REPRESENTATIONS OF MASCULINITY IN *BARBIE* FILM (2023)

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Abstract

Masculinity is the characteristics that are traditionally thought to be typical of or suitable for men. This research attempts to discuss a character's masculinity in *Barbie* 2023 Film. To specify the research, the researcher divided this analysis into two research questions, they are: 1) What are the elements of masculinity depicted in 2023 Barbie Film? 2) How is the depiction of stereotypical masculinity in The 2023 *Barbie* Film? Masculinity in *Barbie* 2023 is very interesting to discuss because it can be identified from various elements contained in the film, in this case the identification of masculinity can be seen from how the characters in this film behave, the intrinsic elements implied in the film, the setting, and also other things that illustrate how the elements of masculinity are contained in the film. The results of this study found two findings, namely the first is what elements of masculinity are found in this film in the form of how the character Ken has an athletic posture that strongly shows elements of masculinity and in several scenes in the film shows masculinity, then the findings of other stereotypes of masculinity that the author managed to identify from the dialog, character acting, setting, or atmosphere that is contained in this film.

Keywords: Masculinity, Character, Stereotype, Representations, *Barbie***.**

INTRODUCTION

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 bea 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.

Based on background of the research, the researcher uses descriptive analysis method. The research deals with the using of masculinity theory to describe the masculinity portrayal of Ken's character and few of masculinity stereotype in *Barbie* Film. As like (Nawawi said in Siswantoro, 2010), that descriptive analysis method can be defined as a procedure to solve the problems by describing or portraying the state of the research subject or research object based on facts.

This study uses qualitative descriptive method. The researcher used descriptive method to describe the answer of research questions. Firstly, researcher categorized the data into masculinity portrayal of Ken's character from the way how he (Ken) body look, the dialogue that appears, and many parts of element and scene that shown in the *Barbie* film. Secondly, the researcher would analyze the data in each category to find masculinity stereotype in the Barbie film.

According to (Kirk and Miller in Hihmat, 2011) qualitative methodology is a tradition in social knowledge which depends oh human's sphere observation fundamentally. Thus, using qualitative approach is the appropriated manner for this study. Then, (Dawson, 2009) says that qualitative research methodology is the research to attempt and get in-depth opinion from participant. This might be noted from the finding data from the researcher.

To support the purposes of the research, the researcher used masculinity theory to support the analysis of the research as the literary approaches. The researcher employs mostly John Beynon Theory who studies masculinity in his book Masculinities and Culture (Nasir, 2007: 2). In this book, Beynon describes the masculine figure in every decade. Beynon divides the masculine form with the idea of the trend of the times, there are; the masculine concept before 1980, the masculine concept in 1980, the masculine concept in 1990, and the masculine concept in the 2000s that have described above, And also researchers will use mostly Zysberg's theory of stereotypical masculinity which states that men live in a more violent world, with the main point of the discussion is that men tend to have harder and more painful lives.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION
Masculinity

There are several things that have to be understood by the people about definition of masculinity. Actually, there is no valid explanation about the meaning of masculinity.

But, the researcher finds some description to make "masculinity" can be more identified by the other. The term of "masculinity" itself identically relate with gender. Definitely, "gender" has the different meaning with sex. (Mutunda, 2009) gives same the argument that masculinity has no valid universal definition. In this case, male identities just appreciated through social process of gender construction. It happens caused there is an idea in patriarchy stereotype that the men hold the dominance towards the women in the general society. This point opens on an assumption that the masculinity itself constructed by general manhood concept through gender perspective. Definitely, masculinity can defined as the male maleness that related with its quality of sexuality, meanwhile the masculine itself just refers to male characteristics in general.

Then (Beynon in Nasir, 2002) explains more about the relation between gender and masculinity itself, he assumes: if gender is cultural, then it follows that women as well as men can step into and inhabit (whether permanently or temporarily) masculinity as a 'cultural space', one with its own sets of behaviours. In this view the masculine' and 'the feminine signify a range of culturally defined characteristics assignable to both men and women by also introducing sexuality. Beynon describes the masculine figure in every decade. Beynon divides the masculine form with the idea of the trend of the times, there are; the masculine concept before 1980, the masculine concept in 1980, the masculine concept in 1990, and the masculine concept in the 2000s. This is described as follows below:

Masculinity Before 1980s

The masculine figures that appear are those of working-class men with their body shapes and behavior as dominators, especially over women. This kind of male image is indeed thick with the beginning of industrialization at that time, men worked in factories as steel-armed workers with steel sleeves. Men were seen as very fatherly, as rulers in the family and a figure capable of leading women as well as the the main decision-maker. This concept of masculinity is called the traditional masculinity in the western view.

