

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the general description of the research. This chapter consists of five components, they are research background, statements of problem, objectives of the research, research significances, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background

Men, in a contemporary world, is becoming more and more dynamics. The role of men in today's society is evolving in response to changing social, economic, and cultural dynamics. Traditionally, societal expectations placed a strong emphasis on men as providers, protectors, and leaders within their families and communities. The task for gender equality policy is to build on men's growing concern with gender change, and find ways of including issues about men and boys in gender and development policies, without weakening the effectiveness of those policies for the advancement of women and girls (Connell, 2003, p. 15). In contemporary society, men are increasingly encouraged to embrace a wider range of roles and behaviors beyond traditional notions of masculinity. This includes nurturing and caregiving roles within the family, active participation in household chores and childcare, and collaboration with their partners in decision-making processes. Moreover, men are also encouraged to express their emotions openly and seek support when needed, challenging the stereotype of stoicism and emotional detachment (Beynon, 2002, p. 28).

Furthermore, there is growing recognition of the importance of men's role in promoting gender equality and challenging harmful gender stereotypes and behaviors. Men are increasingly called upon to be allies in the fight against sexism, misogyny, and gender-based violence (Halberstam, 2019, p. 38). This involves actively listening to and amplifying the voices of women, challenging toxic masculinity within their own communities, and advocating for policies and practices that promote gender equity and social justice. That, also applied in

literature. The role of men in literature has been diverse and multifaceted, reflecting the complexities of masculinity across different cultures, historical periods, and literary genres. In many traditional narratives, men have been depicted as protagonists who embody traits such as strength, courage, and resilience (Rowland, 1998, p. 40).

Throughout literary history, masculinity has been a central and enduring motif, captivating readers with its exploration of behavior and the complexities of men. One of the literary genres that applied masculinity in it, is a movie. Movie is one of the literary works, in the form of moving images in which there are scenes that describe a storyline. Movie are a tool to convey various messages to the audience through the medium of stories (Wibowo, 2006, p. 28). Movie is also a medium of artistic expression as a tool for artists and moviemakers in expressing ideas and story ideas. Essentially and substantially, movies have power that will have implications for the communicants of society. Whether it is a high, popular or cyber literature, masculinity often takes part in every age of literature.

Masculinity in movies often reflects and reinforces societal perceptions and expectations of manhood, presenting a diverse range of portrayals that can both challenge and perpetuate traditional gender norms. For example, in action films, masculinity is frequently associated with physical strength, courage, and heroism, with male protagonists often embodying stoicism and resilience in the face of adversity (Wedgwood, 2009, p. 338). These characters are often depicted as assertive, dominant, and in control, showcasing traditional ideals of masculinity. The characters are often the being main key of a movies to be driven. And a character also has its own characterization, which depicting the story by the author.

Because characterization is when the narrator tells us what we need to know about the character in the story. Then, there are ways to analyze characterization. First, by seeing characterization through the appearance that they seeing. Second, by seeing characterization through the dialogue they said, direct or indirect. Third, by seeing the characterization through the external action which means seeing the characters act and its purpose. On the other hand, dramas and character-driven

narratives may delve deeper into the complexities of masculinity, exploring themes such as vulnerability, emotional expression, and the pressure to conform to societal expectations. One of the movies that depict masculinity within the characterization are *The Iron Claw* (2023), directed by Sean Durkin.

As a movie who based its own story around the real depiction of a person who's his life dedicated to the sports of boxing, which is Von Erich brothers, masculinity must be one of the huge factors in *The Iron Claw* (2023) movie. Because in this movie, most of the shown characters were men and the stories centering around the real tragedy that happened and affecting the whole family of Von Erich in the 80's. In that case, men, is the gender who is related most with those masculinity aspects. Even though, masculinity is a trait that connected to men or women. Because, the gender idea of masculinity refers to a characteristic of men or women that is socially or culturally produced. (Fakih, 2008, p. 20). *The Iron Claw* (2023) is a movie that tells the story of the glory days of a wrestler named Von Erich along with the accompanying myth: his family was cursed. That even though Erich reached his golden age in the world of wrestling, he had to lose his children one by one. This story begins when Jack Adkisson started his career as a professional wrestler with the stage name Fritz Von Erich. His performance in grappling was greatly admired and he was even famous for a finishing move called "*The Iron Claw*", a move where he squeezed his opponent's face until it surrendered. In the midst of his fame, Von Erich had to experience a bitter incident, namely the loss of his first son, Jackie or Jack Adkisson Jr. in 1959 (Goodman, 2015, p. 19). The seven years old child died horribly because he was electrocuted and drowned in the playground. He died and was found with his face in a puddle of melting snow.

