

## Revealing Gender Relations in Arab Society in the Film Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah Through a Literary Sociology Perspective

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### مستخلص

يركز هذا البحث على مشكلة أنماط العلاقة بين الجنسين الموجودة في فيلم بركة يقابل بركة. وتعتبر مسألة العلاقة بين الجنسين في هذا الفيلم مثيرة للاهتمام ومهمة للدراسة لأن هذا الفيلم يستكشف عن العلاقة بين الجنسين ضمن الإطار الثقافي للمجتمع السعودي الذي يتطابق مع المجتمع الأبوي، ويقوم على الشريعة الإسلامية، ويحد بشكل كبير من مساحة حركة المرأة. طريقة البحث المستخدمة في هذا البحث هو الوصفي التحليلي بمنهج علم الاجتماع الأدبي وهو علم الظواهر الاجتماعية. ومصدر البيانات الأساسي هو فيلم بركة يقابل بركة لمحمود صباغ. تظهر نتائج البحث أن هناك عدة أشكال للعلاقة بين الجنسين في هذا الفيلم. الشكل الأول هو الهيمنة في العلاقة بين الجنسين، والشكل الثاني هو التبعية في العلاقة بين الجنسين، والشكل الثالث هو العلاقة المتساوية بين الجنسين. ومن جميع أشكال العلاقة الموجودة بين الجنسين في هذا الفيلم، يمكن أن يستنتج أن هناك مشاكل كبيرة في العلاقة بين المرأة والرجل في المجتمع العربي، وكانت العلاقة بين الجنسين في الماضي تعتبر أفضل مقارنة بالمجتمع العربي اليوم، وأن النظام القائم لا يدعم إقامة علاقة جيدة بين الجنسين، وأن هناك شرعية دينية فيما يتعلق بالعلاقة بين الجنسين.

الكلمات المفتاحية: العلاقات بين الجنسين؛ المجتمع العربي؛ فيلم بركة يقابل بركة.

### Abstract

This article focuses on the patterns of gender relations depicted in the film Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah. The issue of gender relations in this film is intriguing and significant for research because it explores gender relations within the cultural framework of Saudi society, which aligns with a patriarchal system, is based on Islamic Sharia, and significantly restricts women's mobility. The research method used in this article is descriptive-analytical, employing the literary sociology approach, which is a study of social phenomena. The primary data source is the film Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah by Mahmoud Sabbagh. The research findings reveal several forms of gender relations in this film. The first form is dominance in the relationship between the sexes, the second form is dependency in gender relations, and the third form is equal gender relations. Among all the forms of gender relations depicted in this film, it can be concluded that there are significant issues in male-female relations in Arab society. Gender relations in the past were considered better compared to contemporary Arab society, and the existing system does not support the establishment of healthy gender relations. Additionally, there is a religious legitimacy concerning gender relations.

**Keywords:** Gender Relations; Arab Society; Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah Film

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## INTRODUCTION

It is generally known that gender relations in Arab society are difficult for the outside world to understand. This is due to the very limited interactions between men and women in public spaces. Furthermore, according to Winkel and Strachan, the female population is still shrouded in mystery and stereotypes. Research on Saudi Arabian women is even rarer than research on Muslim women.<sup>1</sup> However, with the development of visual media, the relationship patterns between men and women which are very closed in Arab society can be observed through films, for example, the film *Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah*. Referring to Decio Torrez Cruz, this was possible because the issues discussed in the film are human and humanitarian.<sup>2</sup> Films are related to social life, standards, and customs of the particular era in which the literature was written. Films contain human behavior through story characters.<sup>3</sup>

Film as a literary product offers a perspective on treating life creatively and artistically. Films portray human life based on chronology or time sequence, so if you look closely, the human behavior shown in the story often repeats events. This recurrence is captured as a phenomenon and can then be identified into certain categories, such as psychological, social, and societal symptoms.<sup>4</sup> Film is one of the media that touches on many issues that reflect the secretions of society, for example, the digital revolution,<sup>5</sup> or gender relations.

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<sup>1</sup> Carmen Winkel and Laura Strachan, "Through the Eyes of a Woman: Using Oral History to Explore the Enigmatic World of Saudi Arabia's Female Population", *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 21(6), 80-97, 2020. DOI: <https://vc.bridgew.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2294&context=jiws>

<sup>2</sup>Decio Torrez Cruz "Literature and Film: A Brief Overview of Theory and Criticism", *Postmodern Metanarratives*, (Brazil: Universidade Federal da Bahia, 2014), h. 38-49. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137439734\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137439734_3)

<sup>3</sup>BAO Bo, "The differences between novels and film s- Enhance literature teaching by using films", *US-China Education Review A & B*, Vol. 5, No.7, 2008

<sup>4</sup>Charles Zastrow , Karen K. Kirst-Ashman, et al, *Understanding Human Behavior and the Social Environment*, (Massachusetts: Cengage Learning, 2018), <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:142700256>

<sup>5</sup>رامي أبو شهاب، "الفيلم الفرنسي. من تعتقد عن الزمان والإدراك الهيبوية الأنوثية في عالم إفتراضي"، *القدس العربي*، ٢٠١٩.

<https://www.alquds.co.uk>

Gender relations in Arab society that can be observed through literary media include films *Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah*. The pattern of male and female relationships in this film was very interesting to be investigated because this film was shown in Saudi Arabia, where almost all official cinema performances have been banned since 1979.<sup>6</sup> Another factor is that this film tells the story of the relationship between men and women, which is often covered up in media reports. Additionally, there is a significant gap between men and women, leading to cultural, social, and economic problems. Historically, women's space for movement in Saudi Arabia has long been very limited, especially in educational, social, and political contexts.<sup>7</sup> The Imperial government was seen as advocating or enforcing total sex segregation. Saudi Arabian women did not have the same rights as men, and often experience discrimination.<sup>8</sup>

In addition, referring to the International Convention on Human Rights, the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia must guarantee equal rights between men and women and ensure that women enjoy all rights, for instance in the economic, social, cultural, civil, and political fields.<sup>9</sup> For this reason, in the late 1950s and early 1960s significant steps were taken to open the first schools for girls in Saudi Arabia. By the mid-1970s, about half of all Saudi girls attended school. New initiatives regarding women are contained in "Saudi vision 2030" and "Saudi female leaders" announced in April 2016 by the Chairman of the Council of Economic and Development Affairs, and 'The National Transformation Plan 2020' (Saudi Vision 2017). The National Transformation Plan's goal is to increase the percentage of women in leadership positions by 2020. The plan includes a multitude of initiatives to support this goal, such as training programme for women leaders, reforms and legislation, which can help to improve the condition of women's lives.<sup>10</sup> The Saudi Arabian government through Vision 2030 seeks to increase the percentage of Saudi women's

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<sup>6</sup>"Barakah Meets Barakah' ('Barakah Yoqabil Barakah'): Berlin Review", <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/general-news/barakah-meets-barakah-barakah-yoqabil-865315/#!>

