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The Representation of the Female Figure as a Caregiver in the Film *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan*

Ketut Anindita Satyanandani^{1*}, Regina Nathalia Elyzabeth Pandjaitan¹, Atika Sari¹

¹ Department of Media and Communication, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia.

* Corresponding author: Ketut Anindita Satyanandani (ketut.anindita.satyanandani-2024@fisip.unair.ac.id)

Abstract

Women's representation in film is closely connected to cultural constructions of femininity, caregiving, and gender expectations. *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* presents Sore as a woman who attempts to transform her husband's unhealthy lifestyle while repeatedly providing physical and emotional care. This study aims to analyze the representation of women as caregivers through the concept of nurture and examine how *Sore* reflects the cultural reality of Indonesian women. A qualitative approach was employed using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis of denotation, connotation, and myth, supported by Stuart Hall's representation perspective. Data were obtained through repeated observation of selected scenes, dialogues, visual elements, and interactions involving Sore and Jonathan. The findings indicate that Sore is constructed as a caring, attentive, and responsible woman who manages Jonathan's health, daily needs, and emotional well-being. However, her caregiving also reveals emotional exhaustion and an unequal burden of responsibility. At the same time, Sore demonstrates agency by making decisions and initiating change. The study concludes that the film simultaneously reproduces traditional expectations of women as caregivers while negotiating these expectations through female agency and shared relational responsibility.

Keywords

Caregiving, Emotional Labor, Film, Gender Roles, Nurture, Roland Barthes, Women's Representation.

1. Introduction

Film is a form of media and art that the public has widely enjoyed since its emergence in the late nineteenth century. Beyond entertainment, film functions as an educational and critical medium through which directors communicate ideas and social perspectives to audiences. In Indonesia, the film industry encompasses diverse genres and local productions that carry cultural and social meanings. Film can therefore serve as a bridge between filmmakers and audiences while also reflecting societal values through the representations it constructs. As cinematic representation is closely connected to social life, film can function not only as entertainment but also as a strategic medium for shaping and influencing public opinion (Rachman, 2020). Through representation, audiences can examine how meaning is constructed within particular social and cultural contexts (Rokhman & Elsa, 2019). However, local films continue to face challenges in competing with international releases, which may contribute to lower popularity in the domestic market (Toni, 2025).

The representation of women in film remains an important issue in cultural and gender studies. Female characters are frequently portrayed through negative stereotypes, including as sexual objects, victims, weak figures, or temptresses who serve male interests (Irawan, 2014; Niza, 2022). Even representations that appear positive may reproduce conventional gender expectations by emphasizing women's nurturing, managerial, and caregiving roles. Such representations reflect how culture influences gender positions, values, attitudes, and expectations (Yuliantini, 2021). According to Hall (1997), representation is not merely a reflection of reality but a process through which meaning is produced and exchanged within a culture. Members of a culture construct meanings through language, interpretation, social interaction, and the values attached to people, objects, and phenomena (Pandrianto et al., 2023). Thus, representations of women in film can reproduce or negotiate social constructions of femininity.

This phenomenon is particularly evident in *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan*, a romantic science-fiction film directed by Yandy Laurens and released in Indonesian cinemas on July 10, 2025. The film follows Jonathan, an Indonesian photographer in Zagreb, whose unhealthy lifestyle is challenged by Sore, who claims to be his future wife and seeks to prevent his death. Her continuous efforts to care for, manage, and transform Jonathan's physical and emotional well-being reflect the culturally constructed concept of nurture, in which women are expected to maintain their partners' and families' well-being. This burden is reinforced by the unequal distribution of domestic and unpaid care work, with women globally performing approximately 75% of such responsibilities. Hochschild and Machung (1989) describe the "second shift" as women's continued domestic responsibilities alongside formal employment, while Power (2020) highlights the "third shift" of invisible emotional labor. In the film, Sore embodies these burdens by regulating Jonathan's lifestyle, preparing healthy food, removing cigarettes and alcohol, assisting with daily activities, and sacrificing her time and emotional energy to save him.