At the time of the tragic incident, Von Erich was not there because he was having a wrestling match out of town. He only found out his first son had died after returning home from the match. He felt very sad when he came home, instead of getting a warm hug, but the funeral of his first child. After this incident, the wrestler lost his third son, David, in 1984 at a hotel in Tokyo. Not only that, he also lost his fifth son, 23 years old Mike, due to a drug overdose. On the other hand, his career

in wrestling is increasingly successful. However, the suffering did not stop approaching. He lost his youngest son, Chris, who was 22 years old to suicide by shooting himself in the head. The tragic incident continued with his fourth son, Kerry, who also chose to end his life 2 years after his younger brother's death.

The writer chooses *The Iron Claw* (2023) movie as the object of the research because the movie is commonly known and widely recognized, popular on the sport genre, as it gained the rating of 7.8/10 on the IMDb website. Also produced by one of the most commonly known production houses today, A24. The movie grossing \$18.8 million against its \$15.9 million budget, and considered as a box office success. It was also nominated for 34 awards all across the world, winning thrice, including Best Ensemble at NBR Award, Top Films at NBR Award and Best Ensemble Cast at UFCA Award. It made the writer very intrigued to analyze the portrayal of male characters in *The Iron Claw* (2023) movie by looking at masculinity factors using the theory from Raewyn Connell, Tristan Bridges & CJ Pascoe, Michael Kimmel about masculinity and the characterization theory from Petrie and Boggs.

Hegemonic masculinity relies on two central assumptions, first there exist a plurality of masculinities and second, these masculinities are organized hierarchically. Plural masculinities theory said that “*there is not a single masculinity, but rather multiple masculinities*” (Stoller, 2020, p. 7). Black masculinities, white masculinities, gay masculinities, and working-class masculinities are all forms of masculinity that contain the dominant and marginalized masculinities within themselves. Some masculinities are marginalized, for example, gay masculinities, are at the bottom of a gender hierarchy among men, but such heterosexual black masculinities are marginalized too. (Mula, 2015, p. 205) The subject of hegemonic masculinity is men, and the object is women. Men can do hegemonic masculinity when it is desirable, but the same men can distance themselves strategically from hegemonic masculinity at other moments. Therefore, masculinity represents not a certain type of men but, rather a way that men position themselves through discursive practices. (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 14).

Hybrid masculinity, one of the types of masculinity that is not often talked by people. Hybrid masculinity, in terms of the definition refers to how certain men adopt components of marginalized or subordinate masculinities into their own masculinity performances, essentially combining these features with traditional, hegemonic masculinity. (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014, p. 30). Hybrid masculinity, in terms of practice is the way men open up to his problems. Whether it is his problem inside his house and problem outside his house, for example his work problem. This integration allows men to appear progressive and adaptive to changing gender norms while still maintaining their dominant status and privileges. These men can distinguish themselves from more openly violent and dominant types of masculinity through displaying behaviors and attitudes commonly associated with non-hegemonic masculinities, such as emotional expressiveness, inclusion, or openness to variety.

There is also, toxic masculinity. Toxic masculinity, as a new type of masculinity in regards to the other types of masculinity. First, discussed in the 1990's, now the toxic masculinity is becoming more and more popular. By its meaning and by its definition, toxic masculinity describes to cultural norms and societal expectations that encourage men to show behaviors linked to dominance, violence, emotional suppression, and arrogance. Those traits, are likely to be found nowadays, especially in this modern era where people can do whatever they want. While these characteristics are frequently lauded in patriarchal countries, they can lead to unhealthy behaviors and attitudes that have a negative influence on both men and others. Toxic masculinity fosters a narrow and harmful concept of manhood, in which feelings like as vulnerability, empathy, and compassion are viewed as flaws and power and control are emphasized.

In the introductory chapter of a study, writers generally review previous research related to their research topic. It aims to provide context, identify research opportunities, support arguments, and build a foundation for the research being conducted. Previous research summarizes existing findings in related literature, helps in demonstrating the relevance of current research, identifies unexplored areas

of the literature, supports research hypotheses or objectives, and creates a strong foundation for future research.

