

Feminine Values, Patriarchy, and the Struggle for Gender Equality in *Kim Ji-young: Born 1982*: A Cultural Feminist Analysis

Della Suci Delfiana

Universitas Dian Nuswantoro, Semarang,
Indonesia
dellasuci322@gmail.com

Neni Kurniawati

Universitas Dian Nuswantoro, Semarang,
Indonesia
neni.kurniawati@dsn.dinus.ac.id

Abstract

Kim Ji-young: Born 1982 represents the experiences of women navigating patriarchal gender norms in contemporary South Korean society. This study aims to examine how feminine values like empathy, patience, emotional resilience, and self-awareness help women achieve gender equality. A descriptive qualitative method was employed to analyse selected scenes and dialogues using concepts derived from Sally J. Scholz's cultural feminism. The primary data were collected from the film's visual narratives and dialogues. The secondary data were obtained from previous studies on cultural feminism and the socio-cultural context of South Korea. The findings show that patriarchal structures within the family, workplace, and the public sphere position women in subordinate roles while simultaneously encouraging forms of emotional and symbolic resistance. Instead of being perceived as a sign of fragility, feminine values are presented as a symbol of moral strength that allows the main character to keep her identity and dignity as a woman. These findings suggest that, within the film, feminine values function as sources of strength for the main character while navigating patriarchal gender norms.

Keywords: cultural feminism; gender inequality; identity; patriarchy; South Korea

INTRODUCTION

The film *Kim Ji-young: Born 1982* depicts the lived reality of South Korean women growing up within a deeply rooted patriarchal social system that has survived from traditional to modern society. The main character's birth year, 1982, does not merely indicate a point in time but also holds significant historical and cultural meaning in Korea. Women born during this period experienced South Korea's rapid economic development while also being affected by Confucian values that emphasize gender-distinct roles between men and women. According to Humairah (2025) in "*Nilai-Nilai Konfusianisme dan Stagnasi Perkembangan Gerakan Feminisme di Korea Selatan*," Confucianism plays an important part in determining gender roles and family

dynamics within Korean society. Since the Joseon Dynasty, Confucian-influenced cultural structures have positioned men as the primary authority figures, while women are expected to fulfill domestic responsibilities as obedient wives, mothers, and daughters. The perception of male superiority and female inferiority has become a cultural foundation that indirectly restricts women's opportunities to make independent life decisions. This patriarchal value system is continuously transmitted across generations, creating differences in behavior, status, and power between men and women, which ultimately forms a gender-based hierarchical structure (Sarwenda, 2017).

During the 1980s, South Korean society was transforming; however, these changes had

not yet fully transformed gender roles. Although women achieved more access to education and the workplace, traditional expectations remained that they should prioritize family over work. In the collectivist culture and male-dominated family system, women were portrayed as responsible for maintaining household harmony, while men were seen as the primary economic earners. Despite the growth of modern society, traditional gender roles remained dominant. This situation led to gender discrimination, especially in legal institutions, the entertainment industry, marriage, and the workplace (Chan, 2016). These situations also influenced social norms that regulate women's behavior from childhood to adulthood, requiring them to be caring, patient, and willing to make sacrifices for their family. Therefore, cultural background is an important basis for understanding how women's identities develop within a discriminatory and patriarchal social system.

Gender discrimination comes from a social system that accepts inequality between men and women as natural and unquestionable. It happens not only in the workplace and public spaces but also in families and in ordinary social interactions. Women are often treated differently from men, especially in terms of educational priorities and freedom of speech. When women enter the workforce, they are usually expected to retire following marriage or motherhood, leading to beliefs that they are less qualified for promotion. As a result, women often experience early career barriers because they believe marriage and motherhood prevent them from fully focusing on their job responsibilities (Zhang, 2025). Discrimination is also reflected in the domestic division of labor, where household responsibilities are regarded as a natural necessity for women, regardless of whether they also work outside the home. This issue is portrayed in *Kim Ji-young: Born 1982*,

which shows how women are pressured by family, the workplace, and society to adapt to roles that are often underestimated.

Women's discrimination in Kim Ji-young: Born 1982 is not always represented through physical violence but rather through verbal behaviors, institutional norms, and socially accepted expectations that appear normal but severely limit their freedom. Women are often portrayed as supporters of men's success rather than as people with their own identities and goals. Within the household, women are expected to be loving wives and daughters-in-law. In the workplace, they are often perceived as unstable due to marriage and motherhood. In public spaces, they are judged based on standards of femininity that require them to be gentle and non-disruptive (Ajizah & Khomisah, 2021). These types of discrimination cause ongoing psychological pressure and lead to the main character's internal personality conflict.

Kim Ji-young: Born 1982 highlights feminine values as a fundamental feature of its research into gender inequality. In cultural contexts, feminine values include compassion, empathy, patience, and emotional sensitivity. From a cultural feminist perspective, these values are not signs of weakness, but rather sources of moral strength and identity in responding to gender inequality. *Kim Ji-young*, as the main character, is depicted as a South Korean woman who struggles with a lot of gender discrimination and social pressure from childhood through marriage and motherhood. Despite these issues, she keeps trying to show care and empathy for her family and those around her. She also shows patience in fulfilling societal expectations as a perfect wife and mother, even as her individual identity gradually becomes suppressed.

The film depicts feminine values such as empathy for family and society in the context of injustice, patience as a coping mechanism under patriarchal pressure in daily life, emotional resilience in the presence of repeated gender discrimination, care and responsibility in domestic roles without losing self-awareness, and the courage to express emotions as a potential form of symbolic resistance. These values become an important part of Ji-young's identity as a woman living in a patriarchal society. However, she does not completely reject the roles given to her; she maintains her identity as an individual. In this sense, feminine values serve as a source of strength that enables her to maintain her humanity amid social constraints. This means feminine values are not just individual traits but also cultural processes that protect women's dignity in a system of inequality.