<sup>7</sup>Safaa Fouad Rajkhan, *Women in Arab Saudi Status, Rights, and Limitations*, (Washington: University of Washington Bothell, 2014), <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:73974389>

<sup>8</sup>Dewi Nevy Rusmarina dkk, "Dinamika Kesetaraan Gender di Arab Saudi: Sebuah Harapan Baru di Era Raja Salman", *Sospol: Jurnal Sosial Politik Vol 6 No. 1* (Kudus: Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Kudus, 2020), h. 32-44. DOI:[10.22219/sospol.v6i1.11208](https://doi.org/10.22219/sospol.v6i1.11208)

<sup>9</sup>خيرى بغدادى، "العلاقة العاطفية بين الجنسين باستخدام الوسائل الإلكترونية بين المجتمع الافتراضية والمجتمع الحقيقي"، *المجلة العلوم الإنسانية والاجتماعية*، جامعة قاصدي مرباح ورقلة، ٢٠١١

<sup>10</sup>Waseem Ahmed, "Women Empowerment in Saudi Arabia: An Analysis from Education Policy Perspective", *The Middle East International Journal for Social Sciences (MEIJSS) Vol. 2, No. 3*, 2020, e-ISSN: 2682-8766

participation in the labor market by 30%, and provide opportunities to make them true and effective partners in building the country and development.<sup>11</sup>

However, even though various instruments regarding equal rights between men and women exist, widespread discrimination against women still exists. Generally speaking, discrimination against women is a violation of the principles of equal rights and respect for human dignity<sup>12</sup> and is an obstacle to women's participation in political, social, economic, and cultural life.<sup>13</sup> According to data from the World Economic Forum's 2017 Global Gender Gap Report, Saudi Arabia is ranked 138th out of 144 countries. In 2018, the country was elected as a new member to the Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.<sup>14</sup> Discrimination also makes it difficult to develop women's full potential in serving the country and humanity.<sup>15</sup> The emergence of the gender movement which aims to fight for women's rights to be equal to men is triggered by many problems faced by women.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, this research seeks to reveal current gender relations through the medium of film *Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah*.

There were several research results and articles that have been published regarding the films *Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah*. The first scientific publication was done by Katherine Hennessey which concluded that the film *Yuqâbil Barakah* was a rewrite of Hamlet and the best Shakespeare adaptation in the Arabian Peninsula,<sup>17</sup> the second research was investigated by Ifi Erwhintiana and Aning Ayu Kusumawati which

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<sup>11</sup> حنان أسعد خوج و نيلي السيد عاشور "تعزيز دور المرأة العلمية السعودية في تحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة لرؤية 2030

"تحسين الصورة الذهنية للمملكة نموذجاً"، *International Journal of Learning Management Systems*, 11 (2), 125-141, 2023 DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21608/IJLMS.2023.283121>

<sup>12</sup>Roberto Andorno, "Human Dignity and Human Rights", *Handbook of Global Bioethics*, (Springer Netherlands, 2014), h. 45-57, DOI:[10.1007/978-94-007-2512-6\\_66](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-2512-6_66)

<sup>13</sup><https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women>

<sup>14</sup> Wafaa Saleh, and Areej Malibari, "Saudi Women and Vision 2030: Bridging the Gap?", *Behavioral Sciences*, 11(10), 132. 2021, <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs11100132>

<sup>15</sup>Jean K.L. Lee, et.al. "The Impact of Poverty and Discrimination on Family Interactions and Problem Development", *Handbook of Parenting and Child Development Across the Lifespan*, (Springer, Cham: 2018), pp. 699-712. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-94598-9\\_31](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-94598-9_31)

<sup>16</sup>Elizabeth Jay Friedman, "Women's Human Rights: The Emergence of a Movement", *Women's Rights Human Rights*, (San Francisco, University of San Francisco, 2018), pp. 18-35. DOI:[10.4324/9781315656571-3](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315656571-3)

<sup>17</sup>Katherine Hennessey, "Conclusion: The Peninsula in 2016, the "Year of Shakespeare"", *Shakespeare on the Arabian Peninsula*, (London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp.299-317. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-58471-7\\_9](https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-58471-7_9)

highlighted the reflection of modern women in Saudi Arabia,<sup>18</sup> and then a research by Adelia Rizki Widnyasandra who focused on social criticism.<sup>19</sup> Afterwards, there were also reviews by Mina Ucar about the contents of the film.<sup>20</sup> Of all the scientific publications found, none has studied the gender relations in the film.

Regarding gender relations, the system of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which is based on Islamic law<sup>21</sup> should adopt the principle of complementary equality between men and women, taking into account the nature and characteristics of both sexes. For this reason, most areas of human rights are absolutely the same for men and women, such as the rights to work, education, health, and economic rights. In the *Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah*, the gender relations experienced by the characters in the film were depicted. One of the ways in which these gender relations can be observed in a scene lasting 1 hour 9 minutes 15 seconds through a conversation between a female character named Bibi and her father Hamzah.

*"A lot of things have changed. As you know, Mayyada and I are expecting a baby. We are responsible for you in God's eyes. To guarantee your future, you will marry,"* said Hamzah starting the conversation.

*"I'm not ready to get married now. I haven't been able to commit myself."* Bibi replied.

*"We are marrying you to someone in the family. This way you are part of us. You will marry my brother. You are a treasure to this family."* Hamzah's decision ended their conversation.

From this dialogue, it can be seen that the female character wants to build equality in gender relations. She tried to be assertive in the conversation she had with her father. She expressed her own opinion clearly, conveying what was in her heart. The statement *"I'm not ready to get married now. I haven't been able to commit myself,"* demonstrated strength as a woman. She showed the principle that she alone determines her life. What is reflected in this dialogue is very different from the common perception that Arab women are submissive and obedient to their parents and are subordinated in gender relations.

Furthermore, gender relations in the film *Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah* are intriguing to study, considering that Saudi Arabia tends to be closed and very limited in

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<sup>18</sup>Ifi Erwhintiana dan Aning Ayu Kusumawati, "Refleksi Perempuan Arab Modern dalam Film Barakah Yuqobil Barakah", *LINGUA*, Vol. 18, No. 2, September 2021, pp. 290-302. DOI: [10.30957/lingua.v18i2.720](https://doi.org/10.30957/lingua.v18i2.720).

