

The Existence of Women Filmmakers in Film Ecosystem of Bandung

Dara Bunga Rembulan^{1*}, Rufus Goang Swaradesy²

Television and Film Department¹, Cultural Anthropology Department², Institute of Indonesian Arts and Culture Bandung¹²
Jalan Buah Batu no 212, Bandung City

darabungarembulan@gmail.com

The art of filmmaking is a creative process that involves collaboration from various parties and aspects. This also inspired women filmmakers to create their own works. Many women filmmakers have successfully addressed important issues through their films. The number of women filmmakers in Bandung is still relatively low. Based on data obtained from film communities in Bandung, women filmmakers account for only about one-third of the total number. However, women filmmakers have achieved various notable accomplishments on both national and international levels. This research was conducted to understand the presence of women filmmakers in Bandung within the scope of the national film. Data were obtained in collaboration with Bandung Film Commission (BFC). The informants were women filmmakers who are originally from Bandung and have made contributions to the national film industry. This paper represents a qualitative descriptive study. The research subjects were women filmmakers in Bandung, and the selection of informants was done using purposive sampling techniques. The results of the research indicate that the presence of women filmmakers does not happen instantly. There are internal and external factors that support the development of skills in filmmaking. The level of filmmaking activity in the region is crucial, making the presence of film communities in Bandung highly supportive of the emergence of women filmmakers on the national stage. The existence of women filmmakers is marked by their works, attitudes, and professions. To sustain the existence of women filmmakers, harmony between the realms of education, the professional world, and film associations is essential.

Keywords: Existence, Bandung women filmmakers, Film Industry, Film Association.

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INTRODUCTION

The film is a series of moving images to form a story (Irawan, 2013). The film is often chosen as a medium for conveying something because it has several advantages, including 1) Films can present a strong emotional impact, being able to connect the audience with personal stories; 2) films can illustrate visual contrasts directly; 3) films can communicate with their audiences without reaching a wide range of perspectives; 4) films can motivate audiences to make changes; 5) film can be a tool that can connect the audience with the easiest experience through the language of images (Javandalasta, 2011).

The art of making films is creativity that involves the collaboration of various parties and aspects in the process of its realization (Saadah, 2022). Collectively films are often called cinema which refers to the form of moving pictures presented in a dark room (theater) or cinema. Cinema is a true portrait of a life that is depicted through scenes/acting played by actors/actresses based on cinematographic principles (Fuadi, 2022). On the other hand, a film can also be referred to as a mass communication medium in which there are cultural values (Santoso, 2017).

There are at least three stages in the process of making a film, namely pre-production (conception), production (shooting/shooting), and post-production (editing) (Ardianto, 2020). Making a film is the result of collaborative work. This means that the production process of a film involves some creative experts who have a touch of technology in their expertise, all of these elements are integrated, and synergistic and complement each other to produce a complete work (Imanto, 2007). The success of a film is not determined by the story alone, but elements involved in the production process of a film including producers, directors, screenwriters, camera directors, artistic directors, music directors, sound engineers, and editing can be integrated into the production process (Dwiyani, 2023). Synergize with one another and understand each other for which they are responsible (Hardianto, 2016).

Many women filmmakers have succeeded in raising important issues through films. Film theorist Sigfried Kracauer once said that a nation's films reflect the nation's mentality more than that reflected through other artistic media (Kracauer, 1974). Gender equality can be reflected in a film. The film is an effective medium for influencing or spreading knowledge, one of which is gender equality (Widarti, 2021). Through the works that are made, Indonesian women filmmakers show themselves

that they are equal to the position of men in terms of Indonesian film. Many films by Indonesian women filmmakers have won awards or been screened at international film festivals, which has further strengthened the position of women filmmakers in the Indonesian film scene. For example, the film *Sekala Niskala* (2018) directed by Kamila Andiri which successfully won awards at the 2017 Toronto international film festival and at Tokyo Filmex 2017. Films *Seperti Dendam*, *Rindu harus dibayar tuntas*, directed by Djenar Maesa Ayu, also won the Golden Leopard Award at the event on Locarno International Film Festival 2021.

The *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* (UNESCO) stated that Bandung is one of the UNESCO *Creative Cities Network's creative city networks* in the field of design (Pracintya, 2020). However, it is not only the field of design that is developing, there are also other fields of art, one of which is film. The potential for film to become an industry in Bandung is very possible. The film ecosystem in Bandung has begun to be seen since the existence of the Bandung Film Commission, where BFC has become a space for mutual connection between filmmakers, communities, film schools, universities, the government, and other film networks. Activities that have been underway include film production, workshops, film screenings, and film festivals.