Although research on female representation in film is extensive, studies specifically examining women as caregivers through the concept of nurture remain limited. Previous research by Atmojo et al. (2019) and Afriani et al. (2025) has examined soft-selling in tourism without focusing on female representation and has applied Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis and representation theory to healthy lifestyle themes. More specifically, Putri and Putri (2026) examined the representation of men in *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis, identifying crisis, intervention, and transformation phases in Jonathan's masculinity and highlighting the reversal of conventional gender roles. However, their study focused on the male figure, whereas the present study examines Sore as

a female caregiver and the burden associated with her caregiving role. This gap provides the basis for investigating how the film constructs women not only as nurturing figures but also as agents of change within intimate relationships.

The novelty of this study lies in examining the representation of women as caregivers through the concept of nurture while simultaneously interpreting Sore as a reflection of the social and cultural reality of Indonesian women. Using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis and Stuart Hall's representation perspective, the study examines denotation, connotation, and myth to reveal how caregiving, emotional labor, gender expectations, and women's agency are constructed through Sore's character. This study aims to analyze the representation of women as caregivers within the concept of nurture in the film *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* and to examine how the character of Sore reflects the cultural reality of women in Indonesia. The study contributes to film, gender, and cultural studies by providing a critical understanding of how cinematic narratives reproduce, negotiate, and potentially challenge cultural constructions of women's caregiving roles.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Representation of Women in Film

The representation of women in film reflects broader social, cultural, and ideological constructions of gender. Marshment (1997) argues that popular cultural representations are inherently political because the images presented in media contribute to the construction of ideas about women and their social positions. Film therefore does not simply mirror women's lives but also participates in defining how femininity is understood. Nulman (2014) similarly explains that the globalization of film has influenced the ways women are represented across different cultural contexts, although stereotypical portrayals continue to persist. This is evident in the tendency to associate women with domesticity, emotionality, beauty, and supportive roles. Rohman (2013), for example, found that although contemporary cinema has experienced changes in the portrayal of women, several conventional gender representations remain embedded in film narratives. These findings demonstrate that the development of female representation does not necessarily eliminate traditional gender expectations but may instead reproduce them in modified forms.

More recent research has examined female representation through broader quantitative and media-based perspectives. Yang et al. (2020) demonstrated that female representation and influence in films can be measured across different periods, revealing changes in women's visibility and participation in cinema over time. However, increased visibility does not automatically indicate equal or non-stereotypical representation. Sachar (2024) emphasizes that gender representation in film remains closely connected to social perceptions of gender roles and can reinforce existing inequalities when women are predominantly depicted through stereotypical characteristics. For example, Rohman (2013) showed that contemporary cinema may present women as more active and independent while simultaneously retaining traditional expectations concerning femininity. Thus, examining representation requires attention not only to the presence of female characters but also to the meanings, roles, relationships, and ideological values constructed through their portrayal. This perspective provides a foundation for analyzing Sore as a female caregiver and examining how her representation negotiates traditional and contemporary expectations of women.

2.2. Women as Caregivers and the Burden of Care

Women's caregiving roles are closely associated with gendered expectations that position women as primary providers of emotional, domestic, and relational support. Friedemann and Buckwalter (2014) explain that caregiving responsibilities and their associated burdens are influenced by gender and family relationships, with women

often assuming greater responsibility for the well-being of family members. This gendered expectation is also visible in media representations. Han and Curtis (2021), for example, found that cinematic portrayals during epidemics frequently visualize women through caregiving responsibilities, reinforcing the association between femininity and care. Similarly, Berridge (2022) demonstrates that caring responsibilities have gendered consequences, particularly when women must negotiate caregiving demands alongside other responsibilities. These findings indicate that caregiving is not merely an individual act of affection but is shaped by social expectations concerning what women are expected to do within families and relationships.

