

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THEORY AND METHOD**

#### **2.1. Narrative Elements**

Richard Barsam, in his book *Looking at Series: An Introduction to Film*, stated that narrative is a cinematic structure in which the filmmakers select and structure story events in a cause-and-effect sequence that arises over time (Barsam, 2010:114). He adds that a narrative film is a series devoted to portraying fictional or fictionalized stories in a classic narrative style (2010:114). Hence, in this research, the writer will discuss the character, setting, and events of the chosen object of the study as below.

##### **2.1.1. Intrinsic Aspect**

###### **2.1.1.1. Character**

Character in literary works plays a vital function in the story. Similarly, according to Barsam, characters, as another essential aspect of film narrative, provide functional acts within the plot, either acting or being acted on (2010:134). Meanwhile, Bordwell and Thompson, in their book *Film Art: An Introduction*, stated that characters create causes and record effects in any narrative film, whether fictitious or documentary, and within the film's formal system, characters make things happen and respond to occurrences (2008:78). Characters in films typically have a visible body, as well as traits such as attitudes, abilities, habits, tastes, psychological impulses, and any other qualities that differentiate the character (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008:78).

According to Richard Barsam, a character can be distinguished between a major character and a minor character as the categories that signal the relative importance of characters within the narrative (2010:135). Major characters are the most important characters in the plot who cause or become the subject of most events (Barsam, 2010:135). In contrast, minor characters perform a less essential role in the overall film, frequently delivering in helping develop the plot or flesh out the main character's motivations (Barsam, 2010:136).

#### **2.1.1.2. Setting**

Setting, according to Barsam, is the time and place in which the story occurs, which not only identifies the time, location, or country but also provides the character's social, educational, cultural backgrounds, and other specific characteristics essential for acknowledging them (2010:138). Barsam also stated that setting may frequently provide an implicit explanation for behaviors or traits that an audience might otherwise consider unusual because cultural norms vary from place to place and throughout time (Barsam, 2010:138). In substance, the setting divides into three different kinds: (1) setting of place, (2) setting of time, and (3) setting of social environment.

#### **2.1.1.3. Events**

According to Barsam, events are part of the plot with a logical order and hierarchy. Some of the events in film might be more important than others, and the relative significance can be inferred through the director's selection and arrangement of details of action, character, or setting (2010:127). The hierarchy of events consists of (1) the events that seem crucial to the plot (and thus to the

underlying story) and (2) the events that play a less crucial or even subordinate role (Barsam, 2010:127).

## **2.1.2. Extrinsic Aspect**

### **2.1.2.1. Social Equality**

Social equality is a concept that defines an idea of people in a society being considered equal to each other, rather than as better or worse, inferior or superior (Fourie, 2012:112). Equality attempts to facilitate the process by eliminating the fraudulent advantages of money, which can be interpreted as the intention for a fair start without giving any advantages to particular individual (Stephen, 1891:262). In supporting the definition of social equality, David Miller & Michael Walzer, in their book titled *Pluralism, Justice, and Equality*, states that the concept of justice involves a sense of respect for cultural diversity, but it is also accompanied by a concern for human rights and gender equality (Miller & Walzer, 1995:65)

Other theorists have stated their argument about social equality, like Thomas Scanlon (1997), who identifies that the reason to eliminate inequalities in society is the existence of stigma that differences people through their status, which is closely related to the process of achieving equality (1997:3). Fourie et al. in their book then state that the presence of wealth inequality can lead to relative deprivation, structural discrimination, and objectionable inequalities of esteem, all of which tend to undermine status equality (2015:13).

In the book written by Fourie et al., they claim that social equality is violated by several issues that exist in society, for example, slavery, class systems,

hierarchies of social status based on race or gender, orders of nobility, and any kinds of relationships between superiors and inferiors (2015:3). They also add the asymmetrical relationships that social egalitarians oppose also include the particular kinds of hierarchies of prestige, honor, and esteem, as well as those of power, command, and domination. Those hierarchies should be opposed because they can be categorized as constituting violations of respect (2015:3).

In reality, social equality raises a variety of problems and challenges that must be faced by people who are fighting for their rights. Generally, minority people in society are the ones who have to work hard to get the equality they deserve. According to Sidney Verba and Gary R. Orren in their journal entitled *The Meaning of Equality in America*, there are three areas of struggle for equal treatment and equal position demonstrate the various barriers that both channel and preserve that struggle: conflicts over economic equality, conflicts over political equality, and conflicts among groups which particularly racial and gender groups (1985:375). They also add that, in this case, for social equality, class, gender, and race are all intertwined, and are likewise cut across the equality domains of race, gender, and economic well-being (Verba and Orren, 1985: 385-386).