<sup>19</sup>Adelia Rizki Widnyasandra, *Social Criticism in the Film Barakah Yuqabil Barakah*, (Jakarta: Fakultas Ilmu Pengetahuan dan Budaya Universitas Indonesia, 2023). <https://lib.ui.ac.id/detail?id=9999920517708&lokasi=lokal>

<sup>20</sup>Mina Ucar, "Barakah Meets Barakah of Movie Review", Istanbul 29 Mayıs University, 2021. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351055534\\_Barakah\\_Meets\\_Barakah\\_Of\\_Movie\\_Review](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351055534_Barakah_Meets_Barakah_Of_Movie_Review)

<sup>21</sup>Safaa Fouad Rajkhan, *Women in Arab Saudi Status, Rights, and Limitations*

information and publications regarding women. Additionally, Saudi Arabia adheres to a patriarchal culture and significantly restricts women's movement in the public sphere, making the gender relations of Arab society worth investigating. Based on this phenomenon, this research aims to reveal the forms of gender relations found in *Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah* through a literary sociology approach, specifically socio-phenomenological studies.

## **METHOD**

The literary sociology approach was chosen because it will analyze literary works from a social aspect.<sup>22</sup> Literature is a mirror of society and reflects the reality of society. Literary sociology interprets human existence in a historical and social framework.<sup>23</sup> Every society has its system of norms, behavior, values, beliefs and traditions which are reflected in their respective literary works.<sup>24</sup> Literary sociology helps understand gender, feminism, role status, social discourse, and so on in literature.<sup>25</sup> With socio-phenomenology, literary works are understood through the lens of social phenomena, examining meanings within the framework of the broader cultural system while explaining the social aspects of individual creations. Through this approach, the reciprocal relationship between Arab society and literature related to gender relations will be explored and analyzed.

This research was designed as analytical, descriptive research to explain the phenomenon of gender relations in Arab society. The theoretical framework uses socio-phenomenology theory and gender relations theory. Gender relations can be dominant (controlling), subordinate (controlled), and equal.<sup>26</sup> Research data was obtained from the film *Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah* by Mahmoud Sabbagh, and previous research related to gender and cultural issues in Saudi Arabian society. Research data analysis was carried out by classifying sentences and screenshots that show the

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<sup>22</sup>Sapardi Djoko Damono, *Sosiologi Sastra Sebuah Pengantar Ringkas*. (Jakarta: Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1978), pp. 8. <https://repositori.kemdikbud.go.id/2385/1/Sosiologi%20Sastra%20Sebuah%20Pengantar%20Ringkas%20%281978%29.pdf>

<sup>23</sup>Jan Vána, J. "Theorizing the Social through Literary Fiction: For a New ociology of Literature", *Cultural Sociology*, 14(2), 2020, pp. 180–200. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1749975520922469>

<sup>24</sup>Mujahid Ahmed Alwaqaa, "Sociology and Literature: An Interdisciplinary Approach", *Journal of Liberal Arts and Humanities (JLAH)* Vol. 1, No. 10, 2020, pp. 34-38. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/353434692\\_Sociology\\_and\\_Literature\\_An\\_Interdisciplinary\\_Approach](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/353434692_Sociology_and_Literature_An_Interdisciplinary_Approach)

<sup>25</sup>Thwida Akhter, "Literature and Society: A Critical Analysis of Literary Text through Contemporary Theory", *Talent Development & Excellence*, Vol.12, No.3, pp. 2020, h. 2228-2234. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342082990\\_Literature\\_and\\_Society\\_A\\_Critical\\_Analysis\\_of\\_Literary\\_Text\\_through\\_Contemporary\\_Theory](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342082990_Literature_and_Society_A_Critical_Analysis_of_Literary_Text_through_Contemporary_Theory)

<sup>26</sup>Priyo Soemandoyo, *Wacana Gender & Layar Televisi: Studi Perempuan dalam Pemberitaan Televisi Swasta*, L3PY, 2008), pp.62

phenomenon of gender relations. Considering that this research is qualitative, data analysis was carried out simultaneously with data collection.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Gender Relations

Gender refers to the specific roles, responsibilities, and identities of women and men that are socially regulated and considered in society.<sup>27</sup> Humans are subject to the particularities of each particular culture and change over time. Gender roles are learned in families, schools, religious institutions, and through the media. Humans may grow up to be men and women, but humans learn to become women and men whose actions, values, behavior, roles, and activities are in line with sexual identity.<sup>28</sup> Because gender roles, responsibilities, and characteristics are socially acquired knowledge, people can also change.<sup>29</sup> Gender is the main characteristic that a person has along with race, age, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, and so on.<sup>30</sup>

Moreover, gender relations refer to the social and economic relationships that exist in the family, community, workplace, or society between men and women.<sup>31</sup> Gender relations are a pattern of relationships between men and women that are socially constructed, both in the family and society.<sup>32</sup> Besides, gender relations refer to social relations and the distribution of power between men and women, both in the private and public spheres. Gender relations can be dominant (controlling), subordinate (controlled), and equal.<sup>33</sup> Then, gender relations are sexual contacts in the patriarchal

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<sup>27</sup><https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/1761/file/Gender%20glossary%20of%20terms%20and%20concepts%20.pdf>

<sup>28</sup>Susana A. Eisenchlas, "Gender Roles and Expectations: Any Changes Online?", *Sage Journal*, 2013. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244013506446>

<sup>29</sup>Shirin Heidari, et.al, "Sex and Gender Equity in Research: Rationale for the SAGER guidelines and recommended use", *Research Integrity and Peer Review*, 2016. DOI: [10.1186/s41073-016-0007-6](https://doi.org/10.1186/s41073-016-0007-6)

<sup>30</sup>Ami Wilsaon, "The Social Construct of Gender", 2019, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354193145\\_The\\_Social\\_Construct\\_of\\_Gender](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354193145_The_Social_Construct_of_Gender)

<sup>31</sup>Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay, "Gender Relations, Development Practice and 'Culture'", *Gender and Development*, Vol. 3, No. 1, [Culture], 1995, pp. 13-18. DOI:[10.1080/741921766](https://doi.org/10.1080/741921766)

<sup>32</sup>Umaimah Wahid dan Ferrari Lancia, "Pertukaran Peran Domestik dan Publik Menurut Perspektif Wacana Sosial Halliday", *Mediator: Jurnal Komunikasi*, Vol 11 (1), 2018, pp. 106-118. DOI:[10.29313/mediator.v11i1.3180](https://doi.org/10.29313/mediator.v11i1.3180)

<sup>33</sup>Priyo Soemandoyo, *Wacana Gender & Layar Televisi: Studi Perempuan dalam Pemberitaan Televisi Swasta*, L3PY, 2008), pp.62

sense.<sup>34</sup> In this contact, men have independence while women have submission.<sup>35</sup> The image of the relationship between men and women is a social fact that is historically shaped by various social processes and which then becomes a power structure.<sup>36</sup> Standard values are objective values that require compliance so that they become practices that are continuously repeated in social life.<sup>37</sup>

Likewise, gender relations relate to how power is distributed between the sexes.<sup>38</sup> The division of sexual labor between men and women is not based on normative understandings and biological categories but on qualities, roles, and abilities based on social conventions.<sup>39</sup> In this case, certain gender groups are considered to have a higher position (dominating), being dominated, and being equal.<sup>40</sup> Whereas, In patriarchal societies, men are considered to have a dominant position, while women are subordinate.<sup>41</sup> This unequal and more domination-subordination relationship ultimately provides opportunities for the emergence of various forms of violence against women, such as physical, psychological, and economic violence.<sup>42</sup> Unequal