Cultural feminism provides a perspective that recognizes the value of qualities, experiences, and forms of knowledge traditionally associated with women. Rather than viewing femininity only as a product of patriarchal expectations, cultural feminism emphasizes the importance of women's experiences and the values developed through them. In this perspective, qualities such as care, empathy, responsibility, emotional awareness, and relational sensitivity can be understood as meaningful rather than inferior characteristics. However, recognizing these qualities does not mean that every expression of femininity automatically constitutes resistance to patriarchy. Depending on the social context, feminine values may be expressed through accommodation, coping, negotiation, or resistance.

Sally J. Scholz's cultural feminist perspective is particularly relevant to this study because it provides a framework for examining how

women's experiences and values traditionally associated with femininity can become meaningful in responding to gender inequality. Scholz's perspective gives importance to women's experiences and challenges the tendency to devalue characteristics associated with femininity. From this perspective, care, empathy, responsibility, and emotional expression can be examined as meaningful aspects of women's lives rather than as signs of weakness or passivity. Their relationship with resistance depends on how these values are experienced and negotiated within unequal social relations. This perspective differs from liberal feminism, which primarily emphasizes equal rights, individual freedom, and women's access to opportunities within existing social institutions, and from radical feminism, which focuses more directly on patriarchy as a fundamental system of women's oppression. Cultural feminism instead gives greater attention to the significance of women's experiences and qualities traditionally associated with femininity.

This framework is appropriate for analysing *Kim Ji-young: Born 1982* because the film does not portray Ji-young's response to gender inequality only through direct confrontation. Her experiences are also expressed through care for her family, emotional responses, self-awareness, responsibility, and attempts to negotiate her personal aspirations within patriarchal expectations. These experiences allow this study to examine not only whether Ji-young resists patriarchy, but also how feminine values shape different ways of responding to gender inequality. Therefore, Sally J. Scholz's cultural feminism provides an appropriate framework for examining the relationship between feminine values, everyday experiences, and Ji-young's

responses to patriarchal expectations in the film.

Previous studies on *Kim Ji-young: Born 1982* have analyzed the film from multiple perspectives. Kaestiningtyas, Safitri, and Amalia (2021) examined gender inequality in representation using Sara Mills' critical discourse analysis, focusing on the impact of patriarchal structures on women's lives. Debora (2023) applied Teun A. van Dijk's framework to explain women's resistance to male dominance through social pressures experienced as wives and mothers. Meanwhile, Saragih and Ningrum (2023) used Michel Foucault's theory of power to examine the female body as a socially controlled object within patriarchal culture. These studies demonstrate that the film represents gender inequality and women's struggles within a patriarchal society. However, previous studies have not specifically examined how feminine values can function as a source of strength and resistance to gender inequality. Therefore, this study focuses on the representation of feminine values and their role in women's resistance to gender inequality from a cultural feminist perspective.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to analyse the film as a cultural text, focusing on dialogues, scenes, and character actions that represent feminine values and gender inequality. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to analyse the film as a cultural text, focusing on dialogues, scenes, and character actions that represent feminine values and gender inequality. The primary data consisted of selected scenes, dialogues, character actions, and relevant visual elements from the film *Kim Ji-young: Born 1982* (2019). The secondary data consisted of books, journal articles, and previous studies related to

cultural feminism, Sally J. Scholz's feminist perspective, feminine values, patriarchy, and gender inequality. The analysis used a cultural feminist analytical design based on Sally J. Scholz's theory to interpret the representation of feminine values and their role in women's resistance to gender inequality. The analysis used a cultural feminist analytical design based on Sally J. Scholz's theory to interpret the representation of feminine values and their role in women's resistance to gender inequality.

The concept of cultural feminism, proposed by Scholz (2010), which emphasizes recognizing feminine values as a form of resistance to gender inequality, serves as the main theoretical foundation of this study. According to this perspective, qualities such as empathy, care, emotional strength, and the ability to build social relationships should not be viewed as signs of weakness but rather as strengths that enable women to confront gender injustice. In this study, feminine values were operationalized as qualities and experiences traditionally associated with femininity, including empathy, care, responsibility, self-awareness, emotional resilience, and emotional expression. These values were examined in relation to the gendered situations experienced by the main character. Women's struggles are not always expressed through direct resistance. Instead, they can be observed in how women live their daily lives and maintain their identities in the face of oppression by remaining self-aware and understanding who they are. Therefore, the analysis did not automatically classify every feminine value as resistance.

The responses represented in the selected scenes were examined as accommodation, coping, negotiation, resistance, or a combination of these forms, depending on the evidence presented in the film. Accommodation refers to continuing socially expected gender roles without directly

challenging them, coping refers to managing or enduring patriarchal pressure, negotiation refers to attempting to create space for personal interests within existing expectations, and resistance refers to explicitly questioning, challenging, or rejecting discriminatory treatment or patriarchal expectations. In this study, the researcher also focused on the main character's emotions and experiences as portrayed through scenes and dialogues relevant to the research topic. The selected scenes were determined based on their relevance to gender expectations, discrimination, gender inequality, feminine values, and the main character's responses to patriarchal pressure. After the data were collected, they were identified and categorized based on relevant themes, including feminine values in South Korean society, forms of discrimination against women, and efforts to resist such discrimination. The data were then coded by identifying the relevant feminine value, examining its function within the gendered situation, and determining the form of response represented in the scene before interpreting the data through Scholz's theory of cultural feminism. Finally, the collected data were analyzed using Scholz's theory of cultural feminism.