First, the author read some of the research in the mix of analysis by the characterization by Petrie and Boggs, in a same subject but on a different object, which in here he analyzes the characterization on “*Suicide Squad*” movie. The studies entitled “*Characterization in the “Suicide Squad” Movie*” conducted by Nurcahyadi Rasyid (2018). This research conducted on the qualitative descriptive methods by finding the stage steps used by the provision of data, data analysis, and the presentation of data analysis results. The aims of this research are to identify the characterization of the “*Suicide Squad*” movie using the characterization theory by Petrie and Boggs, by focusing on the characterization by the appearance, characterization by the dialogue, characterization by the external action, characterization by the internal action, characterization by the reaction of other characters, characterization by the contrast (dramatic foils), characterization by the caricature and leitmotif and characterization by choice and name. The data collection method used in this study is observation and documentation using note-taking techniques. The data analysis method used is the content analysis method. The result of this research analysis is a representation of masculinity values from the characters in the “*Suicide Squad*” movie.

Furthermore, the author read some of the same research in the shape of masculinity with other literary objects as supporters of this research. One of the studies entitled “*Representation of Masculinity in Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them (2016) Movie*” by Qayla Putri Safanah (2016) conducted qualitative descriptive methods by implementing the stage steps used by the provision of data, data analysis, and the presentation of data analysis results. The aims of this research are first, to identify the characterization of the major characters in *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2016) movie and secondly, to analyze and discussed the masculinity values in *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2016) movie through the major characters. This study uses the theory of masculinity to analyze the masculinity values portrayed by major characters in the *Fantastic Beasts and*

Where to Find Them (2016) movie. The data collection method used in this study is observation and documentation using note-taking techniques. The data analysis method used is the content analysis method. The result of this research analysis is a representation of masculinity values from the major characters in *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* (2016) movie

The next research discusses the masculinity in a movie called *Resident Evil* (2010), the research is entitled “*The Masculinity on Heroine Character in Resident Evil’s Movie*” by Lulu Fathaninda. The method that the writer used to analyze the research question through qualitative method. The writer divided this analysis into two research questions. The main theories that the writer use are gender and masculinity theory from R.W. Connell (2005) and supported arguments in this thesis from Judith Halberstam (1998) about female masculine. This thesis focuses on masculinity shown in the movie and portrayed in the main character in the film that is a woman (Alice), that in action movie genre usually the main character or hero are men but in *Resident Evil’s* movie that is women.

Finally, in the research entitled “*The Masculinity Portrayal of Baba’s Character in Khaled Hossaini’s, The Kite Runner*” by Vivi Mubarokah. This research attempts to discuss a character’s masculinity in Khaled Hossaini’s *The Kite Runner*, Baba. To specify the research, the writer divided this analysis into two research questions, namely: 1). How is masculinity portrayal of Baba’s character in *Khaled Hossaini’s, The Kite Runner*? 2). How is the portrayal of masculinity stereotypes in Khaled Hossaini’s, *The Kite Runner*? The Masculinity Portrayal of Baba’s character is interesting to be investigated. Hossaini describes the masculinity portrayal of Baba intensely through several explained narration. In this case, it shaped based on stereotypical view about how is the man should behave. This research uses qualitative descriptive method with using characterization theory to describe masculinity portrayal of Baba’s character.

So, based on the previous studies that the writer entitled, captured and studied above. There is a gap between each research. The first one, there is a gap of eight years between the first previous studies and the writer proposal. The second one,

there is a gap of fourteen years between the second previous studies and the writer very own proposal. The last one, there is a gap of seven years between the third previous studies in accordance to the writer date of proposal.

This research is based on the understanding that previous research has had diverse analyzes when assessing the masculinity aspects and characterization aspects in regards to types of literatures, such as movie and book. Previously, no research had specifically assessed the different types of masculinity in one single movie. Although several previous studies have discussed the masculinity aspects in literary works. In this context, apart from the reasons explained in the research background, this is an additional reason why the writer chose to explore the characterization and masculinity in this movie. The writer attempted to find the different types of masculinity which appeared in *The Iron Claw* (2023) movie, by looking at its characterization as how the characterization could categorize the types of masculinity.