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<sup>34</sup>Prem Kumar Vijayan, "Patriarchy's Engines: Toxic Masculinity, Desire, Sexual Violence", *Patriarchy*, 2023. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/345742213\\_Patriarchy%27s\\_Engines\\_Toxic\\_Masculinity\\_Desire\\_Sexual\\_Violence\\_Countercurrents](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/345742213_Patriarchy%27s_Engines_Toxic_Masculinity_Desire_Sexual_Violence_Countercurrents)

<sup>35</sup> Carol. L. Ember, et.al, *Gender*, (New Haven Connecticut: Yale University, 2019), pp.13. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/363503477\\_Gender/link/6320212e0a70852150ed3c48/download](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/363503477_Gender/link/6320212e0a70852150ed3c48/download)

<sup>36</sup>Dong Sook Shin Girll, "5 Patriarchal Relations and Sexual Division of Labour," in Dong Sook Shin Girll, *Rural Women and Triple Exploitation in Korean Development*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), pp 87-105. [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9780333983324\\_6](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9780333983324_6)

<sup>37</sup>Preeti S Rawat, "Patriarchal Beliefs, Women's Empowerment, and General Well-being", *Vikalpa*, Volume 39 No 2, 2014. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0256090920140206>

<sup>38</sup>Radtke, H. Lorraine, *Power/gender : Social Relations in Theory and Practice Inquiries in Social Construction*, (California: Sage Publications, Inc, 1995). [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232567758\\_Powergender\\_Social\\_relations\\_in\\_theory\\_and\\_practice\\_INQUIRIES\\_in\\_social\\_construction](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232567758_Powergender_Social_relations_in_theory_and_practice_INQUIRIES_in_social_construction)

<sup>39</sup>Guide Feribel, et.al., "Gender Differences in Social Interactions", *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* Volume 186, 2021, pp. 33-45. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2021.03.016>

<sup>40</sup>Mary Maynard, " Gender Relations" in Abbott, P. and Wallace, C. *An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives*, 2nd edn, (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 116-117. [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-349-27552-6\\_6](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-349-27552-6_6)

<sup>41</sup>Preeti S Rawat, "Patriarchal Beliefs, Women's Empowerment, and General Well-being".

<sup>42</sup>Giulia Valsecchi, et.al., " Men's Gender Norms and Gender-Hierarchy-Legitimizing Ideologies: The Effect of Priming Traditional Masculinity Versus a Feminization of Men's Norms", *Gender Issues*, 2023. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12147-022-09308-8>



gender relations also cause problems with sexuality and marriage, leading to sexual violence.<sup>43</sup>

Gender relations regulate the pattern of relationships between men and women.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, gender relations influence people's ability to freely decide, influence, control, enforce, and engage in collective action.<sup>45</sup> The interaction of gender relations emphasizes hierarchical social relations such as class, caste, race, and ethnicity.<sup>46</sup> Hierarchical gender relations are often considered normal relationships, but these relationships are socially and culturally shaped and can change over time.<sup>47</sup> Hierarchical gender relations give rise to injustice towards women because men are considered to oppress and subordinate women and limit women's rights in various fields. Hierarchical gender relations trigger the emergence of power in women to demand their rights as women from men.

### **Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah Film**

*Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah's* film was written and directed by Mahmoud Sabbagh. The film was released on February 12, 2016,<sup>48</sup> and is 1 hour and 28 minutes long. It was awarded as the winner of the best foreign language film in the 89<sup>th</sup> *Academy Awards* in 2017 in Los Angeles<sup>49</sup>. This film is a romantic comedy-drama set in Saudi Arabia. This film tells the story of a relationship between a man and a woman, where there is a man

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<sup>43</sup>Wiwin Indarti and Abdul Munir, "Gender Roles and Relations of Using People as Reflected in Barong Performance of Kemiren Village - Banyuwangi", *Patrawidya*. Vol 17, No. 1, 2016, pp. 81-103. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323934328\\_Peran\\_dan\\_Relasi\\_Gender\\_Masyarakat\\_Usin\\_g\\_dalam\\_Lakon\\_Barong\\_Kemiren-Banyuwangi](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323934328_Peran_dan_Relasi_Gender_Masyarakat_Usin_g_dalam_Lakon_Barong_Kemiren-Banyuwangi)

<sup>44</sup>Sarah lawless, et.al., "Gender Norms and Relations: Implications for Agency in Coastal Livelihoods", *Maritime Studies*, Springer-Verlag GmbH Germany, 2019. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40152-019-00147-0>

<sup>45</sup>Floya Anthias, "The Intersections of Class, Gender, Sexuality and 'Race': The Political Economy of Gendered Violence", *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* Vol. 27, No. 2, 2014, pp. 153-171. DOI:[10.1007/s10767-013-9152-9](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10767-013-9152-9)

<sup>46</sup>Jean Ait Belkhir and Bernice McNair Barnett, "Race, Gender and Class Intersectionality", *Race, Gender & Class* Vol. 8, No. 3, 2001, pp. 157-174. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41674988>

<sup>46</sup><https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2021/10/feature-what-does-gender-equality-look-like-today>

<sup>47</sup>Naeli Sofiyana, *Relasi Gender Dan Kuasa Dalam Penokohan Wayang (Srikandi Dan Dewi Kunti Dalam Perspektif Islam)*, (Semarang: UIN Walisongo Semarang, 2015), xv. <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:164838173>

<sup>48</sup>"Barakah Meets Barakah: A Poignant Commentary on Romance in Arab Saudi", *Arabic 2241* Contemporary Arab Cultures: Arts, Mass Media, Society, The Ohio State University, 2019. <https://u.osu.edu/arabic2241/2019/12/13/barakah-meets-barakah-a-poignant-commentary-on-romance-in-saudi-arabia/>

<sup>49</sup>Adelia Rizki Widayasandra, *Social Criticism in the Film Barakah Yuqabil Barakah*.

who is in love. However, falling in love is not easy in Saudi Arabia because women and men are prohibited from meeting, so this situation causes various things.<sup>50</sup>

The man is a sharia police officer named Barakah and falls in love with a beautiful girl named Bibi. Barakah is a kind-hearted civil servant who goes around Jeddah issuing tickets for minor offenses. Meanwhile, Bibi is a beautiful young woman who uses Instagram to amass millions of followers while pushing boundaries in a conservative society. Since the Saudi government allowed women to drive cars<sup>51</sup> and the development of internet networks, many women have taken advantage of this opportunity, such as being active in electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM).<sup>52</sup> Barakah and Bibi hit it off, but finding the right location to meet in person, and share moments proves difficult due to strict traditions and public policies. Barakah and Bibi felt they both liked each other, but finding the right location to meet in person and share moments proved difficult due to strict traditions and public policies.<sup>53</sup>

The themes raised in the *Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah* film is the struggle of a couple in love not to be bound by strict government regulations that make it difficult. The storyline of this film moves forward. The setting of this film takes place on the streets, Barakah's house and its surroundings, a fruit shop, a clothing shop, a theater, a beach, a construction building, an art exhibition, a barbershop, a cafe, a grocery store, Bibi's house, a tourist spot, cage sheep, and sheep slaughterhouses, illegal breweries, Bibi's family's beach house, Barakah neighborhood apartment rooftops, meeting rooms, boats and roadsides. In terms of time setting, it occurred in the morning, afternoon and evening. In terms of atmosphere, there were quiet, busy, warm, happy, relaxed, serious, sad, angry and annoyed. This film used the language styles of interminous, symbolic, retroric and antithetical contradictions. The point of view in this film is in the first person.

