



Framing Analysis of Feminist Values in the TV Series Money Heist

Sayid Salim¹, Hasrullah Hasrullah¹, Mursalim Mursalim¹

¹ Department of Communication Science, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences,
Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia
kotaksuratnyasayid@gmail.com

Abstract. Film is one of the media in mass communication that is most often used to provide information and also as entertainment. Movies have a very crucial function, they can be used to construct values and even maintain existing values. Therefore, movies are also often used to describe the condition of society. TV Series Money Heist directed by Alex Pina carries the genre of crime and action. In this research, the author tries to see how the packaging of feminism values in the TV Series Money Heist. This research uses a qualitative approach with the observation method. This research also uses Erving Goffman's framing theory which assumes that in reality there are also other realities and Pan and Kosicki's framing analysis technique. The values of feminism are observed using Nancy F. Coot's components of feminism. And in this series, the issues that are selected and highlighted are leadership, courage, and decision-making that are more dominant to female characters.

Keywords: Framing, Feminism, TV Series Money Heist

1 Introduction

It is undeniable that video on Demand (VoD) services, one of the real examples that can be seen from the development of mass media, especially in the world of cinema, is the presence of streaming services that are currently on the rise. Streaming services such as Netflix, Disney+ and others make it easy for users to enjoy the content they provide anywhere and anytime. This is not only felt by film lovers, but the filmmakers themselves feel the change that used to be a film can only be enjoyed by coming to the theater or using a CD to enjoy it. This also makes the distribution of movies and how to enjoy them easier.

The presence of Netflix has also had a significant impact on one of the Spanish TV series, *La Casa de Papel*, better known as *Money Heist*. Without Netflix, the series *Money Heist* would not be as famous as it is today. Initially, *Money Heist* was only broadcast on local Spanish TV channels and only garnered attention during its early weekday broadcasts, attracting 4.5 million local viewers in 2017. In contrast, *Money Heist* can now be enjoyed by people all over the world because Netflix acquired the broadcasting rights for global distribution, ultimately capturing the attention of 64 million viewers during the fourth season's release in April 2020.

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Money Heist is a series that tells the story of a meticulously planned heist on the Spanish Royal Mint and the Spanish National Bank. Not only did Netflix bring about changes to the Money Heist TV series, but Money Heist itself has made a significant impact on the world. Through its documentary film released in 2020 titled "Money Heist: The Phenomenon," the euphoria surrounding the series reached various countries, with demonstrations using symbols from the show and even influencing real-world thefts. It's worth noting that the series features iconic masks inspired by the famous Spanish artist Salvador Dali, specifically the Dali mask, as well as bright red jumpsuits. Additionally, the series' iconic song, "Bella Ciao," which is frequently sung in the show, is closely associated with social resistance and originated during World War II when it was used by the Italian people to oppose the fascist regime in their country.

The series also highlights the director's efforts to showcase the role of women in taking actions and decisions traditionally associated with men. In this regard, the director seems to be challenging the notion that strength must always be represented by a male figure. Characters such as Tokyo, Nairobi, and Raquel Murillo in the series stand out with scenes involving gunfire, leading a team, and devising attack plans. This can be linked to feminists' efforts to challenge the patriarchal values that have long been ingrained in people's perceptions.

Feminism originated from a perception of the unequal position of women compared to men in society. According to Nancy F. Coot's book *The grounding of modern feminism*, feminism contains three important components: (1) Sex equality: opposing the hierarchical position (superior and inferior) between the sexes. Equality is not only quantity, but also quality. (2) Social construction: the relationship between men and women, which until now has been the result of social construction, is not determined by nature (divine nature). (3) Gender identity and roles: Feminists reject the distinction that mixes sex and gender, so that women are made into a separate group in society. As a result of this categorization, Simone de Beauvoir said that women became "the other human being", not human. As a result of this social grouping, it is difficult for women to realize their personal existence or become themselves.

The theory used in this study is Erving Goffman's framing theory in which framing is a theory or process of how mass media messages gain perspective, point of view, or bias. As one of the mass communication theories, framing theory is often associated with agenda setting theory because both theories talk about how the media diverts the attention of the audience from the importance of an issue into what it wants to project and is used to determine the effect of the media.

Framing is an approach to see how reality is formed and constructed by the media. The process of forming and constructing reality has the end result that certain parts of reality are more prominent and more easily recognized. As a result, audiences more easily remember certain aspects that are presented prominently by the media. Aspects that are not presented prominently or even not reported are forgotten and completely ignored by the audience (Halmina, 2021).

In short, in the TV Series Money Heist, it can be seen that women have a very important role, and this is the presumption that this series tries to show women dominating men in various aspects such as leadership, courage, and so on. This is also in line with feminism which sees women's inequality from a political, social and economic perspective in the social order. This research tries to look at this by borrowing the components of feminism offered by Nancy. Through framing, this research tries to see what issues Aliex Pina is trying to show when writing a story which the researcher suspects is trying to highlight the roles of empowered women in this series.