The number of filmmakers in Bandung is still very minimal, especially women filmmakers. However, with the minimal number of women filmmakers, they have progress and work in the field of film, because they have the desire to channel their ideas, and skills and apply themselves to their passion. Yet according to Freeland's research (2011), the increase in the number of women filmmakers in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, has had a major impact on international funding and the value of the quality of film production that will be able to compete in national and international festivals or nominations.

Many achievements have been made by women filmmakers in Bandung, one of which is Anggi Frisca who is a *cinematographer* and director. She won the Citra trophy for the best cinematographic director category in the film *Layla majnun* 2021, *Negeri Sekala Niskala* 2018, and many more. Then Sally Anom Sari is a scenario writer who was nominated for the Citra Cup in 2009. Apart from the two filmmakers, there are still several women filmmakers in Bandung who have not been properly databased. Based on these problems, this research was structured to obtain a database of women filmmakers in Bandung who have worked in the

field of film and the achievements they have achieved. So the existence of women filmmakers in Bandung can become one of the drivers of the film ecosystem in Bandung.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative method (Cresswell, 2015). This type of qualitative approach is used to produce written data in the form of a description of the existence of women filmmakers in Bandung. The subject of study in this research is filmmakers in Bandung who have produced works and achievements.

The data in this study were obtained through the film community in Bandung, namely the Bandung Film Commission (BFC). The data obtained from the BFC was used as a basis for finding relevant informants related to women filmmakers in Bandung. The determination of informants in this study was carried out using a purposive sampling technique, namely directly directed to people who understand the research topic (Cresswell, 2015). The key informants in this research are filmmakers who have an intersection with Bandung. This division means that the filmmaker has a place of birth, work, or work so that those who want to be involved in contributing their ideas for the advancement of the film industry in Bandung.

The data collection technique was carried out using structured interviews using a list of open questions. Open questions were chosen to be able to dig deeper into the information obtained from informants (Remoan, 2022). The questions posed to the informants were related to the existence of the informants in the film world both in Bandung and outside Bandung. Often the focus of the question is directed at how the women filmmaker sees the work, opportunities, and obstacles as a women filmmaker. This is done to conclude the existence of women from the side of the informants themselves.

Secondary data sources used in this study include literature obtained from libraries, books, and scientific journals that are appropriate to the topic of this research, namely the existence of women filmmakers. The data obtained were then analyzed using descriptive qualitative which included data reduction, data presentation, conclusion, and verification (Swaradesy, 2021). Data reduction was carried out by focusing the data on the results of the interviews obtained and the literature on matters related to the existence of women filmmakers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Women Filmmakers and Gender Equality

Based on Yulianto's research (2007), from various studies on women in the media, the results show the representation of women in the mainstream realm such as white skin, seducers, weak, subordinated, unable to work and achieve like men. This is in line with the results of Liestaningsih's research (2003) which explains that women are often described as emotional, crybaby, irrational, and sensual, in the domestic area, women are stupid, submissive, and weak while men are described as strong, macho, aggressive, brave, manly, independent, tough, powerful, smart, rational with a role as head. Even more extreme is the research result of Anindita (2007) which explains that women are an extension of the industry to gain profits with women as objects and not as objects or industry actors themselves.

Several factors cause perspectives that tend not to side with women, among others explained by Liestaningsih (2011: 1) the control of the authorities, especially during the New Order by making the Film Censorship Board (BSF) not conflict with the ideology of the authorities; 2) market reasons, safe and unbanned film production by BSF; 3) patriarchal mindset of film production.

During the New Order era, the number of works by women siennas was still small. This is due to the limited space for women filmmakers and forcing them to adopt a dominant/patriarchal point of view to survive in the film industry (Sen, 2008). The role of women in the film industry during the New Order era was more limited to acting, but after the fall of the New Order regime, new filmmakers began to appear, including women filmmakers who gave a new color to Indonesian screen culture (Marsya, 2019). The track record of women filmmakers has begun to find fresh points, marked by the appearance of the phenomenal work by women filmmaker Mira Lesmana, namely *Ada Apa Dengan Cinta*, in the early 2000s. This seemed to inspire other women filmmakers to showcase their work and achievements in the field of Indonesian cinema. This also at the same time signifies gender equality that women filmmakers can work and take part in the world of Indonesian cinema.

The progress of women filmmakers in Indonesian cinema

Historically, Indonesian film has experienced a crisis peak twice (Alkhajar, 2010). Nugroho's research (1995) explains that the Indonesian film crisis spans a fairly long period of 25 to 30 years. The film crisis in question is explained in detail by

Kristanto (2005) that the first crisis occurred in 1957 when the producers closed the company on the grounds of bankruptcy. The second crisis was explained by Krishna (2004) that around 1992, which was marked by the future of national film which was full of uncertainty even though the market potential still existed. The crisis experienced by Indonesian cinema needs to be responded to optimistically and positively following the results of Al-Malaky's research (2004) that one of the conditions for the growth of the national film sector is to be able to get out of the crisis which exists as a cycle.

