

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

B.1 Theoretical Framework

The section on theoretical framework provides a theoretical explanation of the theory used. The related research review section includes research that supports this theory.

B.1.1 Heroism

Heroism is defined as "great bravery" or "a heroic act" according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary. This definition captures the essence of heroism, which involves both physical courage and moral integrity in the face of adversity (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). The idea of heroism is morally complex and difficult to define. Because heroism covers many different aspects, it cannot be easily understood. Heroism is acceptable if the actions are already visible and have an effect on the surroundings.

As stated by Hochman (2000), "A hero is something or someone who is admired for their bravery or good qualities, such as the main character in a play who is strong enough to defend others." Researchers believe a hero is someone who overcomes adversaries and defends those in need in order to protect peace.

Like so many other concepts, "heroism" is a high-level abstraction that is essentially moral in nature. As such, it requires a logical philosophical framework that includes the mind-body integration principle as its fundamental foundation. The idea cannot be well grasped or properly defined without such a foundation. (Basil Bernstein, 2002)

Heroism may also refer to actions taken freely without expecting reward or other benefits in order to help others or society. Selwyn W. Becker & Alice H. Eagly (2004) say in "The Heroism of Women and Men" that acts of heroism involve helping others even when doing so puts the helper in danger of losing their life or getting hurt.

There is also another important element of heroism, namely sacrifice, which is also confirmed by William R Thomas (2001) in *The Assault in Civilization* the concept of heroism is self-sacrifice. Heroism is the state of someone who wants to help others by making a sacrifice.

Another element of heroism explained by Restivo in Taylor (2001) said "One of the most crucial elements for all heroes is empathy. It's in their basic wiring that they want to be at the heart of difficult events because they receive a great rush or thrill from it. It functions nearly automatically. They never pause to reflect. They simply feel compelled to act". It denotes a kind of courage that arises spontaneously and is based on an urge that happens under certain circumstances.

After examining the idea of heroism, Kinsella (2015) discovered that the majority of the fundamental characteristics of heroism consist of bravery, moral integrity, conviction, courageousness, self-sacrifice, protecting, honesty, self-less, determined, helping others, and inspiring.

By looking at the character of Ben Randall who is not from the military, researcher also needs to understand studies about civil heroism,

one of which is a study from Perry William who says, “a person's decision to act heroically in civil circumstances is influenced by both situational and personal factors. When reacting to emergencies, people are more likely to rely on instinctive, gut-instinctive reactions than on deliberate, analytical thought processes. The potential of intervention can be greatly impacted by elements like emotional valence, closeness to the incident, and perceived similarity to the victim.” Therefore, it can be concluded that situational factors and a person's personal traits have the potential to produce acts of heroism.

B.1.1.1 Bravery

In the context of heroism, bravery is the capacity to face difficulties and threats head-on and frequently put oneself in danger in order to aid or defend others. It entails being prepared to face uncertainty, fear, and possible injury in order to fulfill a moral obligation or accomplish a larger objective. Heroes must possess bravery because it allows them to make daring decisions that could be challenging or even fatal.

Research conducted by Becker and Eagly in (2004) in the Journal of Social and Personal Relationships emphasizes the significant role of bravery in heroic behavior. According to their research, people who are viewed as brave are more likely to be viewed as heroes because bravery is strongly associated with acting courageously and selflessly in difficult circumstances.

Kinsella (2017) also added “Heroism requires bravery beyond physical bravery; it also requires a willingness to take chances, face difficulties head-on, and give up something in order to advance the greater good. It is a quality that can be shown in both extraordinary and commonplace circumstances, elevating common people who choose to act bravely and selflessly into heroes.”

Researcher conclude bravery is one of several key traits of heroism, Allison and Goethals (2020) said “Heroism requires bravery beyond physical courage; it also requires a willingness to take chances, face difficulties head-on, and give up something in order to advance the greater good. It is a quality that can be shown in both extraordinary and commonplace circumstances, elevating common people who choose to act bravely and selflessly into heroes.”

B.1.1.2 Altruism

The definition of altruism refers to doing what is beneficial to the betterment of others, even at personal risk or expense. This type of behavior is defined by altruistic deeds done for the benefit of others without considering reward or gain for oneself. Heroism that embodies altruism is defined by selfless deeds that entail great risks or sacrifices in order to aid or protect others. It is a voluntary, selfless kind of assistance that works in both conventional and heroic contexts. The idea is essential to comprehending the intentions and actions of people who perform

heroic acts, as these people are frequently motivated by empathy and a desire to help others.