In the *Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah* film, different characters from each figure were. The characters in the film are Barakah, Bibi, Madam Mayyadda, Aunt Sa'diyyah, Uncle Da'ash, Maghbool, Hamzah, and Mr. Turki. Barakah is a kind, simple, and naive man. Bibi is a girl who has a good, honest, and paranoid character. Madam Mayyada is a

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<sup>50</sup>Mina Ucar, "Barakah Meets Barakah of Movie Review".

<sup>51</sup>تركي حسن أبو الع لا والسيد إبراهيم مصطفى ، للسيارات من وجهة نظر طالبات الأثار المتوقعة قيادة المرأة السعودية الجامعات السعودية"، (7)5 *المجلة العربية للعلوم ونشر الأبحاث .مجلة العلوم الإنسانية والاجتماعية* ، -87 118. <https://www.ajsrp.com> , <https://doi.org/10.26389/AJSRP.H101220> , DOI:

<sup>52</sup>نوره بنت سعود بن حسني آل هالل. "الكلمة المننطوقة إلكتروني دوافع مشاركة المرأة السعودية في "مجلة البحوث العلمية، جامعة الأزهر، كلية الإعلام"، 66(1)، 442-415، 2023، <https://jsb.journals.ekb.eg/>

<sup>53</sup>Film Araby, "Case Study: Barakah Meets Barakah" , 2017, [https://s3.amazonaws.com/filmarabi/FilmArabi\\_CaseStudy\\_HishamFageeh\\_BarakahMeetsBarakah\\_091018.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/filmarabi/FilmArabi_CaseStudy_HishamFageeh_BarakahMeetsBarakah_091018.pdf)

mother who is strict with her children. Aunt Sa'diyyah is a woman who has a loving and responsible nature. Uncle Da'ash is an honest and confident man. Maqbool is a kind, caring, and cheerful man. Hamzah is a man with a tough and firm character. And Mr. Türkiye is an ambitious and decisive man.

## **Dominance in Gender Relations**

### **1. Gender Dominance in the Relationship between Bibi and Barakah**

Dominance in gender relations can first be seen in the relationship between the characters Bibi and Barakah. At 26.18 minutes of the *Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah* film, Barakah is seen meeting Bibi on the beach with a gift box on her lap. Barakah gave the gift to Bibi, but Bibi refused because the contents of the gift box were women's bras. According to Bibi, it was unreasonable for gifts to be given for the first time when meeting a woman. Bibi said gifts that could be given to women were roses, white for purity, red for passion and longing, and purple for new beginnings. According to Bibi, Barakah was an old-fashioned person who gave gifts like that.

At minute 35.27, Bibi met Barakah at the grocery store. Barakah started the conversation by saying he found a solution and would take Bibi's hand. Bibi replied curtly. Barakah said he was only proposing to Bibi, but Bibi answered she didn't want to hear that. Barakah replied that it was just a formality. Bibi responded that she was fed up with the hypocrisy that was being carried out, and asked Barakah if he thought that Bibi needed more fakeness. Barakah continued to answer that he was only proposing, and Bibi answered no. Bibi knew that Barakah was annoyed, but she also didn't want to go on like this. Hiding in an unsupported environment. Bibi wanted something real because she didn't want to deceive anyone. She also wanted to see Barakah normally, and in normal conditions.

At 39.35 minutes, Bibi calls Barakah and asks to go with him to Dubai. Barakah felt this was too fast. Bibi was annoyed with Barakah's answer and said Barakah was boring, classic, and spoke like her grandmother. At 1.11.46 minutes, Bibi accompanied Barakah in Barakah's car and vented her frustration about Madam Mayyada who scolded her. Bibi talked about being married to her father's cousin, and she was not her parents' daughter. Bibi is an adopted child. She felt she was just a golden trophy in their social theater. She thanked Barakah because finally her parents would have children and no longer need her. The role she played was finished and gone.

Bibi is annoyed because Barakah's neighbors are successful, and Barakah's neighborhood is capable of doing anything. Bibi was also angry just because she was blamed for the bra she was wearing. Bibi was angry while holding her bra strap. Barakah stopped the car trying to stop Bibi's actions and told her to calm down. Then Barakah asked if that was a push-up bra. Bibi who heard this became angry again and said that Barakah had dirty thoughts. She said everyone was very dirty. Then Bibi got out of the car and left Barakah. Bibi climbed the stairs on the side of the road and sat there, lamenting her life. Barakah got out of the car and walked across the street to

observe Bibi. Until night fell, Barakah still saw Bibi there sleeping and was approached by a passer-by to wake Bibi up and leave. Barakah only saw it from afar.

From these scenes, it can be seen that the gender relations that were built between men and women in the film *Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah* is domination, where the Bibi character dominates the Barakah character. Bibi has masculinity traits such as being firm in relationships. When Barakah gave a bra as a gift to Bibi, Bibi rejected the gift because what Barakah gave was inappropriate for a man who had just met a woman. Bibi suggested giving the gift to her sister and taught Barakah the appropriate gift to give to a woman.

In the scene when Barakah wants to hold Bibi's hand, Bibi firmly refuses because they are in an environment where everyone has many rules, and they cannot express themselves freely. In scene 39.35, Bibi calls Barakah to ask him to go, but Barakah refuses. A growing phenomenon is that a woman may go to the West, or perhaps even stay there because she knows how men meet their girlfriends outside, which is prohibited in her country. They oppose the system that prohibits women and men from meeting because two people who like each other need time to get to know each other. They love their country, but the big problem is the relationship between women and men. When two people who are in love meet outside, the Sharia police will come there. This shows that there is no freedom in the relationship between men and women who are not yet married, and in many ways, for women, it is very limited.

Barakah doesn't seem to understand the meaning of Bibi's conversation when Bibi tells about her family. It can be seen how Bibi's attitude dominates Barakah because she speaks loudly to Barakah. Then in scene 1.11.46, it can be seen that Bibi pouring out her anger on Barakah after arguing with Madam Mayyada. From the description above, it can be seen that Bibi's character dominates Barakah's character in their relationship. This means that the gender relations that are built are the dominance of women over men.

