

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Nowadays, gender discrimination has become a widespread phenomenon. In most societies, men are often perceived as the superior gender, excelling in all aspects of life compared to women. Men are stereotypically associated with traits, such as physical strength, rationality, and independence. Conversely, women are often viewed as the weaker, more futile gender, characterized by physical frailty, irrationality, and excessive emotionality. This constructed notion of gender differences has perpetuated discriminatory attitudes and behaviors towards women. According to Beauvoir (2010:29), men consistently strive to subjugate women through the imposition of rules designed to foster women's reliance on men. Consequently, women find themselves in a vulnerable position, vulnerable to oppression and deprivation of freedom at the hands of men.

The persistent oppression faced by women has fueled their struggle against gender inequality, giving rise to the feminist movement. This movement represents the awakening of women's consciousness to the unequal treatment they endure in the fields of politics, society, and economy. Moreover, feminist theory emerged as a comprehensive framework for examining society, social dynamics, and the human condition from the perspective of women. The central aim of this theory is to create a "better world for women," one free from the shackles of gender-based discrimination and inequity. However, the feminist movement centers on achieving

equality and justice for women, who have historically been viewed as subordinate to men in both the public and private spheres. Feminists advocate for women's rights as human beings on par with men, such as equal opportunities to vote, work, and receive a fair education. A significant milestone was achieved in 1920, when women's suffrage was finally granted in the United States through the 19th Amendment to the Constitution (Horton and Simmons, 2006:73). The past struggles of feminists paved the way for modern women to secure the right to vote and must be acknowledged. Nevertheless, despite the hard-fought victories of earlier feminists, there remains substantial ground to cover in realizing women's rights that continue to be denied by societal norms and practices.

Women's struggle against the oppression they face represents their struggle to demand equal rights with men. Women are trying to gain gender equality and a start to fight for their human right to live as a worthy and independent being without oppression from men or society. This struggle is linked to the feminist movement, which also seeks to establish gender equality between women and men. This aligns with Tong's (2009:46) assertion that the true essence of feminism is a state where women are liberated from oppression. Consequently, the feminist movement serves as the primary instrument for women to fight for their rights and freedoms.

"Captain Marvel" serves as a cinematic embodiment of feminist struggle ideals, weaving the narrative around the journey of Carol Danvers, who transforms into a powerful superhero. Set against the backdrop of a male-dominated society, the film navigates Carol's path of self-discovery, challenging societal expectations, and overcoming gender discrimination. The storyline unfolds as Carol unravels the

truth about her past, confronting the manipulative tactics of the Kree, an alien race exploiting her powers for their own purposes.

Her character becomes a symbol of the feminist struggle, rejecting limiting stereotypes and embracing her strength. The movie delves into themes of women's struggle and friendship, exemplified through Carol's bond with Maria Rambeau, highlighting the strength derived from supportive relationships among women. Furthermore, Carol, as Captain Marvel, fights for equality, empowerment, and the dismantling of gender-based stereotypes. The movie stands as a testament to the resilience and strength of women, urging audiences to reflect on and challenge societal norms that perpetuate gender inequalities.

The writer is particularly interested in doing the research because the movie provides a representation of feminist themes within the superhero genre, offering a unique perspective to examine issues of gender equality. The analysis of the movie will focus on the main character, Carol Danvers. The character of Carol Danvers/Captain Marvel serves as a potent symbol of resilience and strength, making the movie a rich source for analyzing feminist struggle. In this research thesis, the writer will focus on analyzing the cause, struggle, and impact of Carol to become a feminist struggle in the Captain Marvel Movie.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the topic and research background, there are several problems that will be analyzed. The problem is presented in the form of a research question below:

- 1.2.1 What is the intrinsic aspect in *Captain Marvel (2019)* Movie?
- 1.2.2 What is the background of Carol to become a feminist figure in *Captain Marvel (2019)* Movie?
- 1.2.3 What is the struggle of Carol to become a feminist figure in *Captain Marvel (2019)* Movie?
- 1.2.4 What is the impact of Feminist Movement on Carol in *Captain Marvel (2019)* Movie?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the statements of the research questions, in this reserach the writer has several objectives to be achieved as the result of the study. The objectives are below:

- 1.3.1 To analyze the intrinsic aspect in *Captain Marvel (2019)* Movie
- 1.3.2 To analyze the background of Carol to become a feminist figure in *Captain Marvel (2019)* Movie
- 1.3.3 To analyze the struggle of Carol to become a feminist figure in *Captain Marvel (2019)* Movie
- 1.3.4 To analyze the impact of Feminist Movement on Carol in *Captain Marvel (2019)* Movie

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study directs the focus on analyzing the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects. The intrinsic aspects delve into an examination of the narrative elements, such as character and characterization, conflict, and cinematographic elements. Meanwhile, regarding to extrinsic aspects, this study undertakes an analysis of the representation of woman's struggle rejecting oppression by Carol such as the causes of Carol to become a feminist figure in Captain Marvel Movie, the struggle of Carol as a feminist figure in Captain Marvel Movie, and the last one is the impact of feminist movement on Carol in Captain Marvel Movie.