2 Research Method

This type of research is descriptive qualitative, namely a technique that describes and interprets the meaning of the data that has been collected by paying attention to and recording as many aspects of the situation being studied at that time as possible, so as to obtain a general and comprehensive picture of the actual situation (Kriyantono, 2007). According to Moleong (2010), using descriptive methods means that researchers analyze the data collected in the form of words, images and not numbers. This data may come from interview scripts, field notes, photos, video tapes, personal documents, notes or memos and other official documents. This research also uses a content analysis method where content analysis is one of the main methods of communication science, content analysis studies the content of media (newspapers, radio, film and television). Through content analysis, researchers can study the content description, message characteristics, and developments (trends) of a content (Eriyanto, 2011). In this research, the subject of study is the TV series Money Heist, which consists of a total of 48 episodes spanning 5 seasons. The data analysis technique utilized in this research involves framing, which is defined as an effort to make messages more prominent in their delivery to the audience. In brief, framing is the way in which media frames the existing reality. In this study, the researcher employs framing as defined by Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki, using four alternative framings to help analyze the feminist values present in the TV series Money Heist.

3 Results and Discussion

In this series, Tokyo is portrayed as a woman who struggles to control her emotions, tends to be impulsive, and often clashes with members she dislikes. This can be seen in several scenes that depict these traits, such as Tokyo protecting Rio, Tokyo intervening with Berlin, Tokyo resisting the police, and the moment when Tokyo sacrifices herself. In the frame where Tokyo intervenes with Berlin, the scheme revolves around Tokyo's frustration upon discovering that something is being concealed between the Professor and Berlin. Tokyo makes the decision to intervene with Berlin in an attempt to uncover what she doesn't know.

Table 1. Tokyo Frame Description

Description	Image	Timestamp
Tokyo Intervenes Berlin		Season 2 Episode 2 Minute 09:52

In this series Nairobi is a very motivated character in doing everything, he is the one who is responsible for the assets obtained by the robber group such as gold and money. He is also the quality controller of the group, this is reflected in the frames where Nairobi leads the troops and Nairobi leads the gold smelting. In the frame of Nairobi leading the troops, the scheme that is built is that Nairobi sees Rio who is about to be executed and also does not know that Tokyo has been arrested by the police. Nairobi and Denver disagree with Berlin's decision to execute Rio and end up hitting Berlin on the head until he becomes unconscious and takes over the leadership.

Table 2. Nairobi Frame Description

Description	Image	Timestamp
Nairobi Leads Forces		Season 2 Episode 3 Minute 42:30

Stockholm is a character who was initially weak and often used but after joining the robber group she became a strong character and was willing to do anything with her husband Danver. This can be seen in the frame of Stockholm who wants to join the mission. In the frame where Stockholm wants to join the mission, the scheme is that Danver and Stockholm already have a child. Danver is not comfortable with this situation, according to him Stockholm should stay and watch their baby. Stockholm said that he would still join this mission, according to him Monica who used to work as an employee at the Spanish Money Printing Agency no longer existed, only Stockholm was a big robber. A disgusted Stockholm tells Denver it's all sexism and Nairobi who saw and heard their fight says she's sick of the patriarchy too.

Table 3. Stockholm Frame Description

Description	Image	Timestamp
Stockholm wants to join the mission		Season 3 Episode 2 Minute 20:20

The findings indicate that specific issues are selected and highlighted in the TV series *Money Heist*. This stems from the assumption of framing theory by Erving Goffman, which views media as constructing reality in an effort to emphasize issues that lead to more prominent realities, resulting in the audience's greater recall of these issues. In this series, the prominent realities include leadership, courage, and decision-making, which are more dominantly portrayed by the female characters.

The TV series *Money Heist* was chosen to examine feminist values because several analyzed scenes have representations of Nancy F. Cott's feminist components, including sex equality, which opposes hierarchical gender positions, the social construction that views relations between women and men as constructed rather than natural or divine, and identity and gender roles, where the rejection of gender and sex mixing in everyday life is addressed. In terms of sex equality, it is evident in the character Tokyo, who defies the leader of her group. Her scheme involves Tokyo's frustration at not knowing the plans Berlin and the Professor have made, as she, being just a member, is excluded from this knowledge. Tokyo threatens to kill Berlin out of her frustration and disappointment. Her act of challenging the group's leader demonstrates trust among members as a better means of knowing future plans. Other members who are unaware remain silent due to their fear of Berlin's charismatic leadership, while Tokyo dares to oppose what Berlin does. The director aims to show that among many men, Tokyo is a woman brave enough to challenge a leader when she senses something is wrong. It opposes Berlin's monopolization of power, which Tokyo dislikes, and she challenges Berlin's superiority.

Sex equality is further exemplified by Tokyo when she willingly sacrifices herself. In this scenario, Denver, Manila, and Tokyo are under pressure from a special team trying to make them surrender. To move to safety, one of them must stay behind to hold off the police's special team, and Tokyo volunteers for this role. This demonstrates sex equality as Tokyo is willing to sacrifice her life for her friends' safety. This action complements her bravery as a robber, including confronting her leader for her loved ones, facing the police, and sacrificing her life. Tokyo shows that her level of courage may not be attainable by others, and it is manifested through five grenades prepared to explode alongside the enemies and herself. The value of sex equality is also seen in the character Alicia Sierra, who successfully tracks down the Professor's location while pregnant. This demonstrates her strength and intelligence as a police-woman in a male-dominated profession. Her achievement goes against societal expectations of women's capabilities in such roles, and it highlights her ability to perform under challenging circumstances.