Conflict among the racial group becomes one of the struggles for equality. Moreover, there is also a connection between class and race in the issue happening, which perform a barrier to the people in society. According to Margaret Hunter, color hierarchy developed in the United States of America during the slavery era and afterward, in which the enslavers typically used skin

tone as a hierarchy dimension since the lighter-skinned African slaves have given some additional privileges by them (Hunter, 2007:239). The hierarchy of color then continues to give an issue in society, such as racial discrimination, a pervasive problem in the USA that targets people of color (2007:237). Systems of racial discrimination operate on at least two levels: race and color. The first system of discrimination is the level of racial category, in which she argues that regardless of physical appearance, African Americans of all skin tones are subject to certain kinds of discrimination, denigration, and second-class citizenship, simply because they are African American. The second system of discrimination, or colorism, is at the skin tone level: darker skin or lighter skin. She also adds that although all blacks experience discrimination as blacks, the intensity, frequency, and outcomes of that discrimination will differ dramatically by skin tone (Hunter, 2007:238).

As a consequence of the discrimination, darker-skinned African Americans may earn less money than lighter-skinned African Americans, although both earn less than whites. These two systems of discrimination (race and color) work in concert. The two systems are distinct but inextricably connected (Hunter, 2007:238).

#### **2.1.2.2. Dimensions of Social Equality**

There are three dimensions of social equality, as stated by Fourie, C., Schuppert, F., and Wallimann-Helmer, I., which are: (1) respect and recognition (2) love, care, and solidarity and (3) power, which is drawn from John Baker's idea of the five-dimensional conceptual framework. People relate to each other as

equals only when everyone engages in a spirit of equal respect; when we relate to each other inappropriately in loving, careful, and solidary ways; and when we replace relationships of genuine cooperation with relationships of power over one another (Fourie et al., 2015:66).

#### **2.1.2.2.1. Respect and Recognition**

Respect is the more general phrase concerned with how someone may be considered superior, equal, or lower in value, whereas recognition focuses on how people's connections to others create respect and disrespect (Fourie et al., 2015:67). As a result, unequal recognition becomes intrinsically linked to the societal position of distinct social groups or categories.

The basic concept of social or relational equality is that people should treat one another as equals. Distributional principles of respect and recognition could be summarized as follows: everyone should receive an equal degree of respect and recognition, or perhaps a sufficient amount, and everyone should be equally, or adequately, able to provide respect and recognition to others. Respect and recognition are essential because being respected by people and showing respect to them can affect the well-being of oneself (Fourie et al., 2015:68).

Fourie, C., Schuppert, F., and Wallimann-Helmer, I. also divide two arguments for equal respect. Both the arguments define the basic respect that someone has to relate each other as human-beings without concerning the distinction that existed, such as gender, disability, ethnicity, beliefs, etc. because respect and recognition should imply mutual engagement (2015:71).

#### **2.1.2.2.2. Love, Care, and Solidarity**

The feminist movement is one of the critical egalitarian movements in which the contribution to egalitarian thought emphasizes love and care as human relationships. The love and care on the agenda of the egalitarian theory are helpful to think of them as members of family concepts which explain love as the sense of intimate personal relationship, and care has a wider range since it connects to love. In contrast, solidarity is feeling in a relationship with people who still cares and are willing to act on one's behalf (Fourie et al., 2015:73).

Fourie, C., Schuppert, F., and Wallimann-Helmer, I. add that love, care, and solidarity are on the good side of a spectrum that involves negative interactions such as hatred, neglect, antagonism, abuse, and violence. As with the previous concept of respect, distributional concepts of love, care, and solidarity can be developed, in which people should receive equal love, care, and solidarity, and everyone also should be equally able to provide love, care, and solidarity to others (Fourie et al., 2015:74). In the case of respect, the equality principles require us to treat each other respectfully; meanwhile, the relational principles of these concepts which can be interpreted as egalitarian is an obligation to treat each other lovingly, caringly, and solidary, rather than to hate, neglect, or abuse each other (2015:74).

#### **2.1.2.2.3. Power**

Power can be looked at through a distributional lens as the same as other relationships. The definition of equality in terms of an equal distribution of power is ensuring an acceptable minimum set of power or protection from the power of others (Fourie et al., 2015:80). Basic rights and liberties can also be considered as

limiting the power that specific individuals have over others (or, similarly, as preserving people's rights to speak, vote, and so on). When discussing about the theories of justice, which are described in terms of absolute freedom or capacities, it appears simple to reframe them in terms of empowerment, i.e., the distribution of an individual's ability to fulfill their goals (2015:81).