Significant research studies have demonstrated that a basic component of heroic behavior is altruism in heroism, or the selfless act of assisting others at personal risk or expense. Research by Batson (2014) on "Empathy and Altruism" challenges the idea that all helpful behavior is ultimately self-serving by showing that empathy-induced altruism can result in truly selfless heroic acts. His empathy-altruism hypothesis, which demonstrates that people who have empathy for others are more likely to assist even when they could easily avoid doing so and when their assistance is anonymous, lends credence to the idea that genuine altruism is the motivation behind heroic action.

Altruism is an important predictor of heroic behavior, according to research. Heroes frequently have strong altruistic tendencies, motivated by empathy and a desire to help others without expecting anything in return, according to a study published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (Monin, 2002).

To add to this, "The Banality of Heroism" by Franco and Zimbardo (2006) implies that everyone has the capacity for altruistic heroism under the correct conditions. It is not just a trait of extraordinary people. They argue that rather than being a result of innate personality qualities, heroic behavior frequently results from environmental circumstances, suggesting

that the potential for selfless bravery is more common than previously thought. When taken as a whole, these studies demonstrate that altruism in heroism is both a real phenomenon with roots in empathy and a universal potential that can be triggered in the correct circumstances.

B.1.1.3 Resilience

Heroism requires resilience because it allows people to overcome hardship and carry out their acts of heroism in the face of difficulties. The connection between resilience and heroism was done by a researcher named Salvatore R. Maddi (2007) in his study entitled "Relevance of Hardiness Assessment and Training to the Military Context." Maddi's work on hardiness, a key component of resilience, provides valuable insights into heroic behavior. He discovered that those with high levels of hardiness, a trait defined by dedication, mastery, and challenge, were more likely to sustain their well-being and productivity in high-stress environments. This is closely related to heroism because heroic people frequently deal with extremely trying and stressful circumstances.

Adding to this, research on resilience by Ann S. Masten and colleagues, especially in their paper "Resilience in development: The importance of early childhood" (2015), highlights that resilience is a skill that can be acquired over time rather than a fixed trait. This supports the notion that heroic potential is developable. According to Masten's

research, resilience is developed through early experiences and supportive relationships, and resilience can then encourage heroic tendencies.

B.1.4 Empathy

Empathy plays a vital role in heroism, often serving as a key motivator for heroic actions. It refers to the ability to understand and share the feelings of others, which can drive individuals to take risks or make sacrifices to help those in need, this statement also confirmed by Adams (2013) in his study he said “Individuals with high level of empathy are more likely to act heroically because they have a strong sense of empathy for other people's needs and emotions.”

Empathy is crucial for the emergence of heroic behaviors, as it allows individuals to understand and respond to the needs of others. Kohen (2019) argue “Those who are highly empathetic may have improved situational awareness, which increases their sensitivity to minute signs of danger or distress. Heroic deeds are characterized by compassionate action, which is often the result of empathic awareness. Furthermore, in times of crisis, empathy can cause emotional contagion, inspiring onlookers to take heroic action to ease the suffering of others.”

The relationship between resilience and heroism is supported by a study that was published in the Journal of Positive Psychology. It shows how resilient people are better able to handle stress and bounce back from

trying circumstances, which makes them more likely to participate in prosocial behaviors like acts of heroism (Walker & Frimer, 2007).

B.1.2 Civic Heroism

The term "civil heroism" describes bravery and selflessness displayed by people in the framework of their society or community, frequently in support of social justice, the general welfare, or democratic principles. In contrast to traditional heroism, which can entail amazing deeds in dire circumstances, civic heroism is defined by deeds that advance the common good, frequently via activism, advocacy, or volunteer work. These heroes act out of a sense of moral and civic duty, and their deeds frequently spur others to action and effect social change.

Research on civic heroism underscores its importance in fostering a sense of community and encouraging civic engagement. Carlo et al. (2003) conducted a study that was published in the *American Journal of Community Psychology*. The study looks at the contribution civic heroism makes to social cohesion and community issues. The study demonstrated the tremendous influence of these actions on social justice and community well-being by showing that people who commit acts of civic heroism are frequently driven by empathy and a desire to make a positive contribution to society.

