

PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTERS IN THE LION KING MOVIE

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ABSTRACT

The researcher observed that each literary work was created with a specific purpose in mind, such as teaching positive values through the characterization of the characters. Included in the animated film *The Lion King*, which has become a favourite children's film since its release in 1994. This study aimed to analyse psychological aspects of characters in the movie. The psychological analysis was based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory which consists of physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization needs. The researcher applied a qualitative approach and a descriptive method for this research. The researcher found that the psychological needs felt by the characters in *The Lion King* film were related to the basic needs for food and space based on the findings of the analysis. The security needs were always related to the need for the characters' lives to be safe. The need for closeness and attention from family and friends is related to the need for love and belonging. In the researcher's analysis, esteem needs were related to the need for recognition and strength, particularly in the characters of Simba and Mufasa. The most dominant psychological aspect in the characters, Simba, is his strong need of self-actualization. He desired to prove his existence and ability to a great king, as his father.

Keywords: *Character, Movie, Psychological*

INTRODUCTION

A literary work is a fictional world structure that describes the work's reality. Even if literary works are fictitious, they are still related to real-world reality. Literary works provide not only entertainment but also added value, such as the value of beauty, the value of life, or moral teachings. A literary work is a medium used by an author to convey his ideas as a means of connecting the ideas the author wishes to convey. Related to the definition of literary work, (Klarer, 2013) stated that, "Literary work refers to the entirety of written expression, with the restriction that not every written document can be categorised as literature in the more exact sense of the word".

Literature work consists of several types. Safitri (2019) divides literature into oral/popular literature and written literature. Oral literature is literary work delivered orally, but literature is centred on writing. People who do not know how to write letters have no written literature, only

oral traditions. Every literary work contains a structural element, which is a design framework that combines various film elements and represents the filmmaker's thoughts. Shitiani (2011) stated that structure can be found in all works of art. In film, it weaves action and ideas into a cohesive whole.

Literature is expanding rapidly in the current era of modernization. Technology is becoming more advanced, which has an impact on the world of literature. The phenomenon of film adaptations of literary works has existed for decades. Many films have been commercially and critically successful, particularly in terms of audience and public acceptance. To analyse a literary work is to identify the separate parts that make it up, to determine the relationship among the parts, and to discover the relation of the parts to the whole (Kenney, 1966).

Character is important because it conveys the author's message, which can result in various values in human life such as morality, education, and so on. Characters are the fictional structural elements that give birth to events. Characters in fiction are divided into two types based on their involvement in the overall story. The central figure or characters come first. The central character is the one who plays the most important role in the story, and whose existence can be determined in three ways: (1) the character is most involved with the meaning or theme of the story; (2) the character is most related to other characters; and (3) the character takes the most time to tell.

The objective of this research is to conduct a psychological analysis of the characters in the movie *The Lion King*. About the definition of characteristic, according to (Abrams, 1971), is the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as endowed with particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the person says and their distinctive ways of saying it the dialogue and from what they do the action. The term psychology derives from the Ancient Greek language, specifically from the words *psyche* (soul, spirit, soul, atma, and life) and *logos* (science or study). It is often interpreted etymologically as the science of psychology or the study of souls or spirits. The researcher used Abrahams Maslow's theory in this analysis, which consists of Psychological Needs, Safety Needs, The Love and Belonging Needs, Esteem Needs, and Self Actualization Needs.

This film, directed by Jon Favreau, tells the story of Simba, a young lion who was born as a king and eventually succeeded Mufasa, his father. Simba admired his father greatly. Not all animals, however, celebrate Simba's birth. Scar, Mufasa's brother, has his own plans. He plots a battle for the 'Stone of Honor' involving betrayal, destruction, tragedy, and drama, forcing Simba

to flee and be exiled. Simba must find a way to grow and reclaim what is rightfully his with the help of two new friends.

Because of the researcher's interest in literary works, the researcher decided to analyse literature in film form. The researcher also observed that each literary work was created with a specific purpose in mind, such as teaching positive values through the characterization of the characters. Included in the animated film *The Lion King*, which has become a favourite children's film since its release in 1994. The researcher decided to analyse the live action version of *The Lion King* film in his research, which has the same plot as the animated version but is presented in a more realistic live action format. *The Lion King* (2019) is also the second film to win a Golden Globe for Best Musical or Comedy, following *Beauty and the Beast*. The researcher noticed that the characters in this film had interesting and educational psychological aspects to analyze by depicting the iconic characters. Regarding the background of the problem above, the researcher chose the title "Psychological Analysis of The Characters in *The Lion King* (2019) Movie".

METHOD

This research began with data collection, data reduction, data classification, data analysis, data display, and the writing of the findings and discussion of this research. To give clearer explanation, the researcher conceptualised the timeline into the following matrix.