Visual elements were also examined in the selected scenes when they contributed to the interpretation of feminine values and gender inequality. The analysis considered relevant facial expressions, gestures, character positioning, interactions between characters, settings, and other visible details that supported the meaning of the dialogue and character actions. These visual elements were interpreted together with the dialogue, actions, and narrative context to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the representation of feminine values and gender inequality. To ensure the trustworthiness of the analysis, the researcher repeatedly

viewed the film and cross-checked the selected scenes, dialogues, character actions, visual elements, and timestamps against the original film. The categorization of feminine values and forms of response was reviewed to ensure that each interpretation was supported by observable evidence from the film. The findings were also compared with Scholz's cultural feminist perspective and relevant previous studies to reduce interpretations based solely on theoretical assumptions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Kim Ji-young: Born 1982 portrays the life of a South Korean woman growing up in a society where men continue to hold a dominant position, shaping how men and women are perceived. The main character, Kim Ji-young, experiences various forms of gender discrimination from childhood to adulthood. These experiences not only affect her relationships with others but also have a profound impact on her psychological well-being, making her increasingly aware of gender inequality and encouraging her to challenge it. Throughout the film, Ji-young's struggle is not always shown through confrontation. Instead, it is often expressed through the feminine values she embodies. Qualities such as empathy, patience, compassion, and emotional resilience become important sources of strength that help her cope with discrimination and continue her struggle for gender equality. Therefore, this analysis explores how feminine values are portrayed throughout the film and how they shape Ji-young's struggle against the patriarchal system.

The analysis does not assume that every representation of feminine values constitutes resistance. Instead, each response is examined according to the evidence presented in the relevant scene to determine whether it represents accommodation,

coping, negotiation, resistance, or a combination of these forms.

Representation of Gender Discrimination in Kim Ji-young's Life

Gender discrimination in the film is portrayed not only within the family but also in the workplace and public spaces. This reflects the strong influence of patriarchal culture in South Korean society. Through Ji-young's experiences, the film illustrates how women are often expected to give in, serve others, and adapt to the existing social system. These experiences gradually become the source of both emotional pressure and self-awareness, encouraging Ji-young to preserve her identity and dignity as a woman.

Gender Preference in the Family

Within the family setting, women are often assumed to bear the primary responsibility for doing household chores and caring for other family members. Meanwhile, men are still viewed favorably by society even when their contribution to domestic work is minimal. This situation indicates that patriarchal views continue to influence the division of roles within the family.

Mother-in-law: My son is a modern husband.

Ji-young: I do it all at home, mother.

(Kim Ji-young: Born 1982, Timestamp: 00:06:46-00:06:52)

The term 'modern husband,' uttered by Kim Ji-young's mother-in-law, reflects a subtle critique of modernity, one that tends to reject traditional values. This suggests that men's participation in domestic responsibilities is seen as optional rather than obligatory. This dialogue also reveals a paradox, as women (in this case, the mother-in-law) may also contribute to reinforcing discriminatory treatment of other women. Ji-young's calm response, which rejects the justification of gender inequality in household roles, represents a form of passive yet firm resistance. However, this response does not represent direct resistance because Ji-young

does not reject her domestic responsibilities or explicitly challenge the existing family arrangement. Her statement is better understood as a combination of accommodation and emerging negotiation: she continues to fulfil the role expected of her while simultaneously making the unequal distribution of domestic labor visible. This distinction shows that her awareness of inequality develops within, rather than completely outside, the existing domestic expectations. From the perspective of Scholz's cultural feminism, this experience is significant because care and responsibility, although traditionally associated with women's domestic roles, can also become a basis for recognizing and questioning gender inequality.

Working women often experience a double burden, as they are expected not only to perform professional duties outside the home but also to take full responsibility for domestic tasks. At the same time, patriarchal thinking still frames household work as inherently women's responsibility. As a result, men are often seen as not required to participate in domestic labor. This unequal burden frequently leads to both physical and emotional exhaustion for women, as they continue to hold the primary responsibility for managing the household (Althaaf et al., 2025).

Gender Discrimination in the Workplace

In the workplace, women often face different treatment compared to men, especially after they get married or have children. They are frequently perceived as less capable of fully committing to their jobs because they are assumed to prioritize family responsibilities. This perception shows that patriarchal stereotypes still influence women's opportunities to grow and obtain important positions in the workplace.

Ji-young: Why didn't you take me on your team?

Chief: The company wants a long-term team of over five years. It's hard for female

workers with marriage and parenting. Even if I took you on, it would've been hard on you. (Kim Ji-young: Born 1982, Timestamp: 00:27:13-00:27:33)

This scene shows that a woman's role as a wife or mother is often treated as an obstacle to career advancement. The belief that women cannot fully commit to work due to domestic responsibilities, while men are not judged by the same standard, forms the foundation of the patriarchal system. This also reflects how capitalist structures and sexist attitudes reinforce each other by limiting women's access to strategic positions and restricting their professional development and potential. Such workplace stereotypes often become barriers for women to receive promotions, as there is still a widespread assumption that women are not suitable for leadership positions (Althaaf, et. al., 2025).

In this particular scene, however, the discriminatory assumption comes primarily from the employer rather than from an explicit response by Ji-young. Therefore, the scene itself is better interpreted as a representation of structural gender discrimination rather than direct resistance. Her later statement, "I know I can do the job well," provides clearer evidence of resistance because she directly challenges the assumption that marriage and parenting determine her professional ability. From Scholz's cultural feminist perspective, this contrast is important because it shows how Ji-young's self-awareness develops in response to an experience of gender discrimination and becomes more explicitly expressed in the subsequent interaction.