1.2 Statements of Problem

The main problem in this research is related to the masculinity in the characterization that shown throughout the movie of *The Iron Claw* (2023). The statements of problem come because, masculinity is a very extensive discussion. Indeed, the masculinity constructed by Raewyn Connell in the realm of hegemonic masculinity, Tristan Bridges & CJ Pascoe on the world of hybrid masculinity and Michael Kimmel in the perspectives of toxic masculinity combined the characterization theory on movies by Petrie and Boggs. This needs to be analyzed and explored in depth, to prove that this film does contain the masculinity section, not only contain, but exist and alive throughout the scene and throughout the dialogue of the movie. In regards to make these movies completely analyzed from the masculinity and characterization point of view. These elements are also able to make the plot of this movie grow.

Based on the background and statement of the problems, it can be formulated into research question as follows:

1. How many types of masculinity are in *The Iron Claw* (2023) movie?
2. How are the construction of masculinity in each character in *The Iron Claw* (2023) movie?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To describe how many the types of masculinity in *The Iron Claw* (2023) movie.
2. To examine how the masculinity construct in each character in *The Iron Claw* (2023) movie.

1.4 Research Significances

Research significance can be classified into two aspects, namely theoretical benefits and practical benefits. It is hoped that the theoretical benefits of this research will broaden understanding and contribution in the field of analyzing the elements that make up literary works using masculinity approach, as well as in the field of analyzing how a movie can be driving an aspect of gender role, such as masculinity. Apart from that, it is hoped that the results of this research can provide a basis for further research.

In practice, this research should be able to contribute to the academic field of literature. It is hoped that this research could help future writers in determining how to examine literary works using the theory of masculinity. Specifically literary works with movies that expand information about the shape of the three types of masculinity by Raewyn Connell, Tristan Bridges & CJ Pascoe, Michael Kimmel and characterization by Petrie and Boggs.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

The use of a definition of key terms by writers is advantageous in presenting concise and accurate explanations of the fundamental concepts used within the study. The inclusion of this definition serves the purpose of ensuring the reader's comprehension of the writers intended meaning for any term utilized within the study context, while also mitigating the potential for ambiguity or misinterpretation

1 Hegemonic Masculinity

Hegemonic masculinity, as defined by Raewyn Connell, is the culturally dominant ideal of masculinity that wields authority and influence over different masculinities and femininities in society. Connell's seminal work, particularly in her book "*Masculinities*" (2020), defines hegemonic masculinity as the normative standard against which most men are assessed, even though few can fully live it. This type of masculinity is distinguished by features such as toughness, stoicism, competitiveness, and the subordination of women and other less dominant masculinities, such as gay men or men from diverse racial and social backgrounds. Connell contends that hegemonic masculinity is defined by collective cultural standards that preserve male supremacy rather than individual men's particular characteristics. (R. Connell, 2020, p. 32).

2 Hybrid Masculinity

Tristan Bridges and C.J. Pascoe define hybrid masculinity as how some men combine elements of both traditional and non-traditional masculinities in response to evolving gender norms. This type of masculinity enables males to adopt behaviors and attributes normally associated with marginalized or less dominant types of masculinity, such as emotional openness, nurturing, or support for gender equality, while retaining their social status. Bridges and Pascoe's research focuses on how males employ hybrid tactics to position themselves as progressive or inclusive while not substantially challenging existing male dominance structures. By deliberately adopting these characteristics, males can appear more modern and adaptive, winning social

approbation in today's diverse and sensitive environments. (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014, p. 28).

3 Toxic Masculinity

Toxic masculinity, described as a collection of cultural norms and expectations that drive males to engage in destructive actions and attitudes toward themselves and others. In his book *“Angry White Men: American Masculinity at the End of an Era,”* According to Michael Kimmel, it investigates how toxic masculinity fosters behaviors like violence, emotional repression, and domination, which are frequently regarded as markers of "real" manhood. He contends that these characteristics not only foster violence, misogyny, and homophobia, but also contribute to a strong sense of fear and discontent among men. (M. Kimmel, 2017, p. 26).

4 Characterization

To be intriguing, personalities must appear genuine, intelligible, and deserving of our attention. Characters in a story are typically as credible as the plot itself. In other words, they adhere to the rules of probability and necessity (representing outwardly visible realities about human nature), they conform to an inner reality (people as we desire them to be), or they are convincingly portrayed by the actor. (Boggs & Petrie, 2017, p. 50).