give her mother a costly Louis Vuitton pochette. Vina's mother is very proud of the pochette because it has become two meaningful symbols in the Indonesian urban context: a sign of the upper social class and child devotion to her. Luxury goods are a form of proud affection for parents, and the price likely shows the quality of attention. In this case, like the daughter, Vina's mother also depends on the financial power of Vina's husband. Instead of appreciating Vina, her mother expresses her gratitude to Adi, who bought the pochette. The husband blurs Vina's identity as her visit is such a formality of familial politeness. The dedication is not only the presence but can be changed into materials.

Professional Women are Striving For Independent Finance

In contrast to the financial ability guaranteed by men, the female characters represented who have to support themselves are depicted as weak and repressed by the situation. They are forced to face the harsh reality of life. It is seen in Kris and Jessica.



Figure 3. Kris looks pale

Financially, Kris' character is a woman who earns money from the publishing company. There is no information about the company, whether it is owned by her husband or

herself. Referring to Picture 3, Kris's face is pale in everyday life, and her expression is flat and occasionally sad. However, she loves to wear fashionable clothes and feminine accessories. Her pale face indicates she is weak and empty due to her cancer, but she tries to enlighten herself with her appearance. In the hospital, Kris is alone after she divorced her husband. Her loneliness and misery result from her focusing on her career instead of her husband, even children. Even though she is wealthy, if she has no something to do, Kris feels helpless. In a medium close-up shot, the camera captures Kris, who is fashionable with a pink outer with white stripes and loose hair—which depicts Kris' femininity in Picture 3. Implicitly, femininity is correlated with being pretty and soft. The monotone atmosphere of the room depicts Kris' loneliness and boredom routines. She spends most of her time remote working for her publishing company.

As a wealthy publishing company owner, Kris looks sad when Vina's husband calls her in Picture 4. Kris' blank stare indicated her empty self. She is lonely because she is divorced from her husband and her ex-husband never visits Kris during her severe illness. She needs people who understand her personal life. It is why Kris asked Vina to reunite their old friends because she hopes to spend her limited time with the people she loves. She missed *Bebas* gang as she needed moral support. She is too weak to stay strong in front of many people who have higher expectations of independence and resilience. Unfortunately, *Bebas* (2019) does not show that intimate closeness. Only two scenes illustrate Kris talking to Vina from heart to heart. However, that is still from Vina's point of view, who thanks Kris because their meeting reminds her again that they are the main characters in their respective lives.



Figure 4. Kris is gloomy when telling her loneliness

The problem of female characters who have to stand alone is also seen in Jessica. However, Jessica is not described as a woman in the upper class. Referring to Picture 5, Jessica works as an insurance agent because her husband's company is bankrupt, so she has to help him pay all of his debts. Living with her husband does not make Jessica happy as she has to be responsible for her husband's mistakes. Jessica cannot enjoy the job that brings her under pressure in this situation unless she does not do her hobby: touch-up. Her leader expects her to fulfil the target, and she has to work hard all the time.

In Picture 5, Jessica told Kris why Jessica worked as an insurance agent. The cheerful Jessica covered her own life story with a wry laugh—which was not funny. Vina put on a sad expression towards Jessica. Modern society has constructed a myth that career women reflect absolute independence and freedom. However, it is contrary to Jessica, a modern Indonesian woman who is still constructed by traditional gender roles. Jessica has to work under the target's demands as an insurance agent. Jessica, who is usually busy with her work, does not have much free time like Vina, who can visit Kris every time. For Jessica, time is expensive. Even though she works hard, she cannot achieve the title of *Queen of Insurance* (i.e. the agent with the highest number of clients among other agents). Under this patriarchal dominance, Jessica has no resistance to breaking the patriarchal supremacy that binds her. According to Indonesian society, Jessica is a consequence of a wife who is obliged to serve her husband.

Ironically it is pretty standard in society. It is why *Bebas* (2019) depicts the reality of Indonesian women.



Figure 5. Jessica laughs ironically at her life

It is pretty similar to Kris; Jessica's personal life is not a concern in the film. No scene shows Jessica's house and husband. Moreover, as a career woman, Jessica never described her child. In Picture 6, Jessica tries to divert the conversation about her dark past with her husband. She does not want to bring up herself, whom debt collectors have chased due to her husband's bankruptcy. The humorous Jessica manages to cover up her heavy anxiety in facing life's problems with her friends. Jessica likely wants to show that she is all fine. She prevents her friends to know what she is thinking and feeling. From *Bebas* (2019), Jessica is an example of a character burdened with the stereotype of a career woman, in which personal life must be put aside. Her role as a career woman prioritises work professionalism. The limited information about Jessica's personal life makes her identity as a woman who plays a role in the domestic and family spheres seem not to get attention, nor her aspirations.