1.5 Previous Study

There are several studies that have the same topic that are related to this research thesis. These three previous studies have served as the writer primary sources for composing and expanding this research process thesis thus far.

The first study previous is an international journal entitled *Perception of Gender-Stereotype in Films: A Case Study on "Captain Marvel" Superhero Movie* written by Kien Tsong Chau, Pau Yen Ooi, Tan Rurng Jang Amos from University Sains Malaysia. It discusses the Malaysian audiences' perceptions regarding issues of gender stereotyping on the film Captain Marvel. Essentially, it examines whether Malaysian viewers appreciate and resonate with the contextual messages and representations surrounding women conveyed through Captain Marvel's narrative.

The second study is an international journal entitled *Captain Marvel (2019)* written by Kyle Killian from Journal of Feminist Family Therapy. It discusses how

the movie "Captain Marvel" diverges from conventional comic book origin stories by introducing its protagonist, Carol Danvers, in a unique and compelling manner. Nonetheless, "Captain Marvel" serves as an important example of feminist storytelling in the superhero genre, challenging entrenched stereotypes and advocating for greater gender equality in media representation.

The last previous study is a research thesis entitled *Gender Portrayal in the Marvel Cinematic Universe* written by Jess Ameter. It discusses the way gender is portrayed within the popular Marvel Cinematic Universe. This paper examines how gender roles are portrayed in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, especially in relation to the limited number of female characters. It also looks at how female characters are treated by other characters, their significance in the storyline, the stereotypes they face, and the connection between Marvel fans and the company itself.

This research thesis is very different from any other previous studies. There are three differences from the research data, the research theory, and the research method. Firstly, in contrast with the previous studies above, the data of this research thesis will focus on analyzing the main character "Carol" as a feminist figure. Secondly, this research thesis will use feminist theory approach to examine the Carol's feminist struggle to accomplish the goals of this research thesis. Thirdly, the previous studies above use questionnaire methods and audience reviews to collect the data. Meanwhile, this research thesis will use the library research method to collect the data. Primary data is from the Captain Marvel film itself and other data is from journals or books.

1.6 Method of the Study

1.6.1 Research Approach

The writer uses two approaches. The first one is objective approach, the writer uses objective approach to analyze the intrinsic aspects. Intrinsic aspect consists of narrative elements and cinematographic elements of the movie. According to Abrams (2009:63) the objective approach involves analyzing a literary work on its own terms, without considering the writer's perspective. The character, setting, and conflict are examined profoundly to offer a coherent explanation and analysis of the movie.

In addition to that, the writer uses feminist approach to analyze the extrinsic aspect. According to Lauretis (1984:29) The feminist approach is an interdisciplinary mode of analyzing cinema that draws from semiotics, psychoanalysis, literary theory, and feminism itself. It aims to challenge the predominance of masculine perspectives and the portrayal of male subject positions in films. To understand the concept more deeply, the writer uses the theory of radical feminism by Rosemarie Tong.

1.6.2 Method of Data Collection

The writer uses the library research to collect the data. Library research encompasses the process of discovering and pinpointing sources that offer factual information or personal/expert opinions relevant to a research query (George, 2008:6). It serves as a fundamental component of various research methodologies at some juncture.

In analyzing the movie, the writer uses two kinds of data, they are the primary and secondary data. According to Bryman (2012:14) primary data is the information that is collected firsthand by the researcher specifically for the purpose of the study. The primary data of this research thesis is the movie entitled Captain Marvel (2019) directed by Anna Boden and Ryan Fleck.

Secondary data is the information that has been collected and analyzed by someone else for a different purpose, but it is utilized by the researcher for their own investigation (Bryman, 2012:15). Secondary data are collected from books, journal and articles related to the movie and the theory of the study.

1.7 Writing Organization

In this research, there are four chapters that each explain about:

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives the reader a brief overview of this study. In this section, the writer explained the background of the study, research problem, objectives of the study, previous study, and scope of the study.

CHAPTER 2: THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, the writer discusses some theories and concepts which are intrinsic aspects including film theory, narrative elements, and cinematographic elements. The writer also explained extrinsic aspects.

CHAPTER 3: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter delivers the data and the analysis for completing the research question. In this section, the writer discusses the causes, the struggle, and the impact of the feminist movement on Carol in the Captain Marvel movie.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

The last chapter contains the final conclusion of the analysis by summarizing the important points of the research.