Gender Role Expectations in the Household

In household life, women are often expected to prioritize their roles as wives and mothers over their personal interests. Women's desire to work or have a life outside the home is frequently restricted by family rules and

expectations. This condition shows that patriarchal culture still influences women's freedom to make their own life choices.

Ji-young: Should I work at a bakery? The one down the street?

Husband: Is that what you want? Not. It's hard enough raising A-yeong.

(Kim Ji-young: Born 1982, Timestamp: 00:37:12-00:37:32)

This scene shows that women are frequently made to feel that they require permission to have personal freedom within the house. However, Ji-young resists this pressure by questioning and expressing doubt, demonstrating her awareness of inequality within marriage, even though it violates the socially accepted ideal of equality in household relationships. Nevertheless, her response is more accurately classified as negotiation rather than direct resistance. Ji-young does not explicitly reject her husband's decision; instead, she proposes the possibility of working and attempts to find a way to accommodate her personal interest within the existing household responsibilities. Her response therefore demonstrates an effort to create space for herself without completely rejecting the expectations placed upon her. From Scholz's cultural feminist perspective, this negotiation is relevant because Ji-young's personal experiences and awareness of her own needs become meaningful in responding to patriarchal expectations. This interpretation is consistent with Baruna and Lestari (2022), who show that the film represents patriarchal expectations through Ji-young's increasing domestic and childcare responsibilities.

Baruna and Lestari (2022) explain that in the film, patriarchy is portrayed through Ji-young's life, in which a woman is expected to focus more on domestic chores and childcare after marriage and childbirth, leaving little time for herself. In addition, her decision to

work outside the home is strongly restricted by the patriarchal family structure.

Patriarchal Expectations Toward Women

In a patriarchal culture, women are frequently expected to prioritize the needs of their husbands and families over their own interests or future ambitions. As a result, women's sacrifices are regarded as natural following marriage. This stereotype frequently makes women feel guilty for wanting to return to work or pursue a life outside of their household responsibilities.

Ji-young: My former boss called me to work for her.

Mother-in-law: How could you do this to him?

Ji-young: I can explain.

Mother-in-law: Don't hinder his career! Use your head!

(Kim Ji-young: Born 1982, Timestamp: 01:18:33-01:18:53)

Based on this scene, it is clear that a woman's role as a wife or mother is frequently considered a barrier to her career growth. The assumption that women cannot fully commit to their employment due to household responsibilities, while men are not held to the same standard, reflects the unequal treatment created by the patriarchal system. This situation also shows how patriarchal values and sexist attitudes combine to restrict women's possibilities for career progression and prevent them from realizing their full potential. Kaestningtyas, Safitri, and Amalia (2021) explain, using Critical Discourse Analysis, that women are frequently connected with an assumption that they should stay at home until marriage and that domestic responsibilities naturally belong to them. This perspective is expressed in the mother-in-law's statement, which implies that a husband's career must be a priority over a woman's career. These standards show how women have long been taught to prioritize the needs of men and their families over their own interests and career

goals. Ji-young's statement, "I can explain," does not yet demonstrate a direct rejection of this expectation. Instead, it indicates an attempt to communicate and negotiate her position within the family. Therefore, this scene is better understood as familial pressure followed by an attempt at negotiation rather than successful resistance. From Scholz's cultural feminist perspective, the scene demonstrates how women's experiences within traditionally defined family roles can become a site for recognizing and questioning unequal expectations. As a result, women's sacrifices are still considered normal in a patriarchal culture.

Verbal Harassment in Public Spaces

Women frequently receive negative comments and judgments in public places, especially when they are perceived to be incongruous with society's expectations of the ideal woman. Their presence in public may be perceived as disturbing, especially if they are moms accompanied by their children. This situation shows how patriarchal culture not only restricts women in the household and workplace, but also influences how they are treated in everyday social life.

Guy: What a nuisance. Why not drink coffee at home?

Others: What a vermin-like mom.

(Kim Ji-young: Born 1982, Timestamp: 01:46:37-01:47:52)

This scene shows that women are frequently subjected to verbal harassment in public, especially when they do not meet society's standards of being kind, patient, and self-sacrificing. Ji-young is described as a "vermin-like mom" because she appears in public with her child and is perceived as a nuisance by others. From the perspective of cultural feminism, Ji-young's response is important because it shows that women's emotions are a valid and meaningful source

of strength in resisting symbolic oppression. It also reveals that resistance can develop from emotional power rather than conflict. In this scene, the response can be classified more clearly as resistance because Ji-young directly questions the judgment imposed on her and refuses to accept the insulting label attached to her identity as a mother. Unlike the domestic scenes in which she mainly accommodates or negotiates existing expectations, she explicitly challenges the discriminatory treatment directed at her. This distinction demonstrates that the film presents different degrees and forms of response to patriarchal pressure rather than portraying every feminine value as resistance. Previous research on sexism in *Kim Ji-young: Born 1982* showed that women are frequently portrayed as weak and powerless, while those who do not fit the image of the ideal mother become targets for criticism. The film also depicts how verbal abuse and constant public critique become part of a patriarchal system that controls women's behavior and presence in public spaces. Through this representation, this film implies that women experience not just physical kinds of violence, but also social pressure that restricts their freedom in public life.