#### **2.1.2.3. Social Stratification**

Max Weber, Talcott Parsons, and Alexander Henderson stated the system of social stratification includes the distribution of opportunity in different classes which comes from several class status. A class is an association of people with the same class status. Social class represents a specific category formed from a variety of class statuses which facilitating individuals to shift between different class positions either through personal choices or across generations (1947:424).

The examples of the social class are (a) the 'working' class as a whole; the more mechanized the producing process develops, the closer it becomes to this kind. (b) The 'lower middle' classes refer to economically independent elements which are not employed in large-scale organizations. (c) The 'intelligentsia' without independent property and the persons whose social position is primarily dependent on technical training such as engineers, commercial and other officials, and civil servants. (d) The classes occupy a privileged position through property and education (Weber et al., 1947:427).

#### **2.1.2.4. Gender Equality**

According to Ann Oakley, gender is a term with psychological and cultural rather than biological connotations, which is masculine and feminine, not



male and female (1985:159). She then adds that gender is learned through cultural influences and personal responses, which examines how masculinity and femininity of personality, behavior, attitudes, and roles evolve the culturally-provided experience of gender learning (1985:173).

Gender equality is an urgent matter for both men and women; according to Grönvall in *Swedish Work and Policies on Gender Equality*, gender equality between men and women should include equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for women and men, girls and boys (1998:9). Meanwhile a general definition of gender equality provided by the UNESCO's *Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework* is seen as below:

“Gender equality means that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from economic, social, cultural, and political development.” (2003:17)

Moreover, it also says in the book that gender equality is thus the equal societal valuation of men's and women's similarities and differences, and their roles. It is based on men and women being equal partners in their households, communities, and societies (2003:17).

In addition, this concept is also supported by feminists since feminism is an ideology that opposes gender stratification and male dominance. Feminist perceives and actions aim to help bring justice, fairness, and equity for all women, and to contribute to the creation of a society in which men and women are equal in all aspects of life. In general, feminists strive to understand the nature of women in society to achieve social change that will liberate women from their

oppressive minority status and place them on an equal footing with men (The Editors of Salem Press, 2011:97).

In her journal, Louise A. Tilly stated that working-class and black women in the United States created communities on grounds other than or in addition to sex. Furthermore, middle-class women's class interests occasionally prevented them from fully comprehending or cooperating with women of other classes or ethnicities (1989:445-446). According to Joan Scott, gender as an analytical category focuses on meaning, power, and agency, with gender being a fundamental feature of social relationships based on perceived distinctions between the sexes and gender being a primary manner of conveying power relationships (Scott, 1986:42). Tilly also adds her perspective of power that women had in society which show that women are only actors in revolutionary power struggles, and not the winners (Tilly, 1989:458-459).

Regarding the distinction of power that women and men hold in society, as stated in the theories above, it might cause societal problems that disadvantage people with the least power. Robert L. Allen stated his opinion referring to the struggle in the black community, which says black men must hold each other responsible for the issues dealing with sexism in the community since women and children often live to fear men. He claims that harassment, abuse, rape, and violence are no longer only women's issues but have also become men's issues. Even men have a stake in stopping the abuse because it is directed against women who may be their loved ones (1995:136).

Allen adds that men may be unable to halt the racist state's violence from white people, but they can stop self-inflicted violence in black communities. He says that African American men know intimately the violent capabilities of other men. However, ironically many black men instead have internalized the oppressive system's violence and delivered it into black communities and households (1995:137).

## **2.2. Cinematography**

Cinematography becomes one of the primary and essential aspects in a film. According to Barsam, cinematography is the entire process of capturing moving images on a film or a digital storage device (2010:208).

### **2.2.1. Camera Distance (Shot)**

According to Richard Barsam in the book *Looking at Series: An Introduction to Film*, shots employed in a series refer to the implied distance between the camera lens and the subject being photographed (Barsam, 2010:232). The camera distance (shot) can be categorized into an extreme long shot, a long shot, a medium long shot, a medium shot, a medium close-up a close-up, and an extreme close-up.

#### **2.2.1.1. Extreme Long Shot**



Picture 2.1. Extreme Long Shot

(Film Art: An Introduction: page 191)

The extreme long shot captures the distant objects that look so small and tiny compared to the camera. Barsam stated that an extreme long shot (XLS or ELS) is “typically photographed at a great distance away from the subject that subject is frequently too small to be recognized” (2010: 232).