## 2. Gender Dominance in the Relationship between Bibi and Mr. Turkiye

At 59.30 minutes, Mr. Turkiye talked to Bibi about a job offer from a media company that offered her high rates. Mr. Turkiye feels this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that should not be missed. Seeing Bibi's hesitation, Mr. Turkiye insisted that it was financial, which Bibi would lose if she didn't accept, and it was time to say okay. But according to Bibi, money is not everything to her. Mr. Turkiye continued to reassure Bibi of this by saying that he has been in this field for 20 years and has produced most of his country's stars. But Bibi remained adamant. Bibi feels the company doesn't need her but wants followers on her Instagram, and all they care about are "likes and followers".

Then Bibi said she would delete her account at her family's request. Mr. Turkiye, who heard this, persuaded Bibi not to be influenced by her family. He felt that was nonsense and it was time for Bibi to show her face and charm, not just half of her face

that she always showed to the public. Mr. Turkiye said that if Bibi didn't want to, then he would take legal action and burden Bibi. From this dialogue, it can be seen that the gender relationship that is built between Bibi and Mr. Turkiye is the dominance of Mr. Turkiye over Bibi. In this scene, it can be seen that Mr. Turkiye continues to try to ask and persuade Bibi to accept the job offer.

### 3. Gender Dominance in the Relationship between Bibi and Hamzah

In the 1.09.14 minutes, Bibi's parents invite Bibi to talk about important matters in the family room. Bibi's father, Hamzah, started by saying that many things had changed, such as he and Mayyada were expecting a baby, and they were responsible to Bibi in the eyes of God. To guarantee Bibi's future, they will marry Bibi. But Bibi refused because she was not ready for marriage and was unable to commit. Hamzah said that if Bibi were to marry someone from their family, that way she would still be part of the family. Bibi will be married to Hamzah's brother because Bibi is a treasure for their family. Bibi rejected this because she was not ready to get married. Hamzah opposed Bibi's refusal and emphasized that he was the decision-maker in the family.

From this, it can be seen that the gender relations that were built were the dominance of men over women. As is known, Saudi Arabian society is a society that adheres to a patriarchal system. Therefore, women were not given much of a place in society, let alone to have opinions and expressions. Women's rights were limited, especially when talking about politics or culture. Women were considered figures of marriage and children. Women's opinions, thoughts, or feelings were not taken seriously.

### 4. Gender Dominance in the Relationship between Bibi and the Car Driver

At 07.04 minutes, Bibi was seen standing on the side of the road while drinking the coffee in her hand. A car approached Bibi and the driver suddenly asked for Bibi's telephone number. The Bibi who saw the man pulled the shawl around her shoulders over her head. The car driver continued to tease Bibi. He said Bibi was much "hotter" than the sun and offered to take Bibi. Bibi was angry and said "you want a hot? Take this," while dousing the driver's car with the coffee she had in her hand, and then leaving that place. From this scene, can be seen the firm attitude shown by Bibi that a woman is not easy to humiliate. From this it can be observed that the gender relations that were built were the dominance of women over men.

### **Subordination in Gender Relations**

At 17.58 minutes, Aunt Sa'diyyah came with Barakah's turban which had been washed and ironed in her hand, then gave it to Barakah. Barakah thanked him and immediately put on his turban. Aunt Sa'diyyah advised Barakah that Barakah was now an adult and needed a woman to take care of him and his house, such as ironing his turban every morning. She saw that Barakah had been daydreaming a lot lately. Only God will save him by giving him a nurturing woman who will complete him. Barakah responded by saying that he didn't want a nanny.

Aunt Sa'diyyah gave Barakah a blessed talisman, she just got it back from a woman after ten months. The talisman will heal from infertility, direct the lost, and connect with lovers. Bibi Sa'diyyah forced Barakah to take the talisman and told her to slaughter a sheep in the name of God, then sprinkle the talisman with sheep's blood, and forget to keep his intentions pure. Aunt Sa'diyyah explained that the talisman would bind him with his life partner for as long as God willed. Barakah took the talisman and walked away.

From the dialogue above, it can be seen that gender relations are built between men and women, where Bibi Sa'diyyah tries to control Barakah. Bibi Sa'diyyah seemed to be intimidating Barakah to look for a wife so that someone would look after him. She even gave Barakah an amulet to bind the woman he liked. Here it can be seen that the gender relations that are built are the dominance of women over men.

### **Equality in Gender Relations**

#### **1. Gender Equality in the Relationship Between Barakah and Bibi**

At 22.12 minutes, Bibi is seen together with Barakah in an art museum room that displays photographs. Bibi started the conversation by asking Barakah what brought him to the art museum, whether it was to check people's permits. Barakah denied Bibi's statement, he was there because of personal matters, and that he was a member of the national theater. Bibi was a little amazed and asked what Barakah was doing. Barakah answered that he was currently preparing a play entitled Hamlet. Bibi says Barakah will play the role of Hamlet well, then asks if it's on Instagram. Barakah answered no. And Bibi answered that it was strange.

Bibi asks Barakah what he believes in the art they are looking at. Barakah answered that he honestly didn't understand most of the works of art, and his last encounter with art was with oil paintings. If people call it art then it's art. He was sure he was missing something. Bibi replies that it was conceptual art, an art project based entirely on memory. Photographers take these photos to fight the forces of forgetfulness and marginalization. Bibi explained to Barakah that it was her followers and likes that gave her the main stage in the theater. Suddenly a man came and said that there were sharia police. He suggested the girls quickly exit through the other door. Before parting, Bibi gave Barakah her cell phone number so they could meet another time.

At 31.17 minutes, Barakah called Bibi and asked her to meet. Bibi replied that Barakah should not do anything like the teenager who approached her in front of the shop this afternoon. Barakah asked Bibi where they could meet. Bibi explained places they could go, such as having dinner at a restaurant, relaxing on the beach, or listening to music in the car. And in all these places there were always raids from the sharia police. Their choice of meeting was limited to supermarkets or pharmacies. At 50.33 minutes, Bibi called Barakah, telling him that Madam Mayyada wanted to meet Barakah, and explained that Barakah would meet them at the house on the beach. Barakah asked Bibi who Madam Mayyada was. Bibi replied that Madam Mayyada was her mother.

Barakah didn't believe it and asked Bibi again. Bibi also felt annoyed and reiterated that Madam Mayyada wanted to meet him.

At minute 56.13, Barakah invites Bibi to the roof of his neighborhood apartment to watch the celebration and chat together. During the conversation, Bibi admitted that her real name was Barakah, not Bibi. Barakah, who heard this, was shocked and felt it was impossible. Even though the name Barakah had a feminine side, he still felt strange. Bibi also felt the same way, but when she found out that Barakah's name was the same as hers, she felt that it was fate that brought two strange names together, and that was a blessing.