Feminine Values as Sources of Strength

Kim Ji-young: Born 1982 shows that women's struggles are not necessarily reflected in major acts of resistance or aggressive actions. Instead, they can be observed in the feminine values that women represent in their daily lives. In the film, feminine values such as empathy, care, responsibility, self-awareness, emotional resilience, and courage appear as important sources of strength for Kim Ji-young as she confronts social pressure and South Korea's patriarchal culture. These values help her to realize the injustice she experiences while

maintaining her identity and dignity as a woman.

From the perspective of Sally J. Scholz's cultural feminism, these qualities are significant because characteristics traditionally associated with femininity are not treated as inferior or merely supportive traits. Instead, they can become meaningful resources through which Ji-young understands her experiences, maintains her sense of identity, and responds to gendered expectations. However, the film shows that these values can operate through different forms of response, including coping, negotiation, accommodation, and resistance, depending on the situation.

Empathy, Care, and Responsibility in Responding to Domestic Burdens

Gender discrimination in the household is reflected in the unequal division of domestic roles, with women expected to carry the full responsibility for household chores despite physical and mental tiredness. In this situation, Ji-young keeps showing empathy and responsibility for her family while becoming more aware of the unreasonable expectations placed on her.

Ji-young: I'm really tired these days. Your mother would be furious. And I do all the work, not you.

(Kim Ji-young: Born 1982, Timestamp: 00:05:00-00:05:06)

This scene shows how women's household work is typically taken for granted and disregarded, but a husband's role is considered exceptional. In this situation, Ji-young handles her roles as a wife and mother with care and dedication. At the same time, she begins to express her frustration with this unfair treatment in a calm but assertive manner. However, her continued fulfillment of domestic responsibilities indicates that this scene is not an example of direct resistance. It is better understood as a combination of

accommodation and coping, with an emerging awareness of the unequal burden she experiences. Her expression of tiredness becomes important because it makes the unequal distribution of domestic labor visible, even though she does not yet reject the role itself.

Ji-young's response proves that empathy and responsibility are not just a reflection of a woman's commitment but also means to maintain her dignity and humanity in a male-dominated culture. This finding is compatible with Hyojeong Byun's (2021) care ethics perspective, which emphasizes the importance of care and responsibility as meaningful aspects of women's experiences. This interpretation is also supported by Ajizah and Khomisah (2021), who discuss women's roles in domestic and public spaces from a gender-aware perspective.

Self-Awareness as Resistance to Workplace Discrimination

Gender discrimination in the workplace is frequently defined as an assumption that women are unable to completely commit to their careers because they are expected to prioritize marriage, motherhood, and family responsibilities in the future. As a result, women are typically judged on their gender roles rather than their skills, qualifications, and professional potential. In Kim Ji-young: Born 1982, Ji-young gradually realizes that such treatment is an example of a patriarchal culture that restricts women's career success.

Employee: It's hard for female workers with marriage and parenting. Even if I took you on, it would have been hard on you.

Ji-young: I know I can do the job well.

(Kim Ji-young: Born 1982, Timestamp: 00:27:26-00:27:35)

This scene shows how women are frequently judged based on their expected roles as wives and mothers, rather than their abilities,

qualifications, and commitment to their work. The company's statement reflects a common gender stereotype that portrays motherhood as an obstacle to women's career growth. However, Ji-young's response highlights her growing understanding of her own abilities and worth. Rather than accepting the assumption that restricts her potential, she forcefully argues that she is capable of doing the job effectively. Her response reflects her awareness that who she is shouldn't impact her career dignity. Unlike the earlier domestic scenes, this response provides direct textual evidence of resistance because Ji-young explicitly rejects the assumption that marriage and motherhood determine her professional ability. She does not merely cope with or negotiate the stereotype; she directly asserts her competence against the discriminatory assumption.

This situation highlights self-awareness as a feminine value that may be used to fight patriarchal stereotypes. This interpretation is supported by Bae (2024), who discusses how Ji-young's experiences of gender inequality can transform previously unspoken experiences into action. Ji-young teaches herself by understanding her own experiences and capabilities, which are frequently connected with feminine values, such as emotional awareness, reflection, and self-confidence. Her self-awareness allows her to question gender-related boundaries and challenge the idea that women must give up a career to fulfill family responsibilities. As a result, self-awareness becomes an important feminine value, enabling women to resist discrimination and preserve their dignity, confidence, and sense of identity.

Emotional Resilience as a Feminine Value in Resisting Patriarchal Domestic

Patriarchal culture is also reflected in domestic life, where women frequently do

not have complete freedom to make decisions about their own lives. A woman's choices are usually influenced or even controlled by her husband or family. In this situation, Ji-young shows emotional resilience by pursuing her own ambitions despite the pressures and expectations of those around her.

Ji-young: Should I work at a bakery?

Husband: Don't do it.

Ji-young: It would just be in the morning.

Husband: Who told you to work part-time?

(Kim Ji-young: Born 1982, Timestamp: 00:37:12-00:37:32)

This scene shows how patriarchal culture frequently impacts women's decisions inside their families. Although her husband immediately dismisses her choice of working, Ji-young calmly explains that the role only requires her to work in the mornings. Instead of arguing or giving up, she continues to communicate what she wants in a respectful and calming way. This response is better classified as negotiation rather than direct resistance. Ji-young does not openly reject her husband's decision; instead, she proposes a compromise by explaining that she would only work in the morning. Her persistence shows that she is attempting to preserve her personal interest while still responding to the expectations within her marriage. Therefore, the scene demonstrates an early form of negotiation and self-assertion rather than complete rejection of patriarchal authority.

