

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The analysis of *Barbie* (2023) through both intrinsic and extrinsic approaches reveals that the film serves as a critical reflection on identity formation, gender roles, and societal expectations. By combining narrative analysis, cinematographic interpretation, and theoretical perspectives from Social Identity Theory and Barbie Culture (Rogers, 1999), this study demonstrates how the characters of Barbie and Ken undergo parallel yet interconnected journeys of self-discovery.

From the intrinsic aspects, the narrative structure, characterization, conflict, and setting work together to depict the gradual disintegration of an artificial world built upon perfection and rigid gender roles. Barbie's character, initially defined by flawlessness and optimism, experiences an existential awakening as she begins to question her predetermined role in Barbie Land.

The cinematographic shifts from symmetrical framing and bright pink tones to dimmer lighting and close-up shots mirror her growing sense of uncertainty and humanity. Similarly, Ken's visual portrayal evolves from peripheral framing and dependence to dominant low-angle shots when he embraces patriarchy, before returning to balanced compositions that signal self-acceptance. The film's settings Barbie Land, the Real World, and Kendom symbolize the transformation from illusion to awareness, illustrating how identity is influenced by social constructs.

Meanwhile from the extrinsic aspects, the film embodies the principles of Barbie Culture as described by Mary Rogers (1999), where Barbie represents both empowerment and constraint within capitalist consumerism. *Barbie* (2023) reinterprets this duality by exposing the contradictions between appearance and authenticity, and between societal expectation and personal freedom. Barbie Land functions as a metaphor for commodified femininity, while the Real World exposes the patriarchal forces that sustain it.

The transformation of Barbie Land into Kendom extends this critique to masculinity, revealing that both genders can become trapped within the same cultural systems of validation. Applying Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), both Barbie and Ken experience identity crises that arise from social categorization, group comparison, and the desire for belonging. Their eventual self-awareness reflects a movement away from externally defined social roles toward internal self-acceptance.

Overall, the film makes a strong point about the process of self-discovery in a society that is all about images. Barbie's final choice to become human symbolizes liberation from the artificial identity constructed by societal and cultural expectations, while Ken's realization "I'm just Ken, and that's enough" represents the acceptance of intrinsic worth beyond social approval. The film thus reconstructs the meaning of identity not as conformity to gendered ideals but as a dynamic process of understanding and embracing imperfection.

Barbie (2023) is more than just a commercial film. It's a cultural text that critically examines the tension between being true to yourself and following society's expectations. The film uses visual symbols, the way the story is told, and its ideas to promote a message of equality, authenticity, and emotional self-awareness. It encourages both women and men to redefine their sense of self. They should do this not through the lenses of beauty, power, or societal validation.