In the duration of 1.01.31, Barakah invited Bibi to go on a boat on the sea at night to give Bibi a birthday surprise. Bibi who got the shock was very moved and thanked Barakah for bringing her back to life, back to all freedom, air, and the smell of the sea. Bibi appreciates that very much. Barakah tried to hold Bibi's hand, but Bibi avoided it because she thought it was inappropriate. After all, they were still in the public area. Barakah didn't care about anyone because there were only two of them there, and he wanted to be with Bibi. Bibi asked Barakah's reason why Barakah did that. Barakah replied that Bibi could always express what she felt. But Bibi doesn't feel that way, she often feels isolated and alone in this world. Barakah replied, it's not that Bibi's cell phone doesn't stop ringing, then how can Bibi feel lonely? Bibi replied that she didn't care about that, and that made her feel more alone. And they spent the night enjoying the performance of musicians brought by Barakah.

On 01.22.24, Barakah saw Bibi sitting on a park bench and waved at him. Barakah started the meeting by asking how Bibi was. Bibi answered that her name was "Barakah", instead of "Bibi" because now Bibi uses her real name. Barakah said that if he was not Hamlet and did not seek revenge, he was playing Ophelia, a warm and loving female character. Barakah also explained about the bras that annoyed Bibi, that the bras were props that she used to wear in front of a crowd of officials and critics who came to see his drama performance.

Bibi explained that she was holding a press conference and introduced herself as Barakah Harith. She doesn't know her real father, this was who she was and she's not ashamed. She was proud to be part of the orphanage. Barakah teases Bibi by asking if they are serious about giving her two million. Bibi laughed and answered that half a million went to the agent half she got in the form of products, and the remaining one million was left. She said it was a blessing. Barakah said that he saw her name had become commercial and mainstream. So he decided to change his name to Bibi Urabi. They laughed together.

From the dialogues above, it can be seen that the relationship built between Barakah and Bibi was one of equality. This equality can be seen in scene 22.12, where Barakah and Bibi are seen talking to each other without anyone dominating them. Likewise in scene 31.17, where Bibi calls Barakah first, and they discuss places that they can visit, but all these places always have raids because their government is very strict about

unmarried couples. The same thing can also be seen in scene 50.33, namely when Bibi calls Barakah to ask him to come to her house because his mother wants to meet Barakah.

In scene 56.13, Barakah is seen taking Bibi together to the roof of the apartment in his neighborhood. They talked to each other about themselves without any distance between them. In scene 1.01.31, Barakah gives Bibi a birthday surprise, and Bibi responds enthusiastically. They spent time together on the ship and enjoyed their moments together. And when they met after the last fight which caused Bibi to misunderstand Barakah, they asked each other how things were going and discussed past things with a calm heart. This can be seen from Barakah and Bibi's interaction, which looks relaxed without involving any emotions at all, and both of them look comfortable in talking, neither of them dominates each other. It can be seen that the gender relations between men and women that occurred between Barakah and Bibi were equal.

## 2. Gender Equality in the Relationship Between Barakah and Madam Mayyada

At 51.25 minutes, Barakah comes to Bibi's family beach house and has a conversation with Madam Mayyada. Madam Mayyada started their conversation. Madam Mayyada talks about many things, for example, her life running smoothly, families, marriage, community service, travel life, and nightlife. Barakah listened to Madam Mayyada's explanation carefully. At minute 53.00, Madam Mayyada invites Barakah to talk outside the beach house and discusses Bibi who is very precious to her. Her husband wanted a boy because he hoped for a son to carry on their family name. Madam Mayyada added that she had some problems with fertility, which meant she was unable to get pregnant. Hearing about the fertility problem, Barakah suggested that Madam Mayyada meet with Aunt Sa'diyyah.

From the dialogue and scenes, it can be seen that there was equality being established between Barakah and Madam Mayyada. In the conversation, it can be seen that Madam Mayyada and Barakah do not dominate each other. In scene 51.25, Madam Mayyada is seen starting the conversation and saying how much she loves Bibi, she explains the worries of parents in general. Madam Mayyada appeared to be polite in speaking to Barakah and did not appear to be trying to intimidate him. In the 53.00 scene, when Madam Mayyada says things about fertility until Barakah understands what she means, Barakah advises her to meet Bibi Sa'diyyah because Bibi Sa'diyyah is a midwife in her neighborhood. From the interaction between Barakah and Madam Mayyada, it can be seen that the gender relations between men and women were equal.

## 3. Gender Equality in the Relationship Between Barakah and Aunt Sa'diyyah

On 01.21, Aunt Sa'diyyah came to Barakah's house carrying groceries in her hands and told Barakah to take them. She explained that God was blessing Madam Mayyada, because Madam Mayyada had a baby in her arms, and showed her generosity from



the groceries she gave to Barakah. Barakah responded that Madam Mayyada was very unselfish. She added that Madam Mayyada was having a baby shower and told him to come because Madam Mayyada always asked about him. The equality between Barakah and Aunt Sa'diyyah can be seen in this dialogue.

#### 4. Gender Equality in the Relationship Between Madam Mayyada and the Doctor

At 28.58 minutes, Madam Mayyada was seen standing looking outside the building. The doctor who was there explained that the results were still the same. Madam Mayyada asks what he means, she says that medicine has evolved and moved forward, while we were still stuck with the same results. She also talked about other countries such as India and China. Madam Mayyada also added that if people were being cured with herbal and alternative medicine, perhaps she could try it. The doctor replied by saying it had been 20 years and they ran the same test every six months and the results were always the same. However, the doctor suggested that Madam Mayyada could try it, but it was likely that anything in India would not be as good as what Madam Mayyada had tried in Germany and the United States. From the existing dialogue, it can be seen that there was equality in Madam Mayyada's interactions with the Doctor. In the scene where Mrs. Mayyada looks tired because she has done various things to be able to have children, the doctor has tried his best to advise Mrs. Mayyada with words of wisdom so that Mrs. Mayyada doesn't get too down. In this scene, it is not seen that one dominates the other.

### The Phenomenon of Gender Relations in Arab Society

Through studying gender relations in Arab society in the film *Baraqah Yuqabil Barakah*, several important notes can be taken. Firstly, there is a big problem in the relationship between women and men in Saudi Arabia, where there is no mention of equality or justice for women. Women cannot express themselves well. Women are required to submit to many restrictions, even too many restrictions. There are not many places for women in society, so it is not easy for women to develop. Women are prohibited from holding certain positions, such as president and the Shura Council, or holding positions in any ministry. The highest positions held by Saudi women so far are assistant chairman of the Shura Council, assistant minister, ambassador with ministerial rank, and director of a state university.<sup>54</sup> What is depicted in the film is the character Bibi who represents the voice of women in Saudi Arabia, but Bibi cannot do anything, and she cannot overcome the situation around her. Bibi is an unhappy and anxious woman, a symbol of most women.

