

Female Resistance in the *Bida'ah* Film: A Critical Reflection on Patriarchal Culture and Religious Understanding

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Abstract

The film *Bida'ah* is a Malaysian series that critically depicts female characters' resistance to injustice in the context of religion and patriarchal culture. A study of the film *Bida'ah* was conducted to provide an understanding of how visual media such as films can position women as subjects who have a voice, choices, and the courage to fight injustice. The problem statement in this study is how female characters in the film reflect resistance to patriarchal culture and religious understanding. This study aims to uncover the representation of female characters in the film *Bida'ah* as a form of criticism of patriarchal culture and religious understanding that limits women's roles. This study uses a qualitative approach with Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis method with three stages of analysis, namely denotation, connotation, and myth. The findings from this analysis are expected to make a significant contribution to the fields of patriarchy, cinema, and media studies in general. Patriarchal culture exploits this heresy as a tool to maintain power and social control over women, often disguised under the pretext of religious preaching and obedience. Thus, this study is not only a reflection on the courage of female characters in films, but also a call to strengthen the position of women in the public sphere and reinforce narratives of anti-patriarchal social change and gender equality.

Keywords

Resistance 1; *Bid'ah* 2; Patriarchal 3; Religious Understanding

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1. INTRODUCTION

Patriarchal culture remains a powerful reality in Indonesian society. The social structure places men in a dominant position, while women often experience discrimination, restrictions, and marginalization, particularly in social and religious contexts. This phenomenon has serious implications for women's roles, freedoms, and welfare, which are important issues in feminist studies and social development.

In an effort to reflect on and critique patriarchal culture, film media plays a significant role as a medium for expression and education. The film *Bida'ah* is one of Malaysia's cinematic works that critically depicts female characters' resistance to injustice in the context of religion and patriarchal



culture. The main character, Baiduri, is a representation of an educated Muslim woman who not only experiences but also actively fights against the distortion of religious teachings that have often been associated with male power. Baiduri's resistance raises the spirit of *tajdid*, or renewal in religion, which has been synonymous with male figures, thus opening up new space in the study of feminism and the role of women in religious studies (Fitriyani & Sudjatnika, 2025).

This film also shows various strategies of female resistance, which are not always overt and confrontational, but can also be quiet and strategic, as demonstrated by the character Ummi Hafizah. This opens up a richer perspective in understanding the role of women in fighting oppression, where even non-confrontational actions can have a significant impact on social change. The film *Bidaah* symbolically criticizes patriarchal culture and exploitative religious interpretations, which have long silenced women's voices and marginalized them in religious and social spaces. This criticism is important for opening up dialogue and reflection on the role of women in religion and society, as well as rejecting the entrenched hegemony of patriarchy (M. Ainul Budi, 2025).

A study of the film *Bida'ah* is important to provide a deeper understanding of how visual media such as films can position women as subjects who have a voice, choices, and the courage to fight against injustice. The narrative and symbolism in the film position women as agents of social and moral change who not only fight for themselves but also for society at large. By portraying female characters alongside historical female figures in Islamic tradition who are known as fighters for truth, this film serves as both a medium for social education and da'wah that can inspire viewers to understand the importance of equality, courage, and gender justice.

Islam teaches that men and women are equal in the sight of Allah SWT, as stated in QS. Al-Hujurat verse 13.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

Meaning: "O humanity! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may 'get to' know one another. Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware." (Fakhrudin & Irhamah, 2016)

Therefore, when audiences are presented with stories that emphasize women's struggles against patriarchal structures, it can trigger empathy, deep reflection, and motivation to support gender equality efforts from an Islamic perspective. Islam itself explicitly recognizes various rights of women, such as the right to choose a life partner, the right to education, and the right to actively participate in social life. Ironically, in everyday social reality, gender discrimination is still often encountered, which actually violates the essence of Islamic teachings (Narosita and Saidah 2025).