In film, caregiving can therefore function as a representation of both affection and gendered burden. Lushinta et al. (2025), for example, demonstrate how caregiving roles can be constructed through character interactions and dialogue, showing that care is closely connected to expectations regarding responsibility and interpersonal relationships. More recently, Sung (2026) highlights how literary film adaptations in Asia can become spaces for negotiating gender, caregiving, and resistance, suggesting that female characters may simultaneously reproduce and challenge conventional caregiving expectations. This perspective is relevant to Sore in *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan*, where caregiving is represented through her efforts to manage Jonathan's health, habits, emotional condition, and everyday needs. Her repeated sacrifices also reveal the unequal burden associated with caregiving, while her agency demonstrates that women can negotiate rather than accept traditional gender expectations. Thus, the concept of caregiving provides an important framework for examining how the film constructs nurture, emotional labor, responsibility, and female agency.

3. Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis to examine the representation of women in the film *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan*. The study focuses on two aspects: the representation of women as caregivers within the concept of nurture, including domestic responsibilities, caregiving, and emotional labor, and how the character of Sore reflects the social and cultural realities of women in Indonesia. Stuart Hall's representation perspective is employed as a supporting framework to strengthen the interpretation of the construction of meaning surrounding women within their social and cultural contexts. The qualitative approach is used to obtain an in-depth understanding of the meanings constructed through the characters, signs, and narratives presented in the film (Priatna et al., 2025).

The object of this study is the film *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan*, directed by Yandy Laurens. The research population comprises all scenes featuring the character Sore that are relevant to the representation of women in the film. The sample was selected purposively based on scenes depicting caregiving, nurturing, the management of a partner's life, domestic responsibilities, emotional support, caregiving burdens, and women's roles and positions within romantic relationships. Scenes involving Sore's interactions with Jonathan were selected based on their relevance to the concepts of nurture, caregiving, emotional labor, and the socio-cultural construction of women.

The data consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from the film through in-depth observation by repeatedly viewing the film to understand its narrative, the character of Sore, the relationship between Sore and Jonathan, and scenes relevant to the research focus. The primary data include visual, audio, and narrative elements, such as facial expressions, body language, costumes, settings, dialogue, vocal intonation, music, plot, conflict, and character development. Relevant scenes were documented through screenshots and dialogue transcription. Secondary data were obtained through documentation of books, journal articles, and

previous studies related to the representation of women, caregiving, nurture, emotional labor, gender, culture, and film semiotics (Afrizal, 2019; Kurniawati et al., 2022).

The data were analyzed using Roland Barthes’ semiotic framework through three levels of signification: denotation, connotation, and myth. At the denotative level, the researcher identified the literal meanings presented in each scene, including actions, dialogue, expressions, and visual objects. The connotative level was used to interpret implicit meanings related to values, emotions, and social constructions underlying the signs. The mythological level was then used to reveal the ideologies and cultural values naturalized through the representation of women (Sudarto et al., 2015; Wibisono & Sari, 2021). The findings were subsequently interpreted using Stuart Hall’s representation perspective to explain how Sore is constructed as a caregiver, how caregiving burdens and emotional labor are represented, and how the character reflects the social and cultural realities of women in Indonesia. Thus, the analysis not only identifies the meanings conveyed through cinematic signs but also reveals the cultural constructions underlying the representation of women as figures responsible for caring for, managing, and maintaining their partners’ well-being.