In Indonesia, specifically, there are not many women's roles that are portrayed with characters as strong and empowered as male characters. On the other hand, many films still objectify women sexually, as is often seen in horror films (Ayun, 2015).

Apart from being in front of the screen, women also do not get equal opportunities with men behind the scenes. Data from *film Indonesia.or.id* obtained by Yuliantini (2021) noted that only two films were directed by women, namely "My Stupid Boss" by Upi Avianto and "Two Blue Lines" by Ginatri S. Noer. In Imti Mukhasanah's research, it is explained that women's roles in the world of film media are described as objects that are only in the domestic area. The concept and commonsense regarding positions that are considered unbalanced have become a force in the separation of the life sector into the domestic and public sectors (Mukhasanah, 2015). This concept serves as a separator so that women are considered to be active in the domestic sector, while men are placed as a group entitled to fill the public sector. In the case of film production, this has an impact on the mindset that women filmmakers are only responsible for side jobs in a film production team.

Bandung women filmmakers interpret the existence

The existence that will be discussed in this paper is the existence that is interpreted by the informant of this research, namely the Bandung Women Filmmaker, a national cinematographer who was born in Cibiru, Bandung. The informant is a member of the Indonesian Cinematographers Society (ICS), an association of cinematographers in Indonesia. The works that have been produced include:

Karena Aku Sayang Mark (short film, 2007) as Cinematographer

SAIA (2009) as Cinematographer

King (2009) as a Camera Assistant

Metamorfoblus (2010) as a camera operator

Alangkah Lucunya (Negeri Ini) (2010) as a Camera Assistant

Mata Tertutup (2011) as Cinematographer

Merindu Mantan (short film, 2012) as Cinematographer

5 cm (2012) as a Camera Assistant

Tanah Surga... Katanya (2012) as Cinematographer

Kita Versus Korupsi (2012) as Cinematographer

Cerita dari tapal Batas (2012) as Cinematographer

Dino (short film, 2013) as co-director

Sagarmatha (2013) as Cinematographer

Mantan Terindah (2014) as Cinematographer

Sendiri Diana Sendiri (short film, 2015) as Cinematographer

Sekala Niskala (2017) as Cinematographer and executive producer

Negeri Dongeng (2017) as Director, Screenwriter, Cinematographer, and Executive Producer

Night Bus (2017) as Cinematographer

Single Part 2 (2019) as Team behind the scenes

Imperfect: Karir, Cinta & Timbangan (2019) as Cinematographer

Iqro: My Universe (2019) as Cinematographer

Pocong the Origin (2019) as Cinematographer

Lagi-lagi Ateng (2019) as Cinematographer

Nona (2020) as Director

Dunia Dalam Kita (web series, 2020) as Director and producer

The Boy with Moving Image (2020) as Producer

Layla Majnun (2021) as Cinematographer

A World Without (2021) as Cinematographer

Sepeda Presiden (2021) as Cinematographer

Tegar (TBA) as Director

The search for existence as a women filmmaker

The existence of women filmmakers does not happen instantly and everything requires a long and winding process. As a women filmmaker, the informant told how she began as a women filmmaker from Bandung who had to move to the Jakarta film industry to seek knowledge and relationships with Jakarta filmmakers from the Jakarta Art Institute. The initial capital that must be possessed is a strong principle that a filmmaker must have the target of being known by the public as a filmmaker. The introduction is through the work that is produced, the attitude that is carried out, and also the profession that is followed.

Through works, a filmmaker must have work that has been done to show that he deserves to be called a filmmaker. This work is not limited in form. This means that individual or joint work is considered work. This work is certainly recognizable by people in general. Therefore, producing work will certainly require struggle, hard work, relationships, knowledge, and the ability to promote to produce good work.

Through attitude. As a filmmaker, it is very important to have a good attitude. The experience of the informants shows that the beginning of becoming a filmmaker did not come alone, but in collaboration with other people. Therefore, it is very necessary to maintain an attitude so that work partners feel comfortable and want to invite cooperation with us. This attitude includes honesty, confidence, struggle, hard work, and so on. This attitude will stick with the filmmaker personally in the future.

Through profession. As a filmmaker, if you believe that being a filmmaker is your way of life, then you need determination and work wholeheartedly to advance the world of cinema. This reflects that through her profession as a filmmaker, he will commit to advancing the world of film.