Imbalanced power dynamics exist between teachers and students in conventional educational systems, including Islamic ones. Boarding schools (*pesantren*) establish an environment that is

susceptible to exploitative behaviors, including sexual violence. *Bida'ah* film symbolic demonstrates how unchecked spiritual control can evolve into a type of oppression. Both mentally and physically, without sufficient accountability systems in place. In reality, weak regulations, inadequate oversight, and a prevailing culture of silence within religious organizations contribute to incidents of sexual violence. Challenging to disclose and often concealed under the pretext of preserving the respectability of religious organizations. This film subtly encourages viewers to reconsider how religious leaders may misuse their authority, not just for ideological influence, but also to enable sexual offenses that are cloaked in a guise of moral justification (Syamsurrijal et al., 2025)

Previous studies have highlighted the representation of women in films as a form of criticism against patriarchal culture and religious understandings that restrict women's roles in society. Research on Kamila Andini's film *Yuni*, released in 2021, highlights the feminist actions of the main character in confronting the patriarchal culture in Indonesia that regulates and limits women's roles. This film is an important medium for criticizing social norms that restrict women and depicts their struggle to obtain an education and determine their own path in life. The approach used shows how the representation of radical feminism in this film opens a dialogue about discrimination and gender inequality that still exist in society (Widya Apshara et al., 2025).

The Study of Patriarchal Culture in *Gadis Kretek* by Irmawati, Risa Dwi Ayuni, and Amelia Puspita, using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis, adds to our understanding of how patriarchal culture is represented and criticized in the Javanese socio-cultural context. This research examines visual symbols and film narratives to illustrate role restrictions, social control, and discrimination against women, while also presenting efforts to deconstruct patriarchal norms through the representation of strong and independent female characters (Irmawati et al., n.d.).

The correlation between *Yuni* and *Gadis Kretek* is very important in the context of the study "Female Resistance in *Bida'ah* Films: A Critical Reflection on Patriarchal Culture and Religious Understanding," because all three films show how women narratively struggle against patriarchal structures that limit their freedom and rights, whether in the social, cultural, or religious spheres. Each film uses visual mediums to portray women's resistance not only as victims, but as active and conscious agents of change, thereby contributing significantly to the study of feminist cinema in Indonesia and Malaysia, as well as presenting an in-depth critique of patriarchal practices that are deeply rooted in society.

The film *Bida'ah* presents female characters as a form of resistance against patriarchal culture and dominant religious understanding. However, there has not been much research that deeply examines how the representation of female resistance in this film reflects criticism of social and religious structures that often belittle women. The research question in this study is how female characters in the

film reflect resistance to patriarchal culture and religious understanding. This study aims to uncover the representation of female characters in the film *Bida'ah* as a form of criticism of patriarchal culture and religious understanding that limits women's roles.

This research is expected to provide significant benefits in several aspects. First, it enriches academic studies in the fields of patriarchy, cinema, and media studies with a focus on the representation of women and criticism of patriarchal culture through film. Second, it contributes to the social discourse on the importance of women's empowerment in a society that still faces various forms of gender inequality and social oppression. Third, it will provide insights for filmmakers and social activists to optimize the role of the media in voicing women's issues and encouraging more equitable and inclusive social change. Fourth, for the wider community, this research is expected to raise awareness of the importance of gender equality and the active role of women as agents of social and moral change who can bring progress to the nation.

Through this research, it is also hoped that it will open up constructive dialogue on the relationship between culture, religion, gender, and media, as well as encourage a renewal of perspectives and practices in social and religious life that have so far neglected justice and humanity for women. Therefore, research on the film *Bida'ah* is an important step in connecting media, culture, and women's struggles that are relevant to the context of Indonesia and the wider Southeast Asian region.

2. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with semiotic analysis methods to examine the representation of female resistance in the film *Bida'ah*. The qualitative approach aims to gain a deep and comprehensive understanding of the symbolic and narrative meanings contained in the film, particularly those related to patriarchy and female resistance. The research data was obtained from primary data downloaded directly from the Viu Original platform, providing full access to the audiovisual material that was the object of the study. The primary data in the form of films was analyzed in detail to understand the portrayal of female characters and important messages related to patriarchal culture and understanding of religion. Through in-depth observation of the visual and verbal elements in the film, which included detailed observation of each scene, the visual symbols used, the expressions and gestures of the characters, and the transcription of dialogues containing messages of social criticism and feminism, this research also used secondary data obtained from various articles, news, reviews, and film reviews that were relevant and served as additional sources to enrich the context of the analysis and strengthen the interpretation of the film's message. this study also uses secondary data obtained from various relevant articles, news reports, reviews, and film reviews, which serve as additional sources to enrich the context of the analysis and strengthen the interpretation of the film's message. The

use of secondary data serves to analyze the reactions of the public and critics to the film, thereby providing a more comprehensive view of the socio-cultural influence and relevance of the portrayal of female characters in this film (Sugiyono, 2009).