People who display civic heroism frequently have internal motivations, such as a strong desire to have a significant impact and a deep

commitment to social values. According to the research, being involved in civic life exposes people to the needs of the community and the possibility of making a personal contribution, which fosters the growth of these kinds of motivations.

Another study on civic heroism is "Understanding the Nature of Heroism," by Zimbardo et al. (2011). This study looks at the psychological aspects that motivate people to commit acts of heroism as well as other aspects of heroism, such as civic heroism. It highlights the significance of social contexts and situational elements in influencing heroic behavior and the fact that regular people can display extraordinary bravery in specific situations.

This highlights the fact that acts of civic heroism are not limited to heroic deeds performed in amazing situations, but can also include routine deeds motivated by compassion and a dedication to the greater good.

B.1.3 Heroism by Becker and Eagly

Becker and Eagly (2004) explain that heroism has 4 important aspects, namely: situational factors, personality traits, transformation and growth and the last is altruistic motivation.

B.1.3.1 Situational Factors

Situational factors refer to external occurrences or circumstances that affect the possibility of heroic actions. Situational factors are those

outside events or surroundings that affect the probability of heroic actions. Becker and Eagly states, "Situational elements are essential in determining the setting in which heroic actions take place." The dynamic interplay between internal motives and external conditions that leads to the occurrence of heroic deeds is highlighted by situational factor". They emphasize the contextual aspect of heroism, pointing out that although heroic action is shaped in large part by personal qualities and principles, it is also greatly influenced by the local environment and its obstacles.

Philip Zimbardo (2017) also confirmed that "Situational factor of heroism sets that heroic actions are significantly affected by external circumstances instead of solely by an individual's intrinsic qualities." According to Zimbardo, situational factors such as social pressures, group dynamics, and environmental conditions play a crucial role in deciding whether an individual acts heroically. This perspective proposes that ordinary individuals can perform extraordinary acts of heroism when put in the right setting, as the situation can inspire heroic behavior by giving openings, making a sense of duty, or requesting an ethical reaction. The theory underscores the significance of understanding the setting in which gallant acts happen, emphasizing that heroism can emerge in anyone given the proper circumstances.

In another study entitled "The Banality of Heroism" from Franco he stated "that situations rather than inherent personality qualities are

usually the cause of heroic behavior. They argue that the majority of heroic deeds are performed by regular people who happen to be in extraordinary circumstances.”

B.1.3.2 Personality Traits

Personality traits describe ingrained qualities in people that make them more likely to behave heroically. These characteristics affect how people react to external circumstances and how likely they are to display heroic behaviors. According to Becker and Eagly, personality features highlight the unique talents and attributes that make certain people more likely to behave heroically. Though circumstantial elements contribute to heroic actions, personality qualities offer a basis for comprehending why certain people persistently display bravery, empathy, and selflessness in trying conditions.

Kandra Cherry (2024) stated “Personality traits refer to the individual characteristics that predispose a person to perform heroic acts. These characteristics regularly incorporate courage, empathy, altruism, and a solid sense of justice.” Courage permits people to confront fear and threats, whereas empathy and altruism drive them to help others, even at a personal cost. A strong sense of justice motivates heroes to stand up against wrongdoing and fight for what they believe is right. Other significant traits might incorporate resilience, which helps heroes endure hardships, and moral integrity, which guides their

activities according to moral standards. Whereas situational factors play a noteworthy part in heroism, these identity characteristics can impact a person's likelihood to act heroically in different situations.

B.1.3.3 Transformation and Growth

Transformation and growth are terms used to describe the process of personal evolution and development that people go through when they participate in heroic deeds or experiences. This part of the theory emphasizes how heroic actions may cause people to undergo significant transformations that impact their identity, values, and sense of purpose. The heroism theory has evolved and transformed, highlighting the significant influence that heroic conduct may have on a person's relationships, values, and personal growth.

Zimbardo (2017) also added “The idea that ordinary people can become heroes through transformative experiences.” His Heroic Imagination Project focuses on educating individuals about the potential for heroism inside themselves and empowers proactive steps to cultivate heroic behavior. Zimbardo accepts that through training, education, and self-awareness, people can transform and grow into heroes, ready to act when situations demand it.”

B.1.3.4 Altruistic Motivation

The underlying desire or purpose that inspires selfless actions is referred to as altruistic motivation. In particular, it highlights the fact that

heroes are driven by a sincere concern for other people's welfare and frequently prioritize the interests and safety