4. Results

4.1. Representation of Women as Caregivers within the Concept of Nurture

The representation of women as caregivers within the concept of nurture is reflected in Sore’s efforts to manage Jonathan’s health, lifestyle, daily needs, and emotional well-being. Through Roland Barthes’ semiotic framework, the selected scenes are examined at the levels of denotation, connotation, and myth to identify the meanings and cultural ideologies underlying women’s caregiving roles. The findings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Representation of Women as Caregivers within the Concept of Nurture

Key Scene (Timestamp)	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
22:07	Sore expresses her desire to improve Jonathan’s life while standing in a fully equipped kitchen. Wearing a brown shirt, she stands against the kitchen counter and smiles.	Sore’s words indicate her commitment to helping Jonathan adopt a healthier and more organized lifestyle, particularly in relation to his diet, daily habits, and overall well-being.	The scene reinforces the notion that women are naturally expected to nurture and improve men’s lives by organizing their routines, maintaining household order, and overseeing their health and daily habits.
24:25	Jonathan looks happily at Sore across the table while holding a glass of alcohol after they successfully discuss plans for an exhibition.	After previously following Sore’s suggestion regarding the selection of a film that could attract sponsors to his portfolio, Jonathan begins to trust her ability to help improve his circumstances.	The scene suggests that following a woman’s guidance can lead to greater order and well-being, positioning the man as the recipient of and participant in the changes directed by the woman. It reinforces the construction of women as caregivers shaped by relational and social expectations.
24:40	Jonathan meets Sore, who is sitting and eating	Sore and Jonathan have contrasting lifestyles, with Sore	Sore is constructed as more organized and health-conscious than

Key Scene (Timestamp)	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
	cranberries. She tells him, “You will do whatever I say, okay?”	associated with healthier habits, as symbolized by her choice of food. Her statement reflects her intention to transform Jonathan’s lifestyle and daily habits.	Jonathan and is given the authority to manage and transform his behavior. This reinforces gender constructs that position women as mentors, caregivers, and guardians of household values and morals.
25:11	Sore appears angry, annoyed, and disappointed as she destroys Jonathan’s cigarette and throws it into a burning barrel.	Sore’s action demonstrates her concern for Jonathan’s health and her attempt to stop his smoking, which she perceives as part of an unhealthy lifestyle associated with stress, poor dietary habits, and other harmful behaviors.	The scene reproduces the ideology that women are guardians of health and regulators of male behavior. Sore’s action naturalizes the expectation that women should guide men toward healthier and more disciplined lifestyles.
25:31	Sore pours several bottles of alcohol into the kitchen sink, allowing the liquid to flow down the drain while household items are visible around her.	Discarding the alcohol signifies Sore’s rejection of an unhealthy lifestyle and Jonathan’s use of alcohol as an escape from life’s pressures. Her action demonstrates a firm effort to encourage healthier and more disciplined behavior.	The scene reinforces the ideology that women function as moral guardians and regulators of men’s lifestyles. Sore’s disposal of the alcohol reflects the expectation that women should control and correct male behavior to establish a healthier and more orderly life.
26:12	Sore places a plate of sliced apples on Jonathan’s work desk. The apples appear as the brightest objects in the scene, contrasting with the surrounding elements in his room.	Apples are conventionally associated with health, while preparing and serving fruit can signify care and affection. The contrast between the bright apples and Jonathan’s room further emphasizes Sore’s efforts to introduce healthier habits into his life.	The scene constructs Sore’s care as a source of hope and protection that can save Jonathan from his unhealthy future. The apples symbolically represent how her presence brings health, care, and positive change into his life.
26:36	Sore helps Jonathan put on his sneakers and ties his shoelaces while he remains relaxed after waking up.	Putting on and tying another person’s shoes signifies an intimate and highly attentive form of care. Although tying shoelaces is a simple task that adults can generally perform	The scene represents the expectation that women should attend to even minor daily needs within the household. It reflects a social construct that places primary responsibility for domestic care on women,