According to Beynon's writing which is taken from Book entitled *Masculinity and Culture* which also supported from the writings of two social scientists Deborah David and Robert Brannon. (Nasir, 2007: 2), there are four rules that reinforce masculinity, namely rules that reinforce the nature of masculinity, they are: (1) No Sissy Stuff: anything related to feminine things is forbidden, a real man should avoid behaviors or characteristics associated with women. (2) Be a Big Wheel: masculinity can be measured by success, power, and admiration from others. A man must have wealth, fame, and status that is very male. (3) Be a Sturdy Oak: manhood requires rationality, strength and independence. A man should remain calm in all situations, not show emotion, and not show weakness. (4) Give em Hell: Men should have an aura of courage and aggression, and should be able to take risks even if reason and fear want otherwise.

In the traditionality developed by Javanese culture, one of them is similar to the second point that men must be a big wheel. A man is said to be successful if he has garwo (wife), bondo (wealth), turonggo (vehicle), kukilo (pet bird), and pusoko (weapon or

magic) (Osella & Osella, 2000: 120).

Masculinity of The 1980s

The masculine figure then evolved in the 1980s in a a different way. Masculine is not a man who smells of woodspice anymore, masculine is a male figure as a new man. (Beynon in Nasir, 2002) shows two concepts of masculinity in the 80s with the notions of new man as nurturer and new man as narcissist. New man as nurturer was the first wave of male reaction to feminism. Men were living their nature like women as caring beings. Men have the gentleness of a father, for example, to take care of children. Men's desire to support the women's movement also involved men's full role in the domestic arena. This group usually comes from the middle class, well-educated and intellectual. (Beynon, in Nasir, 2007: 3).

The second assumption is that the new man as narcissist is related to the commercialization of masculinity and consumerism since the end of World War II. New man as narcissist are the children of the hippies generation (60s) who were attracted to clothing and pop music. Many commercialized products for men emerged, and men as sexual objects became a huge business. Here, men showed their masculinity with the flamboyant and sophisticated lifestyle of the yuppies. Men increasingly like to pamper themselves with commercial products that make them appear successful. Property, cars, clothes or personal artifacts are dominant manifestations of this lifestyle. These masculine yuppies can be seen in their seen in the way they dress, as well as their Porsches. The yuppies regard the loyal and dedicated male industrial worker as an outdated figure in the operation of capital (Beynon, in Nasir, 2007: 3).

Masculinity of The 1990s

The 1990s also saw the rise of the so-called masculine in the decade of the 1990s. Men are back to not caring about trivialities like the masculine yuppies of the 80s. The new lad comes from pop music and football which leads to macho male traits, violence, and hooliganism. Men then express themselves in consumerist labels in more macho forms, such as building their lives around football or soccer and the world of drinking, as well as sex and relationships with women (Beynon, in Nasir, 2007: 4).

In this decade of the 1990s, men still prioritized their leisure time as a time to have fun, enjoy life freely as it is. Men are with their friends, having fun, swearing, watching soccer, drinking beer, and making jokes that are considered degrading to women. The relationships between men and women are limited to those of pleasure. His freedom keeps him away from domestic relationships that require loyalty and dedication.

Masculinity of The 2000s

Beyond the masculine development proposed by John Beynon, it is also worth looking at the masculine in the 2000s, given that the 2000s are almost a decade old. What is happening with men today is the emergence of something distinctive and the symptoms of maleness are increasingly full of new terminology. Homosexuality that has developed since the 80s, now even male terminology has recognized the term

metrosexual (Nasir, 2002)

Metrosexual men are men who come from the upper middle class, they are diligent in dressing up, and also belong to a respected community in society. Metrosexual men are a kind of socialite (people who like prestigious slang). They generally need to be knowledgeable, or what they call cultured men. Metrosexual men glorify fashion, perhaps similar to the masculine type that existed in the 1980s, maybe even the same. Metrosexual men are people who care about an organized lifestyle, love details, and tend to be perfectionists (Hurlimann, 2007). Metrosexual men are different from effeminate or normal men, but they are all men. Metrosexuals are more inclined to the choice of male identity, mainly because of the demand that metrosexual men are usually in the upper-middle economic class who can afford to ignore the trivialities of their lifestyle. The evolving male masculine type of the 2000s tends towards the metrosexual.

Meanwhile, Rivkin and Ryan (Rivkin, Julie and Ryan, 2004) talk gender as something prior that can be seen by acts, postures, and gestures by which it is dramatized and known. In this case, gender appears to the popular assumption which might well be understood as the spiritual or psychological relation of biology sex. In other meaning, the gender concept can be identified based on the other thing of sex.