In terms of the social construction of gender, characters Nairobi and Lisbon dominate leadership roles. For example, Nairobi expresses dissatisfaction with Berlin's leadership, physically incapacitating him and asserting herself as the new leader. This demonstrates that male leadership does not always result in inclusive leadership styles. Nairobi takes charge to reorganize their plans efficiently, replacing the narcissistic Berlin. She emphasizes this by saying, "Let the matriarchy begin," representing resistance to Berlin's patriarchal approach. The social construction value is also evident in Nairobi's leadership while her team is frightened. She takes on the role of a quality controller when the initial plan faces obstacles due to threats within the Span-

ish Bank. Nairobi's strong leadership is evident as she motivates her teammates while injured. This shows that a strong and even injured woman can lead a group. Nairobi's leadership not only as a quality controller but also during the first and second robberies exemplifies that leadership is not exclusive to men. Qualities are not determined by gender, as Nairobi demonstrates. The social construction value is also visible in the character Lisbon. She is chosen to negotiate with the Professor behind the scenes to prevent further harm to the hostages. This decision contradicts the typical gender-based assumption that men are better suited for leadership roles. In this scene, among numerous male police officers, Inspector Lisbon, a woman, is selected to represent the police and the government in negotiations.

Regarding identity and gender roles, the character Stockholm represents this value. She works alongside her husband in the heist despite having a child. Denver, her husband, expresses concern about her involvement due to their family responsibilities. He wants her to stay and care for their child instead of risking her life on the mission. However, Stockholm insists on participating and accuses Denver of being sexist for suggesting she should stay home and warm a baby bottle while he risks his life in the heist. Stockholm asserts that she is no longer just Monica, a bank employee, but also Stockholm, a skilled thief. She wants to prove that she can take risks alongside her husband and rejects the assumption that a mother's role is solely to care for and educate her child. She believes that she will do anything for her family. According to Haskel (in Susanto) "film is a rich field for exploring stereotypes, this happens because stereotypes exist in society". Initially, films reflected social behavior and sometimes provided innovation regarding social behavior, but the reality is that since the 1950s, the film world has begun to corner women and degrade women through the roles they get in films. Tuchman stated that the media's image of women is not in line with the changes that are taking place in society, for example the transformation of gender roles led by the women's movement. So if you look at the media, it tends to demean women and does not reflect the existing reality (Susanto, 2017).

In research conducted by Susanto with an article entitled "Representation of Feminism in Spy Films" using John Fiske's semiotic method, it shows the figure of a woman who is intellectual and can also make decisions. In the leadership aspect, women are described as leaders in an organization. What was found in research on the film *Spy* is also in line with what was found in this research. Like Nairobi and Tokyo who declared themselves that they too could become leaders through their actions who were not afraid of male hegemony in groups or organizations. In terms of intellectuality, Nairobi is the most visible character because he is the person who manages the stolen goods at the scene. In the *Spy* films and the *Money Heist* series, several aspects of feminism go hand in hand. Since the birth of feminism, film has functioned as a tool of struggle for this movement. It is believed that films can be used as an ideological tool to fight the stereotyping of women's images by men. In particular, as a tool to increase respect for women who are positioned as inferior (Nelmes in Susanto, 2017). This is what the *Money Heist* Series tries to build through the hands of Alex Pina as the story writer. Trying to underline that masculine roles in the real world can also be played by women in this series. This is what makes the characters in the *Money Heist* Series portrayed as empowered women.

4 Conclusion

In the TV series *Money Heist*, the director attempts to create a reality by selecting and highlighting existing issues. This can be observed in the findings, which tend to emphasize issues related to leadership, courage, and decision-making. These themes align with the feminist components outlined by Nancy F. Cott, including sex equality, social construction, and gender role identity. In terms of sex equality, characters like Tokyo and Alicia Sierra are portrayed as strong and courageous women who are willing to challenge anyone. They defy societal norms and expectations, exemplifying the value of gender equality. Regarding social construction, characters Nairobi and Lisbon dominate leadership roles over the male characters in the series. This challenges the traditional perception of male leadership dominance and underscores the idea that leadership qualities are not determined by gender. In the context of gender role identity, characters like Stockholm demonstrate that women can stand shoulder to shoulder with their male counterparts in criminal endeavors, defying traditional gender roles.

As for recommendations based on this research, the following are suggested:

1. Álex Pina, as the creator of the *Money Heist* series, should consistently strive to create captivating works. *Money Heist* had shortcomings towards the end of the story, and these should be addressed in future projects to maintain audience engagement.
2. Netflix should produce more series and films that incorporate feminist values so that audiences can derive meaning from the content rather than merely enjoying it as entertainment.
3. Audiences should be more selective in choosing the content they consume to become more active communicators who can discern messages, lessons, and meanings within the entertainment they enjoy.

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