Key Scene (Timestamp)	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
		independently, Sore takes responsibility for it.	creating an unequal distribution of labor. It also illustrates how women’s emotional labor as caregivers can become overlooked or taken for granted, particularly when their care is perceived as nagging or excessive.
43:15	Sore cries in Jonathan’s room before turning back time. She wears dark clothing, and her hair is loosely arranged in a messy bun.	Her tears, disheveled appearance, and emotional expression signify accumulated frustration, exhaustion, and sadness after repeatedly attempting to change Jonathan’s habits. The contrast between her dark appearance and the bright background emphasizes her concealed emotional burden.	The scene challenges the popular myth that love and care alone can transform another person. It suggests that behavioral change ultimately requires individual awareness and willingness, while highlighting the emotional cost of placing responsibility for another person’s well-being on women.
46:29	Sore speaks firmly to Jonathan after he violates their agreement again. Looking exhausted, she tells him, “If you want to die first, then do not listen to me anymore.”	Her statement reflects frustration as well as continued concern and commitment toward Jonathan. Despite repeated difficulties and his resistance, Sore remains emotionally invested in the relationship and accepts Jonathan despite his flaws.	The scene reflects the cultural ideal of “true love” as enduring and unconditional. It constructs genuine love as the willingness to continue choosing and supporting one’s partner despite repeated difficulties, reinforcing the expectation that women should remain committed to their relationships.
1:20:56	Sore and Jonathan stand face-to-face outdoors on a bright day. Sore smiles warmly at Jonathan and says, “Even if I had to choose a hundred times over, I would still pick you.”	Jonathan’s gradual behavioral changes are presented as the result of Sore’s repeated efforts, although the transformation ultimately occurs without his conscious awareness and without her directly controlling him.	The scene suggests that meaningful change cannot be achieved through coercion or a single intervention. Instead, personal transformation requires time, persistence, and self-awareness, indicating that Sore’s role is ultimately to support change rather than completely control it.
1:34:02	Sore smiles as she realizes that Jonathan has	The aurora symbolizes transformation, a	The scene challenges the idea that improving a relationship is solely a

Key Scene (Timestamp)	Denotation	Connotation	Myth
	changed and become calmer, even though he does not recognize the change himself. The two stand side by side beneath an aurora.	new beginning, and the possibility of a different future. Sore and Jonathan standing together signify their shared journey toward change.	woman's responsibility. It suggests that building a better life requires mutual participation, shared responsibility, and cooperation between partners.
1:49:25	Sore and Jonathan stand side by side, looking at each other and at a projected image of the aurora.	The aurora functions as a visual symbol of transformation and a new beginning. Their presence together signifies the continuation of their relationship after the changes they have experienced.	The scene concludes the representation of caregiving by suggesting that although Sore initially carries the responsibility for improving Jonathan's life, creating a better future ultimately requires shared effort. The burden of care should therefore not rest solely on women.

Based on Table 1, women's representation as caregivers within the concept of nurture is constructed through Sore's efforts to care for, manage, and improve Jonathan's physical, emotional, and everyday well-being. Her mission to save her husband through a time loop reflects cultural expectations that women should care for their partners and maintain household well-being. This expectation often places unequal caregiving responsibilities on women, who may receive limited appreciation for their efforts. Power (2020) found that women globally shoulder 75% of household chores and unpaid care responsibilities, while Marshment (1997) reported that women spend an average of four hours and twenty-five minutes daily managing household responsibilities. These expectations are reflected in Table 1 through scenes in which Sore helps Jonathan put on his shoes, prepares apples and meals, and regulates his unhealthy lifestyle. The opening scene, in which she reminds Jonathan to bring his phone and wallet, further positions her as a "reminder" responsible for household order. These activities reflect domestic responsibilities socially constructed as natural for women, yet their efforts often remain unrecognized because caregiving is taken for granted.