The argument above encouraged by (Graddol and Swan in Hidayat, 2004) that say, gender used to distinguish of social between masculinity and feminity mostly. In general, the term of gender more interpreted as construction instrument socially than biologically. People can be a feminine or masculine, it depends on their behavior. From that point, gender intented as representation of boundary in society.

That the underlying concept of masculinity flawed has been argued from two different points of views, realist and poststructuralist. Then, Collinson and Hearn argue that the concept of masculinity is blurred, is uncertain in its meaning. and tends to deemphasize issues of power and domination (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The statement means that the men in masculinity defend their power from domination, especially over the women.

Meanwhile, (Mason, 2004) gives the other information that related with masculinity. He says that while earl, feminist theorists focused on representations of women, then masculinity is considered within early feminist theory, it is conceived as the dominant gaze brought to bear on images of women. It means, the existence of masculinity itself would not exist without the feminist theory.

Then, the concept of masculinity is criticized for being framed within a heteronormative (many view normatively) conception of gender that contains male-female difference and ignores difference and exclusion within the gender categories.

According to (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) the concept of masculinity is used to rest logically on a dichotomization between sex (biological) and gender (cultural). In this case, masculinity itself refers to gender that can be defined as a term that only has function as clarification toward sex. In addition. not only to understand biological and cultural issue about sex. masculinity also has function to explore dichotomy of sex and

gender. It means, gender and sex cannot be differentiated in ineptly perceptions.

Then, (Mutunda, 2009) says that most of people argue that masculinity is a socially and culturally constructed ideology where men considered within something that they should achieved base on their assiduous efforts. It means, masculinity determined masculine traits of the men in a society that has been approved generally.

Thus, there is the assumption about difference between "maleness" and masculinity that "maleness" refers to biological thing in men's trait, meanwhile masculinity refers to cultural that built by a society about men's traits. This quotation interpreted that men are not only born with masculinity as a part of the genetic formed, but also from something into which appropriated composed of social behavior which they learn culturally. It means masculinity itself is always interpolated by cultural, historical, and also geographical location in the related time influences of feminism movement that has exploded the conception of a uniform masculinity and even sexuality is no longer heid to be fixed or innate, Beynon said in (Nasir, 2002).

Meanwhile, (Beynon in Nasir, 2002) also cites MacIness argument that says in gender, the both of terms (masculinity and femininity) are an ideology that people use in modern society to image and represent the existence if differences between men and women on the basis of their sex.

Whereas, based on (Connell perception in Schippers, 2007) summarizes masculinity as having three components: The social location that individuals, regardless of gender, can move into through practice. Then a set of practice and characteristic understood to be "masculine". Also, the practices are embodied especially by men, but also by women, they have widespread cultural and social effects.

Masculinity can be concluded that the masculinity is the sex and gender characteristic that view compatibility for men typically. Masculinity itself focused on portrayal of men that show how men behave culturally in the society. meanwhile maleness just focused on biological man's portrayal. It is also can be stated as the opposite of femininity which emphasized to women images (masculinity emphasized to men images).

As people know previously, stereotypes can defined as the fixed ideas about something or someone that has not definitely right, even the ides can be wrong. Thus, the society has their stereotypes about masculinity, no matter that all are right or wrong. Based on the assumption about masculinity stereotypes. (Berbee et al. in Zysberg Zysberg, 2012) takes some examples men actually fare worse than women in life expectancy and longevity, effective coping and utilization of coping resources, and quality of social networks and interpersonal relationships. Facts suggest a traditional world which is anything but beneficial to men: men live in a more violent world, not only as aggressors but also as victims.

Their (men's) is lonelier than the women: men report less friendship and less reliance on social support in times of hardship and challenge.

In the other words, people commonly know that a sexiest society ensures the

dominance of men over the women, meanwhile not all the men are always in dominant position. Then from this statement. (Consalvo in Thyssen, 2013) says that the masculinity is organized and also accorded prominence to race, class, sexual orientation, and the other factors hierarchically. Then, in the same resource, this argument supported by Cooper and Foster that masculinity gives an occasion of the hegemonic masculinity that refers being a "real man" is something exalted in general society, Then, in another words, the researcher assumes that this hegemonic masculinity constructed just mostly people who consider that the man has higher authority over the woman.

Thus, the argument above can be supported by the fact that there is the other consideration toward masculinity, such as what Zysberg argues that a closer look at the literature in the field of aggression research reveals differences between men and women that are much more subtle and inconsistent. Apparently, the general level of aggression does not vary significantly among the sexes but rather its expression does while men tend toward direct, physical expression aimed at others or themselves, women tend to express violence and aggression in an indirect, more social and sublimated manner. From that staternent, the researcher can take assumption that the man and the woman have different things in social life.

