

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Social pressure appears as a dominant phenomenon in modern society, particularly in systems influenced by levels of authority, tradition and power. Individuals frequently deal with expectations that influence how they act, make choices and identity in order to remain accepted within a group. These expectations emerge through cultural norms, class structures and social interactions that create a sense of obligation. Human behavior is understood as a product of interaction between individuals and their social environment, since behavior develops through continuous engagement with social systems such as family, community and broader societal forces (Rogers, 2020:2). Such conditions influence individuals to act in ways that align with collective demands as social structures provide frameworks that shape interaction, identity and patterns of behavior (Raza, 2024:12)

Max Weber argues that human behavior has meaning and is always directed toward other people. Behavior becomes social when it includes meaning and takes into account the presence or reaction of others. Individuals act based on how they interpret situations, their motives and their understanding of what is happening around them (Weber, 2019:79). This means people do not make decisions alone, because they are also influenced by the social environment they are in. Through this perspective, social pressure can shape how individuals understand their situation and choose what action to take.

This phenomenon appears strongly in American film as part of cultural production. The American movie industry frequently tells stories about the differences between social classes, the power held by the elite and personal challenges faced by individuals in strict social structures. Film functions as a reflection of social reality and as a medium that shapes public understanding of social issues. Representation refers to the way meaning is created and communicated through language and signs. People use language to express their thoughts, experiences and knowledge, while signs help represent objects, people and events that exist within society and culture (Hall, 1997:28). Films can be understood as a form of representation, as they construct and communicate meanings about social realities, cultural values and lived experiences through visual and narrative elements. Through characters, settings, costumes, dialogue and cinematography, films reflect and shape how certain phenomena are understood within a particular society.

This research focuses on how social pressure can influence human behavior through the movie *Ready or Not* (2019). The film follows Grace, a woman who becomes part of the wealthy Le Domas family after marriage. On her wedding night, she is required to follow a family tradition by participating in a special game. After drawing the “hide and seek” card, Grace suddenly finds herself being hunted by the entire family in a deadly game that continues until sunrise. Throughout the night, Grace struggles to survive while facing fear, violence and pressure from the family tradition that forces her to sacrifice her safety and freedom.

In this research, social pressure means a situation that forces an individual to react to strong challenges in order to survive. Weber's theory of social action classifies behavior into four types: instrumental rational action, value rational action, affective action and traditional action, each type is based on personal meaning (Weber, 2019:102). These ideas help to understand why individuals react in different ways when they are under pressure. In *Ready or Not* (2019), it's assumed that the pressure from society influences how Grace acts. The narrative shows Grace as an outsider who has to take part in a dangerous tradition set by the Le Domas family. This situation leads to a lot of stress that pushes her to adapt, resist and survive. The researcher believes that this film represents a similar phenomenon found in American real life situations, especially in contexts involving power imbalance and social expectation within elite groups. This study aims to explore the forms of social pressure experienced by Grace and the types of social actions reflected in her behavior. Using Weber's theory of social action, this research seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how individuals respond to pressure within a structured social system as represented in American film.

1.2. Research Question

Based on the background of the study, the research problem will be explored through three main aspects of analysis. The research problems are as follows:

1. How do the intrinsic elements of *Ready or Not* (2019) shape the structure of the film?
2. What forms of social pressure are experienced by character Grace in *Ready or Not* (2019)?

3. What types of social actions are reflected in Grace's behavior in *Ready or Not* (2019)?

1.3. Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study is:

1. To analyze how the intrinsic elements of *Ready or Not* (2019) construct and shape the overall narrative structure of the film.
2. To identify and examine the various forms of social pressure experienced by the character Grace throughout the film.
3. To analyze the types of social actions reflected in Grace's behavior in *Ready or Not* (2019) in relation to her responses to the pressures and situations she faces.

1.4. Scope of the Study

This study focuses on analyzing *Ready or Not* (2019) through both intrinsic and extrinsic approaches. The intrinsic analysis examines the narrative elements of the film, including character, setting, plot and cinematography as the foundation for interpreting meaning. The extrinsic analysis applies Max Weber's theory of social action to examine how social pressure is constructed as a force condition that drives the main character's actions under extreme survival circumstances in American society. The scope is limited to the film *Ready or Not* (2019) as the primary source and supported by relevant literature on social action, pressure and survival.

1.5. Previous Studies

In analyzing the movies, the researcher reviewed several studies that are relevant to this study. The analysis presented in this chapter supports the scope of

this study. The researcher has found five studies that were relevant to the researcher's study.

The first study is "*Social Actions of Rex Walls' The Glass Castle: A Weberian Analysis*" by Devita Lailatun Nikmah (2024). This study analyzes the social actions of the main character using Max Weber's social action theory. The researcher categorizes the actions into four types: instrumental, value-rational, affectual and traditional actions and shows how individual motivations affect behavior when people try to reach their goals. The findings shows that affectual action becomes the dominant type, which indicates that emotional aspects play a big role in how the character acts. The study also explains that social action is strongly connected to how individuals understand things and every action shows how a person interprets their experiences and life.