Data analysis was conducted with reference to Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, which is known for its three stages of analysis: denotation, connotation, and myth. In the denotation stage, researchers identify and describe the literal meaning or meaning that is immediately apparent from the visual and verbal elements in the film. For example, recognizing objects, clothing colors, or characters' actions without additional interpretation. The next stage is connotation, where researchers examine the implied meaning or message conveyed by these signs, which are usually related to cultural values (Ali Romdhoni, 2016).

Next, the data was analyzed at the connotative level to understand the hidden meanings behind these symbols. Finally, myth analysis was used to relate the findings to broader socio-cultural and ideological contexts. Meanwhile, the mythical stage is the exploration of broader ideological meanings, where researchers look at social and cultural constructs that are reproduced or criticized through the film. The analysis process began with the collection of visual and verbal data from the film *Bida'ah*, then the researchers identified signs, symbols, and narrative elements directly related to the themes of patriarchy and female resistance. This identification includes the symbolism of color patterns, setting, use of music, critical dialogue, and gestures that reflect the psychological conditions of female characters in general, especially regarding the role of women in patriarchal societies and discriminatory religious interpretations (Roland Barthes, 2012).

The validity of the data in this study was maintained through triangulation techniques, namely comparing the results of observations with relevant literature, theories of patriarchy and semiotics, and consultation with experts in the fields of media and gender studies. This triangulation aimed to ensure that the interpretation of meaning in the films was not purely subjective but was supported by strong theoretical studies and credible secondary data. In addition, the researcher also double-checked the dialogue transcripts and visual clips to ensure the accuracy of the data analyzed (Sugiyono, 2017).

The semiotic approach as the main method in this study provides researchers with a systematic and critical framework for constructing a deep understanding of how the film *Bida'ah* communicates a narrative of resistance against patriarchal culture and discriminatory religious interpretations. This research not only explores the textual content of the film superficially, but also delves into the layers of hidden meanings that contribute to the formation of complex ideological and social messages. The findings from this analysis are expected to make a significant contribution to the fields of patriarchy, cinema, and media studies in general (Rahman & Wenerda, 2025).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Synopsis

Based on the VIU Original and CNN Indonesia app, the series Bida'ah tells the story of a young woman named Baiduri (played by Riena Diana) who is pressured by her very religious mother to join Jihad Ummah, a religious group led by Walid Muhammad Mahdi Ilman (played by Faizal Hussein) who claims to be Imam Mahdi, the savior of Muslims at the end of time. Upon joining, Baiduri begins to realize that there are questionable practices behind the group's religious teachings, including forced marriages, blind obedience, and other rituals whose authenticity is doubtful. When Hambali (Fattah Amin), Walid's deputy's son, returns from Yemen, he also realizes that the group has strayed from its original purpose. To protect his mother and uncover the truth, Baiduri collaborates with Hambali, sacrificing everything to fight the group's leaders and expose their secrets (Viu, 2025). Directed by Pali Yahya and written by Erma Fatima, this religious series consists of 15 episodes, each lasting approximately 30–42 minutes. The film Bida'ah stars a lineup of top actors such as Faizal Hussein, Fattah Amin, Riena Diana, Marissa Yasmin, Vanida Imran, Hasnul Rahmat, Fazlina Ahmad Daud, Nur Fathia, and Malia Baby (CNN Indonesia, 2025).

Semiotic Analysis of Female Characters' Resistance in Episodes 1 – 15

Eps	Scene	Original Dialogue (Melayu)	Denotation	Conotation	Myth
1	Baiduri sprinkled water on Walid's feet.	-	Baiduri splashed the water used to wash Walid's feet onto Walid's face as an act of physical resistance.	A symbol of rejection and contempt for patriarchal authority and abusive religious power.	Showing that such power can and must be resisted.
2	Baiduri was confused as to why the congregation ate Walid's leftovers.	“Saya tak perlu minum bekas orang tuk dapatkan berkah”	Baiduri refused to drink Walid's leftover water, showing clear disbelief.	Criticism of rituals that are considered mystical and manipulative for the sake of obtaining false blessings.	Rejecting the myth that blessings come from physical objects or the remains of religious leaders, fighting against religious dogma that restricts rationality.
4	Baiduri wrote about several irregularities	“Ini yang ku Nampak, belum tentu Ibu nampak	Baiduri noted the oddity of the ritual of drinking Walid's leftover	Criticism of manipulative and harmful practices of excessive	Debunking the myth of untouchable religious

