

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the background of the research, statement of problems, research objectives, research significance, and definition of key terms.

1.1. Background of the Research

Gender issues and all their problems are being hotly discussed and even debated, this gender issue usually debates how the life of a woman wants to have equality and does not want to be differentiated from the life of a man in all realm aspects of life. Unfortunately, these debates have led to many misunderstandings in understanding how a man's masculinity is actually portrayed. Meanwhile Forms of masculinity in the personal aspect personal aspects include indicators such as brave, calm, objective, practical, disciplined, independent, ambitious, proud, adventurous (Chafetz, 1978). Another opinion from Levine and Beynon determine indicators of masculinity including not showing weakness, being able to take risks, having gentleness as a father, glorifying fashion, caring about an organized lifestyle, liking details, tending to be a perfectionist (Nasir, 2002). All of these things show positive things that even all men on earth need to adopt. These misconceptions are closely related to how these opinions are born, one of which is through film media, because film media is an effective medium in growing and shaping how people's opinions and viewpoints are are formed.

Barbie is a 2023 fantasy comedy film directed by Greta Gerwig from a screenplay she co-wrote with Noah Baumbach. Based on the eponymous fashion doll by Mattel, this is the first live-action Barbie film after many computer-animated films and specials. The film stars Margot Robbie as the main character (Barbie) and Ryan Gosling as Ken, and follows the couple's journey of self-discovery after an existential crisis. The supporting cast includes America Ferrera, Kate McKinnon, Issa Rae, Rhea Perlman, and Will Ferrell.

Barbie (2023) is a film that carries the concept of the embodiment of a world called "Barbieland" which contains a glimpse of a woman's life in which the female figure is the dominant figure. Through this film we are invited to understand the understanding side of women, where a woman can do and be whatever she wants, have whatever profession she wants, live various types of life as a woman who has power over the world, without having to worry about the shadow of a man who haunts and takes over that power she has. This film is very suitable to be used as a research object because this film is also considered quite interesting by many film critics, especially with the achievements that have been successfully achieved by this film, namely the *Golden Globe Award for Cinematic and Box Office Achievement (2024)*, and also the *People's Choice Award as the most favorite film (2024)*.

At the beginning of the story in this film, the figure of Ken who is a man is very hopeless and can't do anything, his life can be said to be very down and sad, the only thing that can make his life more meaningful is if he gets attention from Barbie. So, Ken in this story often does a lot of things to get the attention from the Barbies. The character of Ken in this story is willing to do everything for Barbie,

often even arguing and wanting to show off his abilities with the other Ken in order to show that one Ken figure is better than the other Ken figure in the eyes of the Barbie he loves. This is what is interesting about this film, where in the initial narrative the director (Greta Gerwig) offers a film that carries the ideology of feminism with all the power and empowerment of a woman, but she also succeeds in inserting elements of the world of masculinity and patriarchy into this film by very good as a comparison and balancing material in terms of storytelling. This element of masculinity can be presented well through the storyline where Margot Robbie, who plays the role of Barbie, experiences an existential crisis and is required to go to "The real world" to meet a human figure who often plays with her in the form of a doll in order to fix the existential crisis she is experiencing. In the middle of the road, it turns out that Ryan Gosling, who plays Ken, follows him into the "Real World". Upon arrival in the "Real world" they were both very surprised by how different this place was from Barbie land, in reality in the "Real world" people's lives were dominated by men.

Therefore, through this research, the researcher wants to try to reveal how the figure of the real male masculinity principle using the object of The Barbie 2023 film through several different aspects, perspectives and elements in the movie. In addition, researchers have also found several previous studies that discuss the elements of masculinity in several literary works as references and support materials in this research.

. The first research is research from Ulin Sasmita which discusses the elements of masculinity in films, with the title *Representasi Maskulinitas Dalam Film Disney Moana*, The purpose of this study is to identify the signs of

masculinity found in the main character of Moana's daughter with the Charles Sanders Pierce semiotic model and the forms of representation of masculinity in the main character of Moana through representament, object, and interpretant. The findings of the representation of masculinity based on the trichotomy of Charles Sanders Pierce's trichotomy illustrates that the term masculinity or femininity is a gender classifying concept that can be classified as femininity is an interchangeable concept of gender classification. That is, women can be masculine and men can be feminine, which is relative to each culture. In this movie, the main character princess Moana is represented as a masculine woman including brave, strong, unyielding, confident, independent and even acts as a leader (Sasmita, 2017).