#### **2.2.1.2. Long Shot**



Picture 2.2. Long Shot  
(Film Art: An Introduction: page 191)

A long shot (LS), known as the full-body shot, shows the character's entire body (almost filling the frame, but with some area above and below visible) as well as some of the surroundings (Barsam, 2010:233). The long shot captures the objects that are even more visible than the extreme long shot which reveals some of the backgrounds.

#### **2.2.1.3. Medium Long Shot**



Picture 2.3. Medium Long Shot  
(Film Art: An Introduction: page 191)

The medium long shot (MLS), also known as the two-shot, according to Barsam, is neither a long nor a medium shot but something in the midst.

It is used to photograph one or more characters as well as some of the background; usually, the characters are shot from the knees up (2010: 233).

#### **2.2.1.4. Medium Shot**



Picture 2.4. Medium Shot  
(Film Art: An Introduction: page 191)

A medium shot (MS), which falls somewhere between a long shot and a close-up, shows a character from the waist up or their entire figure if they are seated. The MS is the most common type of shot because it replicates our human experience of proximity without intimacy; it provides more body detail than the LS (Barsam, 2010:234).

#### **2.2.1.5. Medium Close-up**



Picture 2.5. Medium Close-up

(Film Art: An Introduction: page 191)

The Medium Close-up (MCU) depicts a character from the middle of the chest to the top of the head. It shows a close-up of the character's face, capturing minor changes in expression and providing information about the character's posture (Barsam, 2010:234).

#### **2.2.1.6. Close-up**



Picture 2.6. Close-up  
(Film Art: An Introduction: page 191)

The close-up (CU) produces when the camera shoots very near to the subject. Although it typically depicts the entire head (including the shoulders), it can also depict a hand, eye, or mouth (Barsam, 2010:234).

#### **2.2.1.7. Extreme Close-up**



Picture 2.7. Extreme Close-up  
(Film Art: An Introduction, page191)

The extreme close-up (XCU or ECU) is a very close-up shot of some details depicted in the series (Barsam, 2010:234). This shot contains one specific object to capture a scene in the smallest possible area.

### **2.2.2. Camera Angles**

According to Richard Barsam, the camera's shooting angles refers to its level and height in relation to the subject being captured. It is another framing element for the filmmaker that provides many expressive possibilities. For filmmakers, there are the other basic camera angles that used except for eye level shot which represent the normal height of camera as people see the world, there are high angle, low angle, Dutch angle, and aerial view (2010:242).

#### **2.2.2.1. Eye Level**

An eye-level shot is taken from the audience's point of view and usually means that the camera has a neutral attitude toward the subject being photographed. An eye-level view utilized early in a film—as part of establishing its characters, period, and place—occurs before the audience has learned the overall context of the plot, so they naturally interpret it as neutral (Barsam, 2010:242).

#### **2.2.2.2. High Angle**

A high-angle shot (a high shot or down shot) is taken from above the action and frequently conveys the observer's superiority to the photographed subject (Barsam, 2010:243).

#### **2.2.2.3. Low Angle**

A low-angle shot (low shot) is taken with the camera below the action, frequently placing the observer in a position of helplessness in the face of superior power (Barsam, 2010:243).

#### **2.2.2.4. Dutch Angle**

A Dutch-angle shot (Dutch-tilt shot or oblique-angle shot) is one in which the camera is slanted from its ordinary horizontal and vertical position, giving the viewer the sense that the world in the frame is out of balance (Barsam, 2010:244).

#### **2.2.2.5. Aerial View**

An aerial-view shot (bird's-eye view shot) is a form of extreme point-of-view shot taken from an aircraft or a very high crane and implies the observer's omniscience (Barsam, 2010:246).

### **2.2.3. Mis-en-Scène**

#### **2.2.3.1. Costume**

The setting of a film generally governs the design of the costumes (the clothing worn by an actor in a movie, known as a wardrobe), which can contribute to that setting and suggest specific character traits such as social station, self-image, the image that the character is trying to project for the world, state of mind, overall situation, and so on. As a result, costumes are yet another aspect that contributes to the story of a film (Barsam, 2010:171).

Barsam stated further about costume which says when the setting takes time in the past, costume designers may need to conduct significant research to



maintain authenticity. Even with the studies, clothes in historical films frequently fail to accurately depict aspects such as women's necklines, breast forms, and waistlines (Barsam, 2010:171).