The second relevant study is "*Revealing Violence Towards Social Action in Animated Film Arcane*" by Teuku Hazel Hafidzan Mauladani and Wahyuni (2024). This study explores how violence affects the rise of social action by using Galtung's theory of violence and Weber's theory of social action. The findings show that social actions appear as responses to direct, structural and cultural violence within the story. The study shows that how characters act is influenced by harsh surroundings, unfairness and constant exposure to fight. Violence is shown as something that is part of systems and cultural beliefs that affects individuals consciously and unconsciously.

The third study is titled "*Characterization of the Main Protagonist in the Movie Ready or Not*" by Ni Kadek Nefiari and I Made Perdana Skolastika (2024).

This study analyzes how Grace is described through her mental state, social factors and physical aspects. The results show a change from a naive bride to a survivor who responds to tough situations, shaped by differences in social class and dangerous circumstances. The study explains that social background, especially economic status, shapes the character's perspective and responses during the story. Psychological pressure during the deadly game also affects her actions and decisions. This research highlights how characterization reflects social issues such as class differences and the struggle for survival.

The fourth relevant study is "*The Effect of Hegemony Towards Social Action in The Hunger Games Film Series*" by Guruh Rumasta (2025). This study examines how dominance affects social actions by using Gramsci's theory and Weber's ideas about social action. The findings show that power, beliefs and cultural influence affect people's goals, values, feelings and customs. The study explains that dominant groups maintain control through persuasion and influence, which affects how individuals think and act in society. Social action is shown as a result of ideological control that works within social systems.

The last relevant study is "*The Influence of Conformity Effect and Emotions on Decision-Making*" by Ruofei Tian (2025). The researcher investigates how conformity and emotions affect the decision-making of individuals. The findings show that individuals tend to follow majority opinions and adjust their choices based on social environments. Emotional conditions such as fear, happiness, anxiety among other emotions affect their decision-making when taking risks or avoiding risks is strongly affected by internal feelings and external social influence.

This study provides insight into how indirect social pressure operates in everyday life, especially through group influence and emotional responses that shape individual choices.

Based on this literature review, the researcher finds important insights about the impacts of various elements such as conformity, emotions, violence and hegemony in shaping social action. These studies show that individual actions are determined by various internal and external elements, which may either be in real life or narrations. However, the discussion about social pressure as a specific and direct factor influencing social action is still limited. The existing studies tend to focus on broader concepts such as psychological influence, structural violence, or dominant power systems. Through this review, the researchers intend to provide an analysis of how social pressure, particularly from family, class and tradition affect individuals behavior.

1.6. Method of Research

To collect data and information relevant to the topic of this thesis, the researcher applies two methods: the research method and the approach method.

1.6.1. Data and Source of Data

The sources of data used in this research include both primary and secondary sources. The primary source is the movie "*Ready or Not*" (2019). The movie contains data in terms of dialogue, characters and images depicting how social pressure is a form of stress influenced by family power, class stratification and life-threatening situations. Secondary sources are academic journals, books and

articles related to social action theory, including works that discuss social pressure, class dominance and survival.

1.6.2. Method of Data Collection

The data collection is based on library research and film observation. Primary data collected through a careful observation of the film with the focus on important scenes, development of characters and important cinematic aspects. Secondary data collected from academic materials such as books and journal articles available in libraries and online databases. Any information about social pressure and survival-driven actions will be organized and analyzed.

1.6.3. Method of Approach

The objective approach is used in this research because it emphasizes the importance of intrinsic elements in shaping the structure of a literary work. Theme, plot, character, setting, and conflict are interconnected components that collectively build a narrative to examines the relationship among the elements to understand how they shape the overall structure of the film and will be used in order to analyze the themes of social pressure and survival-driven actions in *Ready or Not* (2019). The analysis will be based on the theory of social action by Max Weber (1922). The film will be analyzed through the observation of the narration, actions of characters Grace and other cinematic aspects in order to reveal the ways in which social pressure influences her behavior.

1.7. Organization of the Writing

CHAPTER I Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the background of the study, research questions, objective of the study, previous studies, scope of the study, method of study and writing organization of the study.

CHAPTER II Intrinsic Theoretical Framework

In the second chapter, the analysis of the film using the narrative elements like characters, setting, plot and cinematography will be discussed. This chapter will serve as the basis.

CHAPTER III Extrinsic Theoretical Framework

This chapter will discuss the external conditions that shape the analysis and discuss the theories relevant for this study. It will explain the concept of social pressure and the theory of social action that form the main analytical methods used in the study of the film.

CHAPTER IV Discussion

This chapter contains the main analysis of the research. It will analyze the ways in which the film demonstrates social pressure and survival-driven actions in American society through the character of Grace.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

This chapter concludes the study by presenting the results in it and emphasizing the importance of the research analysis. It will also contain closing remarks on the relevance of the study and its value for American Studies.