Principles alone are not enough. The need for driving factors to emerge and maintain the existence of a filmmaker in the world of cinema. These factors consist of internal and external factors, as follows:

Internal factors

From within. Internal factors that come from within focus on mentality, principles, and self-confidence. As filmmakers, especially women filmmakers must have a strong mentality and determination. As a woman, of course, she has to be on an equal footing with men because, in the film profession, there is no division of labor based on gender. A tough mentality is needed because the environment and association of the film world will not accept people who are weak and give up easily. In addition, filmmakers need to have strong principles to support their existence of a filmmaker. This principle was shown by Anggia Frisca that if you have reached a certain stage (in this case as a cinematographer), then don't ever think and do work below that. In the world of film, it can be said that cinematographers have intersected with all parts of work, so if it has reached a certain stage, care should be taken so that the orientation and quality of the works that are created do not decrease. Meanwhile, self-confidence is related to internal factors that continue to maintain enthusiasm so that they continue to work in the world of film.

From family. The second internal factor is family. Not a few families doubt life in the world of cinema. The support from the family who entrusts other family members to continue to be involved in the world of cinema is very decisive. This support began when I was a student majoring in the film until the moment I created a film.

External factors

Association (association). The film climate situation in an area has a strong influence on the development of film in that area. For example, Jakarta is rapidly developing cinema because the environment is indeed supportive of producing film works. In addition, Yogyakarta also has a favorable climate for the world of cinema because apart from the figure of Garin Nugroho who mentors filmmakers, many associations and film communities have contributed to advancing the world of cinema. This is a little different in the Bandung environment because apart from the absence of a mentor, this means that Bandung does not yet have the characteristics to advance its film industry.

Social situation and society. The social situation and society can affect the development of the film ecosystem. For example, around the 1990s, the film industry can be said to be at a nadir (Ridia, 2023). In this case, there are several works produced, but because of the social situation that is not conducive, the interest in appreciating film works is low. This also has an impact on the small number of women

filmmakers who work on a film because most women are not very interested in exploring the world of Indonesian cinema.

Advancing the Bandung Perfilman Ecosystem

The film ecosystem in Bandung can be said to be suspended animation. Several universities have opened film study programs, and apart from that there are also various film communities but not many filmmakers have been produced, especially women from Bandung. It's like Bandung doesn't have a mentor in terms of film and doesn't have a characteristic direction for the development of this film. Therefore, there are several ideas given to advance the Bandung film ecosystem. These ideas include:

Movement with film communities in Bandung. The film communities in Bandung are the main assets that are owned and can be utilized to advance the Bandung film ecosystem. The film community can work together to organize film-based activities such as film discussions, film seminars, workshops, film reviews, watching together, and other relevant activities. These communities can work together or collaborate with communities outside Bandung for the sake of developing relationships and adding insight. This movement is not based solely on financial gain but prioritizes appreciation and a sense of shared learning to advance the film ecosystem in Bandung.

Film education should not only focus on theory and certificates. Several universities in Bandung have study programs and majors in film. These colleges include Padjadjaran University and also the Bandung Institute of Arts and Culture of Indonesia. Having a film study program reflects that Bandung will maintain an academic culture in terms of film education. However, what needs to be considered is that film education should not be stuck in the orientation of certificates and graduation alone. The need for an educational model that prioritizes expertise in the field of film. Composition in film education prioritizes more practice than theory, in drafting concepts, scripts, cameras, recordings, and so on. Film education can take advantage of the independent campus program proclaimed by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture through apprenticeship programs for teaching practitioners. This is important so that there is harmony between universities, students, and practitioners/film industry because after graduating from college, these students will enter the realm of the film industry which they did not meet on campus. Film education like this is expected to produce superior HR students who are ready to work

in the national film industry.

The importance of film associations to be active. Associations can play a role as a bridge for the gap in film education experienced by several campuses in Indonesia. Associations must move to complete the film education section, namely opportunities for internships and providing opportunities for work practice in the film industry. Ideally, according to the author, film students for the first 2 years are to understand basic film theories and courses, then after that, they carry out internships at various film production houses. Associations can bridge the gap in this case by facilitating students to get places for internships or other forms of activity whose main purpose is to provide training for students to work in the film industry. As an example conducted by ICS Students receive training at ICS, then when they finish college, they will be asked to return to the internship to increase their knowledge and expertise in film.

CONCLUSION

The existence of women filmmakers does not just happen, everything needs a process that is not short. The basis for becoming a filmmaker who can demonstrate her existence in the world of cinema is proof through work, attitude, and profession. This proof is certainly strengthened by both internal and external factors that support the environment of the film ecosystem in which he lives. Therefore, the development of the film ecosystem in Bandung, especially those that support the existence of women filmmakers, must continue to be pursued in the form of a joint movement. The existence of female Filmmakers in Bandung marks a significant change in the local film landscape, reflecting increased gender representation and enriching cultural narratives with a focus on local issues and cultural identity. Apart from that, films produced by female filmmakers contribute to the formation of identity and social awareness. This means that the works of female filmmakers not only reflect the nation's mentality, but also act as social agents that form and strengthen awareness of gender, social and political issues, as well as strengthening solidarity between women in the film industry.

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