The next research is a study entitled *Representasi Maskulinitas Dalam Film Talak 3*, by Syulhajji. This research is focused on the element of Masculinity element, such as: No Sissy Stuff (Not femininity), Be a Big Wheel (Important influence), Be a Sturdy Oak (Strong), Give em Hell (Brave), New Man as Nurturer (Fatherly), New Man (as Narcissist), The nature of macho maleness, and hooliganism or in the other definitions are manly in intimidative way. (Syulhajji, 2017). This is in line with the theory that will be used by researcher, namely using John Beynon's finger theory in the book *Masculinities and Culture*, about how John Beynon describes masculine figures in each The aspects examined in this previous study touched on Beynon's opinion of the elements of masculinity in the era before the 1980s, and the rest of the discussion will be the theory of study in this research.

Furthermore, researchers also found previous research that discusses the elements of masculinity in films, namely research conducted by Nurul Dewi Prabawaningrum with her research entitled *Representasi Maskulinitas Dalam Film Aquaman*. This study aims to describe the depiction of male masculinity through the character Arthur Curry in James Wan's Aquaman. This research reveals signs of masculinity through the main character Arthur Curry. The objects of this research are the signs, objects and meanings in the scenes and dialog in the 2018 Aquaman film. The results of the study concluded that the main character in the Aquaman film, Arthur Curry has seven concepts of masculinity expressed by Janet Saltzman Chafetz, including: 1) Physical Appearance: strength, male, athletic, strong and brave. 2) Functional: responsible for his relatives and himself. 3) Sexual: attraction to women. 4) Emotional: controlling or hiding emotions. 5) Intellectual: intelligent, logical, rational and objective thinking. 6) Interpersonal: responsible, leaderly and dominating. 7) Personal Character Other: competitive and adventurous. In accordance with what has been stated previously that Psychology Janet Saltzman Chafetz suggests seven concepts of masculinity characteristics in society, namely: Male Physical Appearance, Male Functional, Male Sexual, Male Emotional, Male Intellectual, Male Interpersonal, and Male Personal Character (Prabawaningrum, 2019).

Based on both of previous study mentioned, there are similarity in the object that have a masculine aspect which contributes in the form of inspiration and also sources of theory that can be collected as a wealth of research data in this study. To specify this research, the researcher divided this analysis into 2 research questions below.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the research background above, the researcher intends to identify the elements of masculinity in *The Barbie 2023* film through several aspects and points of view. The problem formulated into the question as follows:

1. What are the characteristics of masculinity depicted in *The 2023 Barbie* Film?
2. How are the depictions of stereotypical masculinity in *The 2023 Barbie* Film?

1.3 Research Objectives

Related to the questions above, the following are research objectives to answer the masculinity aspects in *The Barbie 2023* film through several aspects and points of view, so the researcher gives rise to two research objectives:

1. To find out what are the characteristics of masculinity depicted in *The 2023 Barbie* Film?
2. To find out how the depictions of stereotypical masculinity in *The 2023 Barbie* Film?

1.4 Research Significance

The researcher expects that the findings and results of this research will be beneficial in providing insights into literary studies and further researchers both on those related to masculinity or in other popular literature research.

1.4.1. Theoretical

This research is aimed to be of significance in the enrichment of knowledge and theoretical perspective in popular literature study, especially on the characteristics of masculinity aspects that contained in literary works.

1.4.2. Practical

The other hope of this research that it will become an empirical source for future researchers and readers of which the element of masculinity and popular literature becomes a subject of interest.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

Key terms are taken from the word in the paper of research. These key terms provide to make the readers of this research easier to comprehend the problem and to avoid misunderstanding the research. The key terms that the researcher uses in this research as follow:

1. Masculinity: identifiable sets of behavior, forms of speech, and styles of bodily compoment that serve to keep men dominant in a patriarchal society (Frith & Gates, 1996)
2. Character: the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with particular moral. intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it the dialogue- and from what they do the action (Abrams & Harpham, 2013)
3. Masculinity Stereotype: fixed idea that people have about the attributes

culturally ascribed to men are like, especially an idea that is wrong.





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