From the perspective of Sally J. Scholz's cultural feminism, this emotional resilience can be understood as a feminine value because cultural feminism recognizes traditionally feminine qualities, such as care and emotional strength, as meaningful rather than inferior. In this scene, Ji-young's emotional resilience allows her to express her wishes and maintain her sense of self while

responding to patriarchal expectations. This reflects emotional resilience as a feminine value, as Ji-young commits to her goals despite the pressures she confronts. This calm persistence shows how women can resist patriarchal norms through emotional resilience while keeping their dignity and sense of self.

Expressing Feelings as a Form of Symbolic Resistance

In a patriarchal culture, women are frequently expected to be silent, patient, and tolerant of their situation without openly expressing their problems. However, this film shows how women's disposition to express their feelings and experiences can become an aspect of symbolic resistance to gender inequality.

Mother-in-law: Will you bring some food and dessert over?

Ji-young: Why make Ji-young serve your daughter, too?

(Kim Ji-young: Born 1982, Timestamp: 00:10:46-00:12:01)

This scene shows Ji-young actually expressing her tiredness and frustration, which she had kept hidden due to the pressures placed on her as a wife, mother, and daughter-in-law. She feels she is losing the ability to be herself because her identity is continuously changed by the social roles demanded of her. From the perspective of Sally J. Scholz's cultural feminism, Ji-young's emotional expression can be understood as a form of feminine strength because her feelings and personal experiences become meaningful in responding to patriarchal expectations. Rather than viewing emotional expression as a sign of weakness, cultural feminism recognizes the value of traditionally feminine experiences and qualities. In this scene, Ji-young's willingness to express her emotions allows her to question the unequal treatment she experiences and assert her identity. This

can be interpreted as symbolic resistance because Ji-young does not simply endure the unequal expectation placed upon her; she openly questions why she is expected to serve her sister-in-law. Her emotional expression therefore functions as an act of questioning rather than merely an emotional reaction. Her courage to express her emotions becomes an important aspect of resisting and defending her identity and dignity as a woman.

Emotional Strength in Facing Verbal Harassment in Public Spaces

Women in public spaces are frequently exposed to verbal harassment when they are perceived to fall short of society's expectations of the ideal woman in a patriarchal culture. This film shows how women try to maintain their dignity even when they suffer direct verbal abuse and harsh judgment from others.

Guys: What a mess. What a vermin-like mom.

Ji-young: Excuse me. Do you know me? Why am I a vermin-like mom? Don't treat me like an insect. You saw me for less than 10 minutes. What do you know about me to insult me?

(Kim Ji-young: Born 1982, Timestamp: 01:47:09-01:47:36)

This scene shows how Ji-young is criticized just because she appears in public with her child. Instead of remaining silent, Ji-young asks why others quickly judge her based on a short impression. Her response portrays her struggle against the discriminatory stereotypes that women frequently confront in society. She asks to be treated as a human deserving of respect and refuses to accept being judged because of her role as a mother. In this case, Ji-young shows her emotional power and resilience by defending herself without turning to violence or impulsive anger. Her response shows that women deserve to be respected as individuals, not just for their social roles and responsibilities.

From the perspective of Sally J. Scholz's cultural feminism, this response can be understood as an expression of feminine strength because women's emotional experiences and traditionally feminine qualities are recognized as meaningful sources of strength rather than signs of weakness. Ji-young's ability to express her feelings and defend her dignity demonstrates how emotional strength can function as a form of resistance to patriarchal judgment. The response can be classified as direct verbal resistance because Ji-young explicitly rejects the insulting judgment and demands that others justify their treatment of her. Unlike accommodation or coping, she does not remain silent or simply endure the judgment; she actively challenges the assumptions made about her as a mother. The film also highlights how public judgment and constant oversight of women are examples of patriarchal systems that restrict women's freedom in their daily lives.

Feminine Values as the Foundation of Gender Equality

Kim Ji-young: Born 1982 proves that feminine values are important to women's pursuit of gender equality. Throughout the film, values such as empathy, self-awareness, emotional strength, responsibility, and resilience help women protect their identity and dignity regardless of patriarchal society norms. As stated by Lee Youngju (2024), this reflects the traditional social values of South Korea, in which women were frequently expected to prioritize marriage and family over higher education. They were urged to show traditional traits such as obedience, devotion, and respect for their husbands and parents-in-law. As a result, women's career and personal growth prospects were usually restricted, and domestic responsibilities were regarded as their primary role. In this context, the film shows that achieving gender equality requires not only bold resistance but

also feminine values that support women in defending their identity, dignity, and equal rights in society.

However, the findings suggest that feminine values do not function in a single or uniform way. In Ji-young's experiences, care and responsibility are often associated with accommodation and coping, her attempt to return to work demonstrates negotiation, while her assertion of professional ability and her response to public harassment provide clearer examples of resistance. From Scholz's cultural feminist perspective, these different responses demonstrate that traditionally feminine values and experiences can become meaningful resources for maintaining identity and responding to gender inequality in different ways. This finding also extends previous studies that have primarily discussed patriarchy, gender discrimination, and women's oppression in the film by highlighting how feminine values are connected to the different ways Ji-young responds to these conditions.

CONCLUSION

Kim Ji-young: Born 1982 depicts gender inequality through Ji-young's experiences in the household, workplace, and public spaces. The analysis shows that patriarchal expectations place Ji-young in subordinate roles and shape her experiences as a wife, mother, and daughter-in-law. These expectations influence her choices, relationships, and opportunities, particularly in relation to domestic responsibilities, career development, and social judgment.