In contrast, Jonathan lives according to the principle that no one, including his wife, has the right to tell him what to do. This is demonstrated in the scene in which he states, "No one can boss me around, not even my wife." This scene illustrates how the male ego, driven by a desire to lead, make decisions, and act with complete freedom, can conflict with women's caring roles, which are often unfairly stereotyped as nagging or controlling. It highlights Jonathan's strong male ego, reinforced by social constructs that position men as firm leaders and decision-makers. Consequently, Jonathan remains resistant to Sore's efforts even though her actions are rooted in sincerity and genuine concern for his well-being. The contrast between Jonathan's resistance and Sore's persistent care demonstrates how the caregiving role may place women in a difficult position: their concern is expected, yet their attempts to provide care can simultaneously be interpreted as controlling behavior (Andriani, 2025).

Through the lens of nurture, Sore's repeated attempts to help Jonathan through the time loop extend beyond caring for or improving his physical condition; they also involve his emotional well-being. This situation inevitably creates an emotional burden. Feminist economists use the term third shift to describe emotional labor, in

which women function as the emotional anchors of households and are responsible for maintaining family stability (Power, 2020). Although the film’s overarching narrative depicts a woman manipulating time to care for her loved one, the emotional burden experienced by Sore is also revealed through subtle details that warrant closer examination. A montage spanning 1:24:39 to 1:32:49 illustrates how Sore’s appearance, initially neat and radiant, gradually becomes disheveled. Similarly, at 43:15, when Sore repeats the greeting, “I am Sore, your wife from the future,” she appears exhausted, and her smile lacks the brightness seen in her initial greeting. The scenes depicting Sore crying in frustration further exemplify this emotional burden. She conceals her tears and fatigue from Jonathan, reflecting how emotional labor often remains invisible and unrecognized as a burden carried by women within the household (Khuza’i, 2013).

Sore’s repeated attempts to care for, manage, transform, and improve Jonathan are visualized through the time-loop mechanism whenever his actions spiral out of control. Despite the physical and emotional exhaustion involved, she continues to set things right, reflecting the expectation that women bear primary responsibility for maintaining relationship well-being and managing both visible and emotional aspects of their partners’ lives (Power, 2020). Sore willingly sacrifices her time, energy, and mental well-being to improve Jonathan’s life and save him, while the absence of reciprocal nurturing initially suggests an unequal distribution of caregiving responsibilities. However, the film also emphasizes that genuine change cannot depend solely on another person’s efforts. Individual self-awareness and willingness to change remain essential. This is evident when Jonathan, after Sore disappears, finally decides to adopt a healthier lifestyle. Thus, although Sore’s repeated efforts through the time loop support Jonathan’s transformation, the film ultimately demonstrates that meaningful change requires personal awareness and responsibility rather than relying entirely on women’s caregiving efforts.

The film illustrates how women are often burdened with managing various aspects of their family’s physical and mental well-being, frequently at the expense of their own health and comfort. Sore embodies the expectation of women as idealized caregivers who appear capable of doing anything, even manipulating time to save a loved one (Selvaraja & Baskaran, 2023). Although her role initially appears romantic, the representation becomes more complex when considered alongside women who experience similar caregiving burdens without the benefit of a fictional time loop, often receiving little appreciation or recognition. However, the film’s conclusion introduces the possibility of growth and a better future. When Sore and Jonathan stand together in a museum while viewing the projected aurora, symbolizing transformation and new beginnings, the scene suggests that changing Jonathan’s fate requires effort from both partners. Thus, the ending emphasizes that caregiving and relationship development should be shared responsibilities, as building a life together cannot depend solely on women’s sacrifices.

4.2. The Character Sore as a Reflection of Cultural Reality in Indonesia.

The character of Sore can be understood as a reflection of the cultural dynamics that shape female identity in Indonesia. Through her mindset, attitudes, and role within relationships, Sore embodies a representation of womanhood that is deeply intertwined with the social values prevalent in society. Her presence in the film serves not merely as a narrative figure but also as a representation of cultural constructs concerning the ideal woman, relational expectations, and the evolving position of women in contemporary society. Such representations are significant because popular culture and film contribute to the construction and circulation of meanings about women and their social roles (Marshment, 1997; Sachar, 2024).