According to (Graddol and Swan, 2003: 13), the women have more free and spread contacts with other people than the men. This argument describes that the using of language also has sensitive characteristic to the interaction. Perhaps, there are some kinds of speech manner that particularly regarded for women or men in society. Generally, the men are more often in speaking swearing words than the women. This argument explains the different concept between masculinity and femininity through their language.

Meanwhile, (Mead in Matunda, 2009: 24) explains more about stereotype gender, especially masculinity. He reverses the situation between the men and the women behavior with the example that there are the men who decorate themselves, they also interested in art, theater, and some petty gossip. But in the other hand, the women the stereotypes are reversed; it is the men who decorate themselves, are vain, and are interested in art, theater, and petty gossip. Whereas the women show themselves as the way they are (unadorned), more brisk and efficient in such practical tasks as raising children and even fishing. So, based on missassumption, it can be concluded that all the men's and the women's behavior, characteristics, and activities are influenced by their social condition strongly.

The quotation above explains about how comparison between the life of men and women. In facts, there are some opinions that argued stereotypically. The quotation above may show the stereotype view of men life, whereas not all of men having loneliness exceed the women. Another argument about masculinity stereotype is. "men live in a more violent world", the writer consider that not all of men living in more violent world than the women live for, that is all can describe masculinity stereotype.

According to (Beynon in Nasir, 2002), there are some points to the existence of a

range of masculinity for, while all men have the male body in common (although even that comes in a variety of sizes, shapes and appearances), there are numerous forms and expressions of gender, of 'being masculine'. The general characteristics of masculinity can be seen based on the physical body. The masculine man always portrayed as a strong person to show his masculinity. Identically, the strong man has the muscular body and courageous personality. This idea created because the mascular men usually have some habits by doing "hard work", such as often picking up some heavy things or something else. The example of masculinity in Ken character:

Figure 1. The Macullar Body of Ken, *Barbie* 2023

The physical masculinity can be seen from how a person looks like. In this case, having a good proporsional athletic body is on kind attribute of masculinity. From this point, the researcher finds masculinity portrayal of Ken's character in the scene above, especially physical masculinity. This shows that Ken has an athletic body condition and his body is full of muscles, which is one of the characteristics of a man's masculinity. Muscles and athletic body conditions are usually associated with masculinity because they are closely related to pain, attitude and consistency, mindset, strength, and also the mentality to never give up before getting the goals desired by a man, which in this case is a good condition of physical body shape.

This is in line with what (Beynon in (Nasir, 2002) stated that the masculine figures that appear are those of working-class men with their body shapes and behavior as dominators and also a masculine man must have an unyielding nature and mental strength and mind and were seen as very fatherly, as rulers in the family and a figure capable of leading women as well as the the main decision-maker. This concept of masculinity is called the traditional masculinity in the western view. This is also in line with what Beynon said in one of the periodic classifications of masculinity, which was during the period of masculinity before the 1980s, namely Be a Sturdy Oack: that manhood requires rationality, strength and independence. A man should remain calm in all situations, not show emotion, and not show weakness.

The example of stereotype masculinity:

Figure 2. Mattel Leadership All Filed by Men, *Barbie* 2023

Leadership, position, and also social status is an achievement that a masculine man always wants to have, therefore many people compete with each other to work hard or even to knock each other down to get this position in his life. Men do this to prove themselves and their ability to dominate each other, especially in dominating a leadership position in front of a woman. This is reflected in how the cut scene above shows that the company officials of the Mattel company that produces Barbie dolls are instead led by men. This is very strange to the author because the company that is supposed to represent the representation of its product, the Barbie doll, is led by a man as a decision-making figure and determines the direction of the company's movement, so in this case the author chose the scene above to be classified into one of the characteristics of stereotypical masculinity.

This has a correlation with what was stated by (Beynon in Nasir, 2002) as a supporting theory of the theory of stereotypical masculinity expressed by Zysberg, such as: men were seen as very fatherly, as rulers in the family and a figure capable of leading women as well as the the main decision-maker. This concept of masculinity is called the traditional masculinity in the western view, it happens caused there is an idea in patriarchy stereotype that the men hold the dominance towards the women in the general society. Therefore, the figures of matel company officials in the cut scene above have been proven to have characteristics of stereotypical masculinity.

CONCLUSION

According to the data analysis above, the researcher concludes this analysis: Ken's character is proven to have characteristics of masculinity through many aspects that he has, including being distinguished through physical aspects and metallicity. Physically, Ken's character has an athletic body with a sixpack and also the proportions of the actors spread throughout his body, making him look manly and seem mighty and strong.

The characters who play the crew and CEO of the Mattel company are also proven to have characteristics of stereotypical masculinity which can be seen from how the dominance of the leadership seat is controlled by all men without involving women, this

shows how stereotypical masculinity of a man who always wants dominance and power over women.

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