The findings indicate that feminine values, including empathy, care, responsibility, self-awareness, emotional resilience, and confidence in expressing personal experiences, are represented as meaningful aspects of Ji-young's responses to gender inequality. However, these values do not always result in direct resistance. Her

responses include accommodation, coping, negotiation, and, in certain situations, explicit resistance. For example, her willingness to negotiate her desire to work reflects an attempt to maintain her personal interests within domestic expectations, while her statement that she can perform a job well and her response to public harassment represent more explicit forms of verbal resistance.

Thus, the film presents feminine values not simply as characteristics of femininity, but as meaningful resources through which Ji-young maintains her identity and dignity while responding to patriarchal expectations. The contribution of this study lies in providing a cultural feminist perspective on the representation of feminine values in relation to gender inequality in *Kim Ji-young: Born 1982*. While previous studies have largely examined the film in terms of patriarchy, gender discrimination, oppression, and the representation of women, this study highlights how feminine values and everyday experiences can shape different responses to patriarchal expectations. By applying Sally J. Scholz's cultural feminism, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of gender inequality by showing that responses to patriarchal pressure are not limited to direct resistance, but may also involve accommodation, coping, negotiation, and resistance. In this way, the study connects the representation of feminine values with the broader issue of how gender inequality is experienced and responded to in everyday life.

REFERENCES

- Aini, A., Winangsih, R., & Kurniawati, R. N. K. (2022). *Representasi budaya patriarki dalam drama Korea "Something in the Rain"* (Skripsi, Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik).

- <https://eprints.untirta.ac.id/id/eprint/15444>
- Althaaf, R. R., Achdiani, Y., & Fatimah, S. N. (2025). Perlawanan perempuan melawan patriarki menuju transformasi sosial. *Jurnal Media Akademik (JMA)*, 3(12).
<https://doi.org/10.62281/bfdzcyj9>
- Amalia, G., Kaestiningtyas, I., & Safitri, A. (2021). Representasi Gender Inequality dalam Film Kim Ji-Young, Born 1982 (Analisis Wacana Kritis Sara Mills)., 10, 48-61.
<https://doi.org/10.33366/jisip.v10i1.2241>
- Amalia, S., Abidin, Z., & Kusumaningrum, R. (2022). Konfusianisme dalam film *Kim Ji Young Born 1982*: Perspektif semiotika. *Jurnal Komunikasi Universitas Garut: Hasil Pemikiran dan Penelitian*, 8(1), 794–804.
<http://journal.uniga.ac.id/index.php/JK/article/view/1291>
- Aminah, S. (2012). Gender, politik, dan patriarki kapitalisme dalam perspektif feminis sosialis. *Jurnal Politik Indonesia*, 1(2), 1–5.
<http://journal.unair.ac.id/filerPDF/1-5%20Siti%20Aminah.pdf>
- Ajizah, N., & Khomisah, K. (2021). Aktualisasi perempuan dalam ruang domestik dan ruang publik dari perspektif sadar gender. *Az-Zahra: Journal of Gender and Family Studies*, 2(1), 59-73.
<https://doi.org/10.15575/azzahra.v2i1.11908>
- Baruna, Y. A. P., & Lestari, C. S. N. (2022). Patriarchy behind *Kim Ji-Young, Born 1982*: A biographical approach. *Lingua*, 17(2).
<https://www.academia.edu/download/100368410/pdf.pdf>
- Bae, J. J. A. (2024). Transforming the Unsaid into Action in Kim Jiyoung, Born 1982. *university of toronto quarterly*, 93(1), 23-41.
<https://utppublishing.com/doi/abs/10.3138/utq.93.01.02>
- Byun, H. (2021). Care-focused Feminism, Care Ethics, and Feminine Artistry in Willa Cather's The Professor's House. *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 13(2).
<https://rupkatha.com/V13/n2/v13n202.pdf>
- Chan, R. (2016). Gender discrimination in South Korea. *The McGill International Review*.
<https://www.mironline.ca/gender-discrimination-in-south-korea-the-mcgill-international-review>
- Debora, E. B. (2023). Kontra Hegemoni Patriarki oleh Perempuan di Korea Selatan dalam Film Kim Ji Young Born 1982. *CaLLs (Journal of Culture, Arts, Literature, and Linguistics)*, 9(1), 155-170.
<https://e-journals.unmul.ac.id/index.php/CALLS/article/download/8968/5293>
- Duriana, E., & Junaedi, F. (2022). Representasi Stereotip Perempuan Pada Film Kim Ji Young, Born 1982 (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta).
<https://eprints.ums.ac.id/id/eprint/100622>
- Febriyanti, R. I. S. Representasi Peran Domestik Ibu Rumah Tangga Dalam Budaya Korea Selatan Dalam Film Kim Ji Young, Born 1982 (2019).
<https://e-journal.unair.ac.id/MEDKOM/article/download/33571/25943>
- Herlambang, M. (2023). Representasi Seksisme dalam Film Kim Ji-Young: Born 1982. *Tuturlogi: Journal of Southeast Asian Communication*, 3(3), 150-167.
<https://tuturlogi.ub.ac.id/index.php/tuturlogi/article/view/13589>