Figure 6. Jessica tells Vina about her husband and their life

Consequently, the audience cannot explore the deep of her real emotions and thoughts from Jessica's perspective. Her friends know that Jessica is limited to her occupation, short story about her husband, hobby, and friendly personality. Jessica builds up her barrier with her old best-friends. Jessica's tendency to avoid revealing personal issues shows that *Bebas* gang members do not have intimate emotional attachments. Fellow members do not encourage and intend to make Jessica more open about her personal life. In fact, as a woman, she also has the right to express her real emotions. She gets much pressure from her husband and works to pay the bills—without enjoying her money. Jessica's difficult position makes her fragile. Jessica, who belongs to the middle social class, does not empathise

with and understand other women. Because of the lack of information, the audience does not know the honest Jessica is.

Kris and Jessica are also kept away from the family aspect for women who are not represented in domestic space. They do not get space for identity construction in personal life information. In *Bebas* (2019), there is no specific and detailed information about the personal lives of Kris and Jessica. In other words, their identity as career women separates them from their identity as women in the domestic and family space. They are separated from private space—which is very important for the members to know if they genuinely care about each other. Openness is essential to foster empathy as a fellow woman who lives in multiple expectations.

Women are Independent But Still Depend On Other Women

As a teenager, Gina becomes one of the most respected and wealthy female figures. Gina's mother is a single parent as well as a successful businesswoman. From her mother, who is independent, strong, and prosperous, Gina is inspired to become a successful businesswoman when she grows up. In addition, Gina's house is described as large and luxurious. The young *Bebas* gang members feel comfortable playing and staying at Gina's house. Financially, teenage Gina is entirely dependent on her mother.

Meanwhile, mentally, she also made his mother a role model. However, everything changes. Gina's mother had a stroke after she went bankrupt. Gina's family undergoes a difficult economic situation. In addition, Gina, who is divorced from her husband, has to be the breadwinner by working part-time jobs. It all makes the representation of this family looks gloomy, sad, and unhappy.



Figure 7. Mbok Umi and Gina.

At this moment, Gina has to survive with the help of her household assistant, Mbok Umi, as in Picture 7. Gina's financial survival does not come entirely from herself. Gina cannot rely on her translation skills because the income from the translation business is not enough to support her family's economy. In addition, Gina also opens a pastry business. Her ability to make pastries comes from Mbok Umi, Gina's household assistant, who faithfully accompanies her even though Gina and her mother fall into poverty. The role of Mbok Umi, who used to be a *helper*, has now actually turned into a *helpful rescuer*. Mbok Umi plays a significant role in Gina's life. The presence of women helps and strengthens each other in critical times of the economy. Mbok Umi also takes care of Gina's family—no matter how worse the condition.

Regardless of their form, women who depend on their financial capabilities to other women are represented as not having good economic abilities. In the end, strong and independent women are represented weakened in terms of their physical and mental health—like what happens to Gina's mother. It all stems from the patriarchal conception that women are weaker than men, and power always correlates to the economy. Meanwhile, women's intuition and physical attributes are *weapons that kill their masters*. Women are still compartmentalized within the stifling boundaries between logic and absolute power,

identified as male traits, so male characters are not a problem. Meanwhile, traditionally, women are identical with softness, which weakens their existence as empowered human beings. The power of women only comes to the surface when they are in a critical position, dying, and at the end of death. What is presented in *Bebas* (2019) is a form of women's defence in fighting for life in many limitations.



Figure 8. Vina and Jojo visit Gina

Meanwhile, the burden of women's devotion to their parents is also seen in Gina, which refers to Picture 8. Poor Gina cannot afford to take her mother, who has a stroke, to the hospital. As a result, Gina can only take care of her mother at home without professional medical facilities. It is likely the opposite of Vina, who can bring her mother to the hospital. Vina's mother looks fresh in the hospital. She likes to talk to her roommates, is energetic, and is not lonely.

In contrast, Gina's mother looks depressed in a wheelchair. She was sombre, aloof, and mysterious. Then, Gina's adult representation looks shabby, lethargic, and insecure. Due to her circumstances, Gina never gets pretty compliments even though she is equipped with a perfect physique. Gina can become a translator and has a talent for making delicious pastries to be marketed. Gina is both a responsible mother and daughter. However, unfortunately, Gina's positive qualifications that can carry out her role as a responsible mother and daughter seem contradictory to the ideal standard that must always refer to social class.

Women Support Each Other Financially

Considering there are women who have economic difficulties, women support each other. At Kris' funeral, she sent a notary to convey her wills to her best friends—not her biological family. As stated in the will, Jessica and Gina receive an abundance of money and valuable properties because they need more help in terms of finance. Kris bought all of Jessica's insurance and signed it as all of her best friends' names to protect them whenever she cannot defend them anymore as she is the leader. Kris is full of responsibility. This inheritance makes Jessica possible to be *The Queen of Insurance* for the first time ever. At the same time, Kris helps Jessica empower her to be the queen in her life and make her dream come true.