Secondly, gender relations in Arab society in the past were considered better. In this film, the Arab society of the past is compared with the Arab society of today. The social variables represented in the film open up opportunities for women and changes

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<sup>54</sup> محمد مصطفى محمد إبراهيم، شروط عمل المرأة في النظام السعودي والشريعة الإسلامية، مجلة العلوم

القانونية، ٣٨ (٢)، 49-76، ٢٠٢٣، <https://jls.elmergib.edu.ly/index.php/jls>

related to women's empowerment and contribute greatly to the awareness and practices of Saudi women. As shown in the film, there is awareness among women about empowerment in various fields, such as legal, personal, economic, and social. Luluh Abd al-Hamid al-Naim's research results show that the highest dimension of Saudi women's empowerment is the personal dimension (8.9), then the legal dimension (8.5), followed by the social dimension (8.2), and finally the economic dimension (7.6).<sup>55</sup> However, in the film all this does not necessarily make gender relations better. Arab society in the past was freer and happier than Arab society today. This is shown through a collage of the history of Saudi Arabia through archive photos displayed.

Another thing that indicates unhappiness in society is the widespread interest in women today, the focus on their identity, increasing their status and strengthening their position in society, and their involvement in new meaningful roles, and thus these women go to work, relate, and interact with groups in society, all of these things cause women to acquire new patterns of behavior. Among these behavioral patterns there are various forms of criminal behavior in various aspects, types, and varieties, including money crimes (economic patterns), which include money theft, bad checks, forgery, embezzlement, commercial concealment, money laundering, and others. Of course, this was also triggered by the Government of Saudi Arabia through its 2030 vision which seeks to increase the percentage of Saudi women's participation in the labor market by 30%<sup>56</sup> and provide opportunities to make them true and effective partners for men.

Rapid urban growth and change accompanying changes in population, economic growth, and changing trends, such as changes in socio-economic structure and increasing population, changes in the family in terms of the size, function, and social center of its members, as well as the complexity of social identity, in addition to the emergence of television satellites, internet, and social media, all of this causes changes in the position, status, and employment of women and allows women to follow the policies set by the Saudi Government. All these changes pave the way for arrogance and criminal behavior in both men and women, with significant differences in individual propensity for arrogance and delinquency by gender. Most of the crimes committed in society are visible in Saudi society. These crimes are male crimes, but

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<sup>55</sup> لولوه عبد الحميد النعيم، دراسة المتغيرات الشخصية والاجتماعية المرتبطة بتمكين المرأة السعودية: دراسة ميدانية على

عينة من النساء في مدينة الأحساء بالمملكة العربية السعودية، *Journal of Human and Social Sciences (JHSS)*, 8(1), 117-134،

DOI: <https://journals.ajsrp.com/index.php/jhss> 2024، <https://doi.org/10.26389/AJSRP.W030923>،

<sup>56</sup> حنان أسعد خوج وني للي السيد عاشور "تعزيز دور المرأة العلمية السعودية في تحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة لرؤية

" 2023 تحسين الصورة الذهنية للمملكة نموذجاً"، *International Journal of Learning Management Systems*, 11 (2)،

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the participation of women involved in criminal behavior has become a phenomenon reserved for release to identify the crimes they committed.<sup>57</sup>

According to Hannan and Nelly, female crime is a real thing that cannot be ignored, because the image of women in society has changed. This is because women have gained several rights that they did not enjoy before, and then they are faced with the same pressures that men experience, and in the end, this can encourage them to take it out in the form of criminal behavior against individuals and society.<sup>58</sup> In the film *Baraqah Yuqabil Barakah*, the government, society, and women compare the past system with the current system. Then there is a scene where Barakah tries on women's clothing when she wants to play Ophelia in the play Hamlet. He doesn't look like a woman. These scenes contain statements and secretly speak about the oppression that occurs, not just the oppression of women.

Thirdly, the existing system does not support the establishment of good relationships between men and women, where there is no suitable place to meet in public spaces. In this film, Barakah and Bibi are depicted as not finding a suitable place to meet because the existing system prohibits couples from meeting in public spaces. Barakah and Bibi are against this system, they love their country, but the big problem is that two people who like each other need time to get to know each other. They cannot freely meet in public places, because there are sharia police everywhere. This shows that there is no freedom in developing relationships between men and women.

Fourthly, there was religious legitimacy in gender relations. The state is governed by religion, so rights were also legitimized by religion. Many things in society were limited by religious thinking, even though these restrictions were not a requirement from a religious perspective. Therefore, society must bear the consequences, and the majority of them were women. An example of this restriction is seen in the scene where Bibi drives a car, but only because she is wearing a mustache for a costume party. Besides, Bibi had to lower the curtain before she started dancing. In another scene, It can be seen a disappointed Barakah starting to question his adherence to the values he was instilled in.

## CONCLUSION

Through research conducted on the film *Barakah Yuqabil Barakah*, three forms of gender relations were found in Arab society, namely dominance, subordination, and equality. The form of dominance can be seen in several scenes and dialogues between the characters Bibi and Barakah, where the character Bibi dominates. The form of male dominance over women can be seen in the relationship between Bibi and Tuan Turkiye, as well as Bibi and Hamzah. The form of gender subordination relationship is the subordination of men to women, as in the relationship between Barakah and Aunt Sa'diyyah, and the subordination of women to men, as in the relationship

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<sup>57</sup> سارة بنت بركات مفاط الجوير ، "جريمة السرقة عند النساء في المجتمع السعودي" ، مجلة الخدمة الاجتماعية ، 70 (2)،

2021، 1270280، <https://search.mandumah.com/Record/1270280>

<sup>58</sup>حنان أسعد خوج وني للي السيد عاشور "تعزيز دور المرأة العلمية السعودية ...

between Bibi and Hamzah. Forms of gender equality between men and women can be seen in several scenes and dialogues, for example between Barakah and Bibi, Barakah and Mrs. Mayyada, Barakah and Bibi Sa'diyyah, and Mrs. Mayyada and the Doctor.

Through the patterns of gender relations in *Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah* film, several things can be concluded. First, there is a big problem in the relationship between women and men in Saudi Arabia, where there is no mention of equality or justice for women. Second, gender relations in Arab society in the past were considered better. In this film, the Arab society of the past is compared with the Arab society of today. Third, the existing system does not support the establishment of good relationships between men and women, where there is no suitable place for men and women to meet in public spaces. Fourth, there is religious legitimacy in gender relations. The state is governed by religion, so rights are also legitimized by religion.

Finally, considering that this research is about gender relations in Arab society, the results of this research can be used to see the form of social relations between men and women in Arab society in the world which is increasingly changing day by day. And because this research is only limited to gender relations in Arab society as presented in the film *Barakah Yuqâbil Barakah* through a literary sociology approach, it is still possible to carry out further research using other literary perspectives, for example, socio-psychological literature to find explanations regarding changes in relations gender in Arab society from the perspective of literary psychology.

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