- Humairah, S. S., & Dewi, A. U. (2025). Nilai-nilai Konfusianisme dan stagnasi perkembangan gerakan feminisme di Korea Selatan. *Padjadjaran Journal of International Relations*, 7(1), 40–54. <https://jurnal.unpad.ac.id/padjar/article/view/54113>
- Irwan, I., Siska, F., Zusmelia, Z., & Meldawati, M. (2022). Analisis perubahan peran dan fungsi keluarga pada masyarakat Minangkabau dalam teori feminisme dan teori kritis. *Satwika: Kajian Ilmu Budaya dan Perubahan Sosial*, 6(1), 191–205. <https://ejournal.umm.ac.id/index.php/JI/CC/article/view/19383>
- Isnaini, H., Khaerunnisa, S., & Khotimah, K. K. (2023). Analisis kepribadian Kim Ji Young dalam budaya patriarki: Analisis teori Sigmund Freud dalam film *Kim Ji Young, Born 1982*. *Morfologi: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan, Bahasa, Sastra dan Budaya*, 1(6), 48–58. <https://journal.aspirasi.or.id/index.php/morfologi/article/view/82>
- Jung, H. (2021). *Kim Ji-young, Born 1982*, revisited. *Journal of Asian Sociology*, 50(1), 203–246. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27011186>
- Kurniawati, N. (2011). *Pencitraan perempuan: Pendekatan kultural feminis terhadap cerpen “Lihun” karya Luxun*. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/295522850.pdf>
- Larasati, W. P., & Anzari, P. P. (2021). Marginalisasi perempuan dalam ranah publik (analisis wacana kritis Sara Mils dalam film *Kim Ji Young Born 1982*). *Jurnal Integrasi dan Harmoni Inovatif Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*, 1(7), 860-865. <https://journal3.um.ac.id/index.php/fis/article/download/764/784>
- Lee, Y. (2024). *Feminine Technologies, Women Users, and Female Bodies in South Korea, 1950–2000* (Doctoral dissertation). <https://tuprints.ulb.tu-darmstadt.de>
- Lestari, C., & Baruna, Y. (2023). Patriarchy Behind Kim Ji-Young, Born 1982: A Biographical Approach. *LiNGUA: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa dan Sastra*. <https://doi.org/10.18860/ling.v17i2.17460>
- Mellinia, W., & Sary, K. A. (2023). Representasi feminisme dalam film *Kim Ji-young, Born 1982*. *Literasi: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 1(1). <https://ejournal.mercubuana-yogya.ac.id/index.php/ilkom/article/view/3023>
- Rasaski, K. C., & Dewi, S. (2023). Kritik epistemologi feminis: Upaya de-westernisasi ilmu pengetahuan dalam perkembangan konsep feminisme di Korea Selatan. *JiIP - Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan*, 6(3), 1923–1935. <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v6i3.1430>
- Riyadi, S. D., & Fauziah, N. (2022). Representasi budaya patriarki di Korea Selatan dalam film *Kim Ji Young Born 1982*. *Kinesik*, 9(3), 291–305. <https://jurnal.fisip.untad.ac.id/index.php/kinesik/article/view/427>
- Saragih, O. K., & Ningrum, W. S. (2023). Tubuh perempuan di balik jeruji budaya patriarki (Telaah wacana kritis Michel Foucault terhadap film *Kim Ji-Young: Born 1982*). *SEIKAT: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Politik dan Hukum*, 2(4), 427-434. <https://ejournal.45mataram.ac.id/index.php/seikat/article/download/765/631>
- Sarwenda, D. (2017). *Representasi perempuan dalam budaya patriarki (Analisis semiotika pada film Veer Zaara karya Yash Chopra)* [Skripsi, Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang]. <https://onsearch.id/Record/IOS4109.45860>

- Savero, I. P. (2021). *Pola komunikasi keluarga dalam pembentukan budaya patriarki di Korea Selatan (Analisis semiotika Roland Barthes pada film "Kim Ji-young, Born 1982")* [Skripsi, Universitas Sebelas Maret]. <https://digilib.uns.ac.id/dokumen/detail/90646/>
- Simanullang, H. S. Y. (2024). *Kontribusi feminisme melalui film Barbie dalam melawan patriarki di Korea Selatan* (Disertasi, Universitas Kristen Indonesia). <http://repository.uki.ac.id/15814/>
- Suci, F. N. K. (2021). *Representasi budaya patriarki masyarakat Korea Selatan dalam film Kim Ji-Young Born 1982* [Skripsi, Universitas Semarang]. <https://eskripsi.usm.ac.id/files/skripsi/G31A/2018/G.331.18.0037/G.331.18.0037-15-File-Komplit-20220301092452.pdf>
- Yusaini, A. P., Belasunda, R., & Hendiawan, T. (2021). Analisis semiotika nilai moral menurut ajaran Konfusianisme dalam film *Parasite*. *eProceedings of Art & Design*, 8(6). <https://openlibrarypublications.telkomuniversity.ac.id/index.php/artdesign/article/view/16739>
- Rahmah, S., Setiawati, E., Sukmawan, S., & Darihastining, S. (2020). Patriarchal oppression in Kim Ji-Yeong, born 1982, by Cho Nam Joo: a feminist literary study. *KnE Social Sciences*, 390-411. <https://knepublishing.com/index.php/KnE-Social/article/download/7428/13153>
- Siani, E. T., Firdausi, I. A., & Lena, M. (2022). Representation of Women's Role in Cultural Patriarchy in the Film *Kim Ji Young, Born 1982*. *Aspiration Journal*, 3(2), 151-173. <http://aspiration.id/index.php/asp/article/view/79>
- Wulandari, W., & Dewi, T. U. (2024). Representasi Ketertindasan Perempuan Dalam Film *Kartini* dan *Kim Ji Young, Born 1982*: Sebuah Kajian Sastra Bandingan. *Jurnal Ilmiah Wahana Pendidikan*, 10(21), 811-818. <http://jurnal.peneliti.net/index.php/JIW/P/article/view/8524>
- Zhang, R. X. (2025). *Racing Against a Career-Fertility Countdown: The Prospective Motherhood Penalty and Gendered Ageism in China's Workplace*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.70082>