Tabel. 1

Timeline Research Plan

No	Research Plan	Days													
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1.	Data collection	■	■												
2.	Data reduction			■											
3.	Data classification				■	■	■								
4.	Analysis						■	■	■	■					
5.	Data display									■					
6.	Finding & Discussion										■	■	■	■	
7.	Conclusion														■

The researcher applied a qualitative approach and a descriptive method for this research. Qualitative work could be completed in a timely manner. Rather than a number, the data was collected in the form of words as a concise description. Descriptive research is a study that

attempts to accurately explain a phenomenon based on the study characteristics. (Huyler & McGill, 2019) writes in his book:

“Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures. Data typically collected in participant settings. Data analysis inductively builds from particulars to general themes. And the researcher makes interpretations of the meaning of the data. The final written report has a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way meaning. And the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation”.

According to the quotation above, qualitative research was used to determine the process of research and procedures used to collect data, and the researcher could interpret the data. Carrie (2007: 3) stated that qualitative research could also be defined as an unfolding model that took place in a natural setting and allowed the researcher to develop a level of detail from high level involvement in the actual experiences.

According to the statement, the meaning of qualitative research is related to the description method, which means it is research whose goal is to accurately describe a phenomenon. As a qualitative analysis, the data collected in this research were in the form of dialogue of the characters in The Lion King movie which indicated the psychological aspects according to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory which consists of physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization needs. The researcher used The Lion King movie (2019) to be analysed. This movie was directed by Jon Favreau and produced by Walt Disney Studios. It was released in 2019, with the duration of 1 hour and 58 minutes. According to Walt Disney Studios on Thursday (18/7/2019), the live-action version of the story is very similar to the animated film, which was released in 1994.

The researcher collected data for this study in some ways. Data collection is defined as the process of gathering, measuring, and analysing accurate information for research purposes using standard, validated techniques. Narrative research analysis is a broad term that encompasses a variety of approaches that rely on the written, spoken, or visual representation of individuals. These approaches typically centre on individuals’ lives as told through their own stories. This section explains the steps taken in this research, such as how the researcher obtained data by watching the movie and taking important notes, which helps the researcher in analysing the movie.

In order to obtain data and facts, the researcher conducted qualitative research using qualitative research techniques. The researcher made use of documentation. It means that in qualitative research, the researcher used some files that had a correlation or support the problem of the research. Because the research was descriptive, the researcher described and analysed the facts discovered in The Lion King movie to answer the problems that have been formulated in the formulation of the problem.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The objective of this research was to analyse the psychological aspect of the characters in The Lion King movie. The psychological analysis was based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory which consisted of physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization needs. Based on the technique of the data analysis, the data was collected by reading the script, watching the movie, and noting the necessary lines and dialogues.

1. Psychological Needs
2. Safety Needs
3. Love and belongingness needs
4. Esteem needs
5. Self-actualization needs

Discussion

1. Analysis of the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

a) Psychological needs

Nurhasanah (2019) stated that fulfilling basic psychological needs can support optimal learning conditions and encourage student involvement in the learning process at school. The Lion King movie tells the story of Simba, a lion cub who was expelled from his homeland after his father, Mufasa, was killed by his uncle, Scar, for the throne. He met Simon and Pumba while in exile. They were the ones who raised Simba. Simba considered returning to the kingdom to reclaim the throne from his uncle over time.

b) Safety Needs

The researcher found that the safety needs of the characters most consisted of safety of life since the characters frequently faced situations where their life was threatened. According to

(Yuli Marseli Simbolon, 2019), the safety need is one of human needs. Its function is to protect our lives from bad things that come from anywhere and at any time. Safety needs are the need for security in life. This need is to ensure our quality of life is safe and comfortable. One of the examples is shown in a scene when Mufasa panicked when he found out that Simba was in danger. Mufasa said, *"Simba? I'll find him."* while he runs to find and save his son, Simba. Tragically, while attempting to save Simba, Mufasa crashed into a valley where the Stampedes were fleeing.

c) Love and belongingness needs

Based on the analysis, the researcher found love and belongingness needs in the dialogue of the movie. According to (Fehr, 1991), love can be studied as "a relationship, as an attitude, as an experience, and so on". Most of the expression indicated needs of friendship, intimacy, trust, and acceptance of family and friends. Nur Laili Sabiela (2017) stated if a person has lack of love and belongingness, possessions, and attachment, this can also have an impact on the individual's health and character factors. One of the dialogues between Zazu and Scar when Scar was asked to meet Mufasa for congratulating coronation ceremony of Simba. Scar said, *"Life's not fair...is it, my little friend? While some are born to feast... others spend their lives in the dark. Begging for scraps. The way I see it...you and I are exactly the same. We both want to find a way out."* This dialogue shows Scar felt abandoned by Mufasa as his own brother. There was a dialogue where Nala asked Simba to go back to their homeland but he did not want to return to his homeland to fight Scar.