#### **2.2.4. Sound**

According to Barsam, sound which includes talking, laughing, singing, music, and the aural effects of objects and settings can all be as expressive as any other narrative or artistic element of cinematic form (2010:368). There are types of film sound which used by the filmmakers that divided into four general categories: (1) vocal sounds; (2) environmental sounds; (3) music; and (4) silence.

##### **2.2.4.1. Vocal Sounds**

Vocal sounds frequently rule most films because they convey a significant part of the narrative weight. There are two type of vocal sounds that used in a film, there are dialogue and narration.

###### **2.2.4.1.1. Dialogue**

Dialogue is the speech of characters either visible onscreen or speaking offscreen which become plot function because it arises from situations, conflict, and character development. Furthermore, dialogue is influenced by actors' voices, facial emotions, and movements and is thus a product of acting (Barsam, 2010:379).

###### **2.2.4.1.2. Narration**

Meanwhile narration, the commentary spoken by either offscreen or onscreen voices, is frequently used in narrative films, where it may emanate from an omniscient voice (thus, not one of the characters) or from a character in the movie (Barsam, 2010:380).

#### **2.2.4.2. Environmental Sounds**

##### **2.2.4.2.1. Ambient Sound**

Ambient sound is recorded during production or added during postproduction and comes from the atmosphere (or background) of the setting or environment being filmed (Barsam, 2010:381).

##### **2.2.4.2.2. Sound Effect**

Sound effects are any sounds that are made artificially for the soundtrack and have a specific purpose in delivering the story. Except for those made on electronic equipment to intentionally create electronic sounds, all sound effects come from "wild" recordings of real things, and it is the responsibility of the sound designer and sound crew to select and combine these sounds to create the hyperreality of the film's soundtrack (Barsam, 2010:381).

##### **2.2.4.3. Music**

Dramatically motivated music can be classical or popular in style, written specifically for the film or taken from music previously composed for another purpose, written by composers known for other types of music or by those who

specialize in music scores, or music played by the characters in the film or by offscreen musicians, diegetic or nondiegetic (Barsam, 2010: 383).

#### **2.2.4.4. Silence**

Silence, paradoxically, provides a similar purpose when the filmmaker intentionally mutes the spoken, environmental, or musical noises that viewers expect to hear in a picture. It has the power to make a scenario seem meaningful or even prophetic. Furthermore, by carefully balancing sound and quiet, a filmmaker might create a new rhythm for the picture that draws attention to the characters' perceptions (Barsam, 2010:388).

### **2.3. Research Methods**

#### **2.3.1. Method of Data Collection**

In composing this research, the writer uses library research to collect the data to support the discussion of the study. The library research method utilizes the writer to use primary and secondary data relevant to the study. Mary W. George in her book *The Elements of Library Research*, defines library research as a method that requires identifying and locating sources that provide factual information or personal/expert opinion on a research question, a necessary component of all other research methods at some point (2008:6).

Furthermore, the writer also uses primary and secondary data. Primary data are the data collected for the specific research problem, using procedures that best fit the research problem. In contrast, secondary data is the material created by other researchers is made available for reuse by the general research community (Hox & Boeije, 2005:593). The primary data of this research is both the series and

the dialogue of *Self Made: Inspired by The Life of Madam C.J. Walker*, including screenshots of specific scenes in the film. At the same time, the secondary data are taken from the thesis, books, and journals from other researchers.

### **2.3.2. Method of Approach**

Based on the background of this research that mentions social and gender equality in *Self-Made: Inspired by The Life of Madam C.J. Walker*, the writer uses sociological and feminist approaches in analyzing the extrinsic aspect of this research to evaluate the relationship between the chosen film, social class, and women.

The sociology of film proposed by Jacob Peter Mayer in his book *Sociology of film*, develops towards the goal of film sociology as study of reception. In this approach, he aimed to answer: 1) which ethical values do films teach, and how do these value patterns relate to the real norms; 2) what is the relationship of both norms of films and real norms in the evolution of absolute value. Mayer comes to the conclusion that it is difficult to provide entertainment that is liberated from moral rules. Regardless of whether it is merely for entertainment, the power of visualization produces values. The fact implies that films and moral standards are inextricably linked (Mayer, 1946:267).

Bressler in his book *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice* also defines feminist criticism as:

“a subfield of feminist studies which defined as an umbrella term for a variety of approaches to culture and literature that are of particular interest to women. The aims and methods of feminist criticism is its focus on patriarchy, the rule of society and culture by men.” (2011:144)

Applying these approaches through the chosen film helps the writer to analyze the research topic about social and gender equality, which then the writer can reveal the existence of the issues in the chosen object of the study.