	s that occurred.		water, the fighting over food among the children, and the excessive prayers.	fanaticism, revealing social injustice and oppression.	leadership, rejecting the use of religion as a tool of control and oppression.
4	Baiduri discussed the facts with Hambali.	“Jadi jalan menuju kepada Allah satu saja. Iman dan Taqwa. Dan Allah sudah janji keimanan kepada Allah Swt adalah kebebasan daripada memperhambakan diri kepada hawa nafsu sesama manusia. Ketakwaan itu adalah melakukan segala perkara yang diperintahkan oleh Allah Swt yang menekankan segala larangannya. Tidak ada kah syarat untuk perempuan masuk surga dengan mentaati seorang mursyid yang belum pasti pun kemursyidannya? betul kan?”	Baiduri spoke with Hambali about the only path to Allah, which is faith and piety without any other conditions.	Criticism of religious deviations that require obedience to a mursyid whose status as a mursyid is unclear.	Debunking the myth that obedience to a spiritual guide is an absolute requirement for entering heaven, affirming individual freedom of belief.
6	Stoning a non-mahram couple caught together	Baiduri: “mengarut, kalau betul budak-budak tu buat salah tapi tak kan lah sampai kena rajam. itu bukan undang-undang dalam negara	A man and woman were caught together; Baiduri stated that it was not his authority to punish them.	Social criticism of extreme punishments in Islam, highlighting the conflict between local culture and religious teachings.	Debunking the myth that all Islamic laws must be applied automatically, emphasizing that the context of the country and culture must be taken into

		kita Bu.” Baiduri: “iya betul bu, tapi bukan undang-undang kita untuk menghukum orang sampai macam t u sekali.”			consideration.
7	Baiduri talks with Walid's two wives.	“Kenapa ummi memilih untuk mengikuti sunnah rasul untuk poligami? sedangkan dalam ajaran agama kita banyak sunnah yang lain. banyak cara lain untuk mendidik hati selain berpoligami, saya cuma kuatir kalau perempuan hanya dijadikan mangsa dalam arti kata berdakwah. memanipulasi perempuan dalam kata dak wah.”	Baiduri questioned the justification of polygamy as sunnah and expressed her concern about the manipulation of women.	Criticism of polygamy, which is used as a justification for preaching but has the potential to exploit women emotionally and socially.	Debunking the myth that polygamy is the only way to educate the heart in Islam, emphasizing that there are many other sunnahs that are more humane.
9	Baiduri and Hambali saw Walid having sexual relations with one of the female congregant s under the pretext of spiritual marriage.	-	Baiduri and Hambali witnessed Walid having sexual intercourse with a female congregant.	Criticism of the misuse of religion to justify illegal sexual acts through the concept of spiritual marriage as a cover.	Debunking the myth that spiritual marriage is a legitimate part of religious practice, asserting that it is manipulation and abuse hidden behind religion.
11	Mia	Mia: “Saya Istri	Mia claimed to be	Criticizing the	Debunking the

	complained to Ummi Hafizah	Batin Walid. Sejak awal saya masuk sini, Walid cakap saya ada peranan penting dalam dakwah Walid jadi saya kena nikah batin dengan walid tapi Walid suruh saya rahasiakan."	Walid's secret wife and played a role in Walid's preaching.	practice of spiritual marriage, which is used as a tool to manipulate women within religious power structures.	myth of spiritual marriage as a valid form of religious marriage, emphasizing that this is a form of religious abuse for certain interests.
11	Baiduri reminded and informed the Young Women's Congregation that their lives always depended on Walid.	"Apakah seorang perempuan itu hanya akan dipandang oleh Allah apabila kita rela hidup berpolygami? Merelakan hidup kita permainan dicaturkan oleh lelaki? Apakah peranan kita sebagai seorang perempuan hanya untuk menjadi pemuas nafsu lelaki? Sebenarnya kalian sendiri yang merelakan diri untuk diperalat sebab terlalu percaya. Terlalu ta'shub karena kalian tidak mempunyai ilmu agama. Sebab itu lah kalian mudah untuk dikuasai"	Baiduri reminded young female congregants that life is not just about accepting polygamy and becoming objects of male desire.	Sharp criticism of patriarchal culture that exploits women without a proper understanding of religion, highlighting dependence and ta'shub.	Debunking the myth that God's satisfaction is related to polygamy and blind obedience, emphasizing the importance of religious knowledge and women's awareness.
12	Walid arranged marriages for several	"Penguasa budaya dan bangsa melayu menjadikan	Walid officially announced Baiduri as his wife, considering	A symbol of patriarchal domination that claims religious	The myth of the absolute power of religious leaders makes