d) Esteem needs

The researcher found that most of the needs of the characters were need for respect. According to (Maslow, 1970) the need for respect or reputation is most important for children and adolescents, and it comes before true self-esteem or dignity. There is a need of esteem, recognition of respect, one of which is shown by the following dialogue *"His Majesty has requested an audience. Upon his entrance, you will rise and genuflect."* and *"You will answer to Mufasa for missing the ceremony this morning."* which depicts Scar being asked to meet Mufasa after Simba's coronation ceremony.

e) Self-actualization needs

Most of the needs were felt by Simba to actualize his ability as the future king of his homeland, such as *"Let's do this. So. What's first? Give orders for the hunt? Chase away evil*

intruders?”, “Dad, let me come! I can help”, “I am not a cub.”, “I know how to hunt, Uncle Scar.”, “See? All clean. Can we go?”, “Trust me, I got this. Follow me to freedom.”, “Oh, I just can't wait to be king.”, “No one says “do this”. No one says “be there”. No one is saying “stop that”. No one is saying “see here”. Free to run around. Free to do it all my way.” There was also dialogue from Zazu when he tried to warn Simba, *“It is my sworn duty to keep you safe. You listen to me right now”* to show his authority to keep Simba safe. Unfortunately, Simba just answers easily, *“Danger? I laugh in the face of danger.”* As well as when Mufasa tried to advise Simba, Simba said, *“I just wanted to show you. I could do it. That I could be brave like you.”* During a dialogue between Scar and Sarabi, Scar said, *“I tried to make you understand what a true king can be.”* to show his power as a king.

2. Psychological Analysis

According to (Tresno, A., Alfian, A., & Saputra, 2020), research entitled *Psychoanalysis of The Main Character as Seen in the Movie Brightburn by David Yerovesky*. This research discussed the psychology of the main character as seen in Brightburn Movie directed by David Yerovesky. The findings in this research showed that the main character's characterization was delivered indirectly within the conversations. This research also showed that the main character experiences some external conflicts of character versus society and reacts to them using Id. The researcher will then discuss the hierarchy of the above needs based on the analysis of the needs of the characters in The Lion King film. This hierarchy will describe each character's psychological aspects.

1) Simba

Simba is the main character in the film The Lion King. Simba is the son of a lion king named Mufasa. As the son of a king, Simba enjoyed privileges that ensured his basic needs, such as psychological needs, security, and affection from both parents, were met. As a result, the next hierarchy of needs that he attempts to meet is the need for self-esteem and self-actualization. Simba is a character with a lot of self-confidence and courage, as well as the typical mischief of a child. As evidenced by the fact that he frequently disregards his father's advice to stay within their territory. He also once boldly invited his friend Nala to go to the Elephant Graveyard, a dangerous place teeming with hyenas. In the end, the hungry hyenas nearly killed Simba and Nala. Simba carried out all of the mischief or bravery so that he could be recognized for his bravery by other characters such as Nala, his mother, and uncle. He also felt the need to actualize himself in order to show that he, like his father, had the potential to become a great king.

2) Mufasa

Mufasa was a wise and powerful king. He has a younger brother named Scar who wanted to be a king. Nonetheless, Mufasa regards Scar as a brother. Mufasa's wisdom was also shown when he advises Simba to become wise because he would be the heir to the throne.

3) Scar

Scar is Simba's uncle, and he is the antagonist in this film. Scar was envious of his brother's greatness and power, and he desperately wanted Mufasa's throne. According to the analysis, the Scar character has difficulty meeting his basic psychological need for food because he cannot hunt at will. He also finds it difficult to fulfil his need for safety because his basic needs are not being met; he also feels insecure because his older brother's power is always overshadowing him. Scar's character cannot fulfil the need for love and belongingness because he preferred to be alone and never interacted with other lions, and his life appears gloomy. Scar struggled to meet his needs for self-esteem and self-actualization as a result of his inability to meet his basic needs. Despite the fact that he was able to seize Mufasa's power and kill him, as well as expel Simba as a descendant of the king from his kingdom, Scar was still not respected in the same way that his older brother was. Despite being king, he did not appear to be as good as Mufasa because he obtained the throne through deception, including deceiving hyenas. Scar had to pay for his cruelty when Simba returned to his kingdom and succeeded in seizing the throne that was rightfully his, and Scar died at the hands of the hyenas.

CONCLUSION

The researcher found that the psychological needs felt by the characters in The Lion King film were related to the basic needs for food and space based on the findings of the analysis. The security needs were always linked to the need for the characters' lives to be safe. The need for closeness and attention from family and friends is linked to the need for love and belonging. In the researcher's analysis, esteem needs were related to the need for recognition and strength, particularly in the characters of Simba and Mufasa. The analysis of self-actualization needs relates to Simba's need to demonstrate his existence and ability to become a great king like his father.

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