Meanwhile, Gina receives much financial support from Kris, such as a strategic position in her own publishing company, a finance guarantee of her children's tuition fee, and exclusive hospital facilities for her mother's therapy. They dance together at the end of the narrative to celebrate their freedom at Kris' funeral, as depicted in Picture 9. There is no sadness, just having fun. There is a unique perspective of seeing death in *Bebas* (2019). Kris' death is not seen as misery and dark, but delight and joy as represented in Picture 9. Their smiles express freedom and delight as they can meet again. Things that seem contradictory also mean that Kris lives forever in their hearts. The death of Kris does not make her to be forgotten, yet otherwise. Kris will always be remembered as she contributes to the life of women. Their togetherness is represented touching as they empower each other—financially.

Jessica and Gina are not helpless and living under capitalism threat anymore. In this film, women friendship is a perfect medium to support women through financial ability. The material becomes the symbol of solidarity as they share their problems regarding patriarchal capitalism.



Figure 9. Bebas gang are dancing together.

The Highlight of Upper-Class Women

Kris is a helper and a leader for her best friends because she is strong, brave, caring and wealthy. It is why her position in this film is crucial and significant. Without her existence, there would not be Bebas gang gathering even if they had been apart for twenty-three years. This film highlights Kris because she is financially stable but still represents friends to brighten her days. Kris is delighted when she meets Vina in a hospital. Kris asks Vina to find all Bebas members to meet them again.

In this situation, Vina becomes the only person who has free time to find the members and visit Kris compared to Jessica and Gina, who are busy handling their families and working. The closeness of Kris and Vina is shown frequently. Vina, who can visit Kris' room, gives Kris more attention than Jessica and Gina, as in Picture 10. Meanwhile, Jessica only visits Kris occasionally if she has spree time out of her work hour.



Figure 10. Kris and Vina talk about life lesson and their bestfriends

Explicitly, Vina and Kris' closeness can be seen in their name—similar to the legendary Indonesian singers they are referred from—Vina Panduwinata and Krisdayanti. This equation makes it easier for them to build connections with each other. Vina and Kris' close friendship creates the same pattern when they grow up. Bebas gang reunites because Vina and Kris meet at the hospital at the film's beginning. As two figures named after famous singers, Vina and Kris become the centre. Their identity is easy to recognise and remember because of their popularity, which is also closely related to social and material capital. The significance of popularity and materialism is the driving force for the characterization of *Bebas* (2019). Despite the close relationship between Vina and Kris, from the beginning to the end of the

film, the audience does not get the precise information and descriptions about Kris. The film shows their intimate interaction but not on a deeper level.

Jessica's character is not much highlighted in the social class sphere compared to Kris. As an insurance agent busy working, Jessica does not spend much time with her friends. It is similar to Gina, who does not have time to visit Kris and her best friends as she has financial urgency. As housewives and mothers, Vina and Gina have different privileges in enjoying time with their friends. A housewife from an upper social class, Vina can have more time with her friends without neglecting her family matters. Meanwhile, Gina seems so busy taking care of her family at home that she does not have much time to be free and have fun.

The space of highlighted characters in *Bebas* (2019) is related to social class. Kris and Vina are two women who become the saviours of their friends. Vina can help find all of her friends to grant Kris favour and spend her time with Kris anytime. Meanwhile, Kris can help Jessica and Gina financially even though they do not spend time together as frequently as Vina. Therefore, the potential and beneficial exchange happen to the upper-class society. Their financial stability gives them privileges to get positive attention from the audience. Here, the audience defines financial success as an indicator of happiness over anything in urban women.

4. Conclusion

The diversity of representation of the four female characters in the film *Bebas* (2019) regarding financial ability and family reflects Indonesian urban society. There are slightly invisible internal social class gaps among its members as they compare themselves with others. However, women can also help other women understand their positions and problems under the patriarchy and capitalism repressions.

The diversity of characters represents that women cannot be represented as entirely perfect, happy, and accessible even though they have followed patriarchal standards. No character seems fulfilled with their adulthood, no matter how their status, either having a spouse or not, career women or housewives, or wealthy or not. They are all struggling and striving to get their happiness—which is always limited by the economy. It is only in a loyal friendship that they can get it all. However, urban society's individuality urges them not to show their vulnerability. They lack emotional support as what women friendship despite their social status. Women in urban and patriarchal contexts are constructed to be private.

From a patriarchal perspective, women's freedom and happiness seem to be dictated by men's existence and standards through family and financial ability, which must always place men above women. Regardless of the role, financially secure women have more privileges such as free time and the ability to help others with material things. Vina and Kris' capital and social capital make their representation space in the film closer and loyal. Vina and Kris are also more likely to stand out as protagonists who help gather old friends and help their members financially from lower social classes, Jessica and Gina. The fragile friendship in this film can be seen in how friends are not sad over the death of Kris. Far from being sad, they made Kris' funeral a moment of reunion and celebration. Overall, the idea of patriarchy in this film places women as materialistic and can be strong only in a group of friends.

Further studies can use the analysis of friendship here to explore Vina's characters development using psychoanalysis and postfeminism. It is significant to understand how a middle-class housewife undergoes patriarchal problems and can survive with the support and power of female friendship in the Indonesian urban context.

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