The film *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* (Sore: Wife from the Future) constructs the character of Sore as a woman closely aligned with Indonesian cultural values. She is portrayed as patient, understanding, and relationship-oriented, traits that have

traditionally been associated with idealized representations of women. In many social contexts, women are expected to maintain relational harmony and serve as emotional anchors for their partners. Sore reflects these values, making her character familiar and relevant to the lived experiences of women. This reflects the persistence of traditional gender expectations in contemporary cinematic representations, despite changes in the ways women are portrayed (Rohman, 2013; Nulman, 2014).

However, Sore is not confined to these traditional constructs. Instead, she demonstrates a negotiation between conventional feminine values and modern ideals of autonomy. She emerges as an individual who actively makes decisions, influences the direction of her relationship, and pursues clear personal goals. This representation signifies a shift from female passivity toward greater autonomy and agency. Research on female representation in film similarly indicates that women's roles have increasingly developed beyond traditional and passive portrayals, although such changes remain connected to existing gender conventions (Rohman, 2013; Yang et al., 2020).

Furthermore, Sore's identity as a "wife from the future" symbolizes the social pressures surrounding relationships and women's futures. In Indonesian society, women often encounter expectations concerning the continuity and success of romantic relationships, particularly marriage. Sore possesses an awareness of future consequences and attempts to alter them, symbolically representing concerns surrounding women's life choices and romantic relationships. Thus, the film's fantasy elements remain connected to broader social realities, demonstrating how cinematic narratives can reproduce and negotiate cultural meanings concerning gender and women's identities (Marshment, 1997; Nulman, 2014).

At the same time, Sore illustrates a shift in the representation of women as agents of change. She is not portrayed merely as a victim of circumstances but as an agent capable of intervening in the course of her life. This contrasts with conventional representations that tend to position women as figures who simply adapt to existing circumstances. Instead, Sore actively seeks to alter her destiny and influence the future of her relationship. Such agency reflects the changing representation of women in contemporary cinema, in which female characters increasingly occupy active positions within narrative and social structures (Yang et al., 2020; Sachar, 2024).

Viewed through the lens of cultural studies, particularly Stuart Hall's perspective, Sore does not merely reflect social reality but also represents a construction of meaning concerning the modern Indonesian woman. Her representation presents a particular image of female identity that may shape how audiences understand women and their roles in contemporary society. Therefore, Sore is not merely a fictional character but part of a broader meaning-making process through which female identity is constructed, negotiated, and understood within the contemporary Indonesian cultural context (Marshment, 1997; Nulman, 2014).

5. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that Sore's representation in *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* is strongly associated with nurture through caregiving, emotional support, and responsibility for Jonathan's well-being. Based on Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis, her actions, dialogue, gestures, and interactions convey meanings beyond their literal functions. Scenes in which Sore prepares healthy food, cuts apples, helps Jonathan put on his shoes, removes his cigarettes, and disposes of his alcohol signify efforts to protect and improve his health. Connotatively, these actions construct Sore as a caring, attentive, and responsible wife, while mythologically reproducing the assumption that women are naturally responsible for partners' well-being and household care. This finding supports Marshment (1997), who highlights cultural

assumptions in female representation, and Sachar (2024), who notes that media can reproduce gender expectations.

The findings further show that Sore's caregiving extends beyond affection to monitoring, organizing, and regulating Jonathan's lifestyle. Her efforts to control his smoking and alcohol consumption, encourage healthier habits, and establish rules demonstrate her responsibility for his well-being. The scene in which she tells Jonathan to follow her instructions also illustrates her authority within the relationship. However, Jonathan's resistance creates tension between masculine ideals of independence and feminine expectations of caregiving. His perception of Sore's behavior as controlling or "nagging" shows how women's care may be undervalued when it challenges male autonomy. This finding aligns with Friedemann and Buckwalter (2014), who highlight the gendered dimensions of caregiving roles and burdens. It also supports Rohman (2013), who argues that contemporary cinema continues to reproduce traditional gender expectations despite changing representations of women.