	of his followers, and Baiduri pretended to faint because Walid took a fourth wife with the excuse that it was with the permission of Allah and the Messenger.	Baiduri sebagai permaisuriku. Penyerahan ini adalah penyatuan bangsa, jadi siapa yang berhak untuk membantah Amanah yang diberikan oleh Rasulullah pada beta."	it a mandate from the Prophet.	legitimacy for the control and oppression of women.	women objects of politics and power.
13	Baiduri woke up from her faint	Baiduri: "Apa kau cakap? Dinda? Aku bukan dinda kau, lepas lah. Saya tak bodoh dengan yang kau cakap tu." Walid: "Baiduri, ini ketentuan Allah. Kita cuma nikah batin saja. Baiduri cuma jadi istri walid di alam lain saja." Baiduri: "Sama alam lain atau alam nyata pun, aku haramkan diri aku menikah dengan kau!"	Baiduri flatly refused and insisted that she would not be swayed by Walid's claim that they were married in a spiritual marriage.	Criticism of Walid's false arguments and manipulation, using the concept of spiritual marriage to secretly exploit women.	Rejecting the myth of spiritual marriage as being religiously valid, emphasizing that the practice is a form of religious abuse that is not recognized by Islamic law.
13	Baiduri made her mother realize her mistake here.	"Baiduri betul-betul tak paham lah apa yang coba mereka perbuat. Nikah batin? Amanah mana yang dia guna pakai? Suka-suka dia ja nak bagi arahan kepada kita tuk	Baiduri emphasized that she did not understand what Walid was doing, rejecting spiritual marriage and criticizing Walid's treatment.	Strong criticism of the manipulation of women for lust and power under the guise of preaching, highlighting symbolic violence.	Debunking the myth of religious legitimacy that is misused to oppress women, raising awareness of religious exploitation.

		nikah dengan dia. Kenapa dia orang nak bodoh-bodohkan perempuan yang ada dalam jamaah ni semata-mata untuk nafsu. Perjuangan dakwah konon, perjuangan dakwah apa, Bu? Sampai nak kena nikah batin perlukah kawin 4 Bu baru boleh berdakwah? Dia orang layan perempuan macam lauk pauk dia orang. Lepas makan, campak, buang! Baiduri nak Allah, bukan dengan cara bida'ah-bida'ah macam ni Bu."			
13	Umami Hafizah witnessed with her own eyes, in tears, Walid's spiritual marriage to Amirah.	"Amirah, malam ini Rasulullah Bersama kita, menyaksikan kita. Ya Allah, aku terima nikahnya Amirah Binti Marzuki dengan maksud nikah batin bermaskawin Al-Fatihah."	Umami Hafizah emotionally witnessed the spiritual marriage between Walid and Amirah with religious ritual recitations.	The symbols of error and religious misguidance practiced by Walid and his congregation demonstrate ritualistic manipulation of religion.	The myth of the legitimacy of spiritual marriages, which are considered valid according to religion, even though they contradict Islamic law and ethics.
14	The young women complained to Baiduri, crying and full of	Dewi: "Walid bujuk aku Baiduri, Walid kata kerana perjuangan dakwah dan	Baiduri questioned his ignorance and rejection of spiritual marriage, as well	Sharp criticism of religious manipulation that exploits women for the sake of lust and power under	Debunking the myth of religious legitimacy used as an excuse for torture and control over

	regret.	karena Allah. Dia buat aku macam binatang Baiduri! Aku salah, dia cakap aku istri batin dia.” Amirah: “Aku pun sama, walid kata tak salah suka sama suka. Aku sakit Baiduri. Dia cakap hal yang sama ke aku.” Syira: “aku minta maaf Baiduri.”	as Walid's cruel treatment of the congregation.	the pretext of preaching.	women, raising awareness about the exploitation of religion.
15	Baiduri took the women away, Walid found out and punished him along with Hambali.	Walid: “kemana kau bawa budak-budak tu pergi?” Baiduri: “aku bawa mereka keluar dari neraka.” Walid: “orang yang berbuat khianat kepada mursyidnya, sama hal nya berbuat khianat kepada Allah dan Rasul.” Hambali: “aku bukan berkhianat jadi hamba kepada penguasa yang Dzolim. dan coba menutupi kerusakannya dengan dalih-dalih agama untuk konon	Baiduri took the female followers away, but was stopped and punished by Walid for betraying his spiritual leader.	Baiduri and Hambali's resistance against Walid's tyrannical rule, who abused religion for the sake of lust and power.	The myth of blind loyalty to a spiritual guide, which is considered equivalent to devotion to Allah, is refuted as a form of oppression and betrayal by tyrannical rulers.

		menyokong kebijakan yang merusakkan akidah demi memuaskan nafsu serakah. Engkau sebenarnya pengkhianat yang sejati, Wali d!"			
15	Ummi Hafizah came to save Baiduri.	"Kau tak pernah puas berhati iblis, kau guna agama untuk menghancurkan perempuan untuk nafsu jahannam kau. Kau memang sia l."	Ummi Hafizah was furious and hurled harsh words at Walid as a form of condemnation for his misuse of religion.	A symbol of strong rejection of religion being used as a tool of oppression and exploitation against women.	Debunking the myth of religious power that is misused for lust and evil, raising the voice of women's liberation.
15	All worshipper s involved were arrested by the police.	Baiduri: "Siapa yang buat report ni? Ummi Hafizah: "Saya yang buat report." Baiduri: "Alhamdulillah, terima kasih Ummi. Baiduri bangga dengan Ummi. Hari ini, Ummi benar-benar menjadi pejuang bagi para Ummah." Ummi: "Ummi bersalah, ummi nak tebus semua kesilapan Ummi kepada anak-anak tu."	All those involved were arrested by the police, and Ummi Hafizah admitted to filing the report. Baiduri praised her courage.	A symbol of courage and awareness to fight oppression by promoting justice and law.	Dispelling the myth that defending a sect means being loyal to the truth, asserting that justice and truth can be upheld through appropriate actions.

		
Baiduri splashed the water Walid had used to wash his feet onto his face as a form of physical resistance.	Baiduri's suspicion of Walid's teachings at Jihad Ummah.	Hambali saw the water left over from Walid and Umme Rabi'atul's bath being placed in a well, which was said to be the Kautsar lake for drinking.
		
Baiduri and Hambali met with the ustadz to discuss their suspicions about what was happening at Jihad Ummah.	Baiduri flatly refused to marry Walid.	Baiduri argued with Walid because he was considered a rebel against Allah and His Messenger.
Several scenes of Baiduri's resistance and suspicion towards Walid.		

Critical Reflection on Patriarchal Culture and Religious Understanding

The correlation between patriarchal culture and the concept of *bid'ah* in religious understanding is very close and mutually influential, especially in the context of religious practices that often oppress women. Patriarchal culture, which essentially positions men in a dominant position and women in a subordinate position, often gains legitimacy through conservative and rigid religious understanding. New religious practices that are invented, known in Islam as *bid'ah*, are used to reinforce this patriarchy (Muhtador & Hamdani, 2021). For example, in the film *Bida'ah*, the practice of "nikah batin" (spiritual marriage), which is not based on sharia law, is a form of *bid'ah* used to silence women and strengthen male dominance, particularly the character of Walid as a tyrannical religious leader.

One of the biggest causes of heresy is excessiveness, which is also a cause of polytheism among humans. This attitude of excessiveness can also occur in religious matters, namely by adding to what has been prescribed by Allah, or by being extreme and condemning others as infidels without valid reasons. Excessiveness, at its core, is the act of going beyond boundaries in belief and practice, whether by excessively praising something or excessively condemning it beyond what is appropriate. It also involves following one's desires, which is dangerous and leads people into innovation and deviant sects (Said bin Ali bin Wahf al-Qahthani, 2014).

Patriarchal culture exploits this heresy as a tool to maintain power and social control over

women, often disguised under the pretext of religious preaching and obedience. This exacerbates deep-rooted gender inequality, hindering women from achieving equality in religious and social contexts. This distorted understanding of religion not only legitimizes oppression, but also cultivates mindsets and practices that hinder women's independence, curtailing their potential to play an active and equal role in social and religious spaces (Rahmania et al., 2023).

Bid'ah is not only about ritual innovations or new teachings that contradict the sunnah, but also social and cultural practices that are used to perpetuate patriarchal culture. The use of bid'ah in this case is a form of religious manipulation that obscures the original meaning of Islamic teachings, which are fair and respect the dignity of women. Conceptually, this reinforces the myth that male authority in religion is absolute and untouchable, while female resistance is considered religious treason. Patriarchal culture in relation to bid'ah is presented as a social construct that aligns religious interpretation with the interests of gender domination. Along with this, the scholars emphasized the need for a more contextual and responsive reinterpretation of religious teachings on gender justice issues, so that the understanding of bid'ah must also be seen not only from a ritualistic aspect, but also from its social and moral impact on marginalized groups, especially women (Zuhdi, 2012).

In the context of the film *Bidaah* that has been analyzed, critical reflection on patriarchal culture and bid'ah leads to the dismantling of power structures that oppress women and misuse religion as a tool. This film positions women as conscious and active subjects in fighting for their rights and rejecting incorrect bid'ah practices that weaken their position. The film *Bida'ah* presents an in-depth portrayal of how women are able to resist the patriarchal rules that restrict them and how women can fight back against violence (Jernih & Lindawati, 2025). Through Baiduri's narrative, the audience is invited to understand how fanaticism and narrow interpretations of religious teachings can give rise to oppression that is concealed under the guise of religion itself.

Resistance in the film *Bida'ah* can be mapped through various forms that reflect the dimensions of resistance according to James Scott's theory of resistance. First, intellectual resistance is evident in the female characters' criticism of religious dogma and oppressive practices under the guise of religion, challenging the myths that shackle rationality and freedom of belief. Intense intellectual debates occur when the main character questions patriarchal power and religious authority, presenting logical arguments that reject the legitimacy of control and oppression disguised as religious teachings. In verbal resistance, female characters dare to speak up, exposing and rejecting various cruelties and manipulations carried out by religious leaders under the pretext of preaching, thus demonstrating courage as a form of real resistance. Physical resistance also emerges as a symbol of explicit rejection, such as the act of pouring water used to wash Walid's feet, marking resistance in a symbolic physical form that rejects oppressive authority.

In addition, spiritual resistance emerges when female figures reaffirm the path of true faith and piety, rejecting the conditions and manipulations of religious power that link spiritual fulfillment to blind obedience to oppressive religious leaders or guides. This spiritual resistance reinforces individual freedom in religion and debunks manipulative myths about religious legitimacy that are used as tools to restrain and control women.

Women oppose patriarchal culture that marginalizes their position. This resistance is carried out both aggressively and peacefully. In the context of violence, women try to erase symbols of patriarchy. They also show resistance by adopting identities that are different from their previous ones. These acts of resistance are not always successful. The process of rejecting patriarchal culture also leads women to experience conflict with their identities. This complicated situation means that women are not yet completely free from the influence of patriarchal culture (Kurniawati, 2019).

4. CONCLUSION

Research shows that female characters in the film *Bida'ah* engage in various forms of resistance that challenge patriarchal structures and authoritative religious interpretations. Through an in-depth analysis of episodes 1 to 15, it was found that these resistance strategies were not merely passive reactions to oppression, but rather a form of resistance that was critical, moral and intellectual in nature, and aimed at liberating women from restrictive norms. These findings support the hypothesis that film media can become a symbolic space and arena for women's struggle to assert their existence, rights, and autonomy in a cultural and religious context full of pressure and tension. In addition, the courage of Baiduri and other female characters in this film shows that resistance is always multidimensional, ranging from symbolic rejection, negotiation of meaning, to concrete actions that inspire social change.

For further research, it is highly recommended to examine audience responses to the film *Bida'ah*, both from a social and religious perspective, to understand the long-term impact of the representation of female characters who engage in resistance. Furthermore, it is also necessary to conduct a comparative analysis with other films that raise similar themes to broaden our understanding of patterns of female resistance in visual media. With the development of technology and digital media, studies on the influence of social media and streaming platforms in spreading narratives of resistance also need to be approached systematically and critically, as they will provide a more complete picture of the dynamics of women's struggles in the contemporary era. Thus, this research is not only a reflection of the courage of female characters in films, but also a call to strengthen the position of women in the public sphere and reinforce narratives of social change that are anti-patriarchal and promote gender equality.

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