The findings also reveal an emotional burden within Sore's caregiving role. Her repeated attempts to alter Jonathan's future require substantial emotional and psychological investment, evident in scenes where she becomes exhausted, cries, and gradually loses her cheerful appearance. These scenes show that her responsibility involves not only visible acts of care but also managing frustration, disappointment, and emotional exhaustion. Han and Curtis (2021) similarly demonstrate how films can visualize the unequal caregiving burden placed on women responsible for others' well-being. Friedemann and Buckwalter (2014) further highlight the gendered burden associated with caregiving roles. Thus, Sore's repeated time-looping symbolizes emotional and psychological labor, revealing the hidden cost behind the romanticized representation of a woman who continually sacrifices herself for her partner.

Nevertheless, Sore is not represented solely as a passive caregiver. The findings show that she acts as an active agent who makes decisions, establishes boundaries, and influences the direction of her relationship with Jonathan. Her efforts to regulate his routines and unhealthy behaviors demonstrate her agency and authority. This finding reflects changing representations of women in contemporary cinema, where female characters increasingly occupy active and influential roles. Yang et al. (2020) emphasize that female representation should be understood not only through women's presence but also through their influence within narratives. Similarly, Nulman (2014) notes that contemporary cinema presents increasingly complex female characters while retaining certain gender conventions. Thus, Sore represents both continuity and transformation, embodying culturally familiar qualities of patience, care, and devotion while simultaneously exercising agency within her relationship.

The final scenes provide a further reinterpretation of Sore's caregiving role by shifting the emphasis from individual sacrifice toward shared responsibility. Jonathan eventually begins to change through his own awareness rather than through Sore's continuous intervention. The scene in which Sore and Jonathan stand together beneath the aurora symbolizes transformation, renewal, and the possibility of beginning a new life together. This suggests that changing a person or repairing a relationship cannot depend entirely on one partner. Sung (2026) highlights that representations of caregiving and resistance in Asian narratives can provide spaces for negotiating established gender roles and imagining alternative forms of relational responsibility. Similarly, Lushinta et al. (2025) demonstrate how caregiving representations in film can involve transformations in relational roles and understandings of responsibility. Therefore, the ending of *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* offers a more complex representation of women: Sore remains a caregiver and

emotional supporter, but her journey also exposes the unequal burden created when women are expected to take primary responsibility for their partners' well-being.

6. Conclusion

This study found that the representation of Sore in *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* constructs women as caregivers through the concept of nurture, particularly through caregiving, emotional support, lifestyle regulation, domestic assistance, and responsibility for a partner's well-being. Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis shows that Sore's caregiving actions carry denotative, connotative, and mythological meanings. At the mythological level, her behavior reproduces the cultural expectation that women should nurture, guide, and maintain their partners' well-being. However, Sore is not represented solely as a passive caregiver. She also demonstrates agency by making decisions, establishing boundaries, and initiating changes. Her emotional exhaustion and repeated sacrifices further reveal the unequal burden embedded in caregiving. The ending of the film challenges this imbalance by emphasizing that meaningful change requires personal awareness and shared responsibility between partners.

These findings imply that *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* provides a complex representation of contemporary Indonesian women by simultaneously reproducing and negotiating traditional gender expectations. The study contributes to film, gender, and cultural studies by showing how caregiving can function as both an expression of affection and a source of gendered burden. However, this study is limited to one film, one female character, and selected scenes interpreted through Barthes' semiotic framework, while the interpretation may also be influenced by researcher subjectivity. Future research could examine other Indonesian films, compare female caregiver representations across different cultural contexts, or investigate audience interpretations to understand how such representations are received and negotiated by viewers.

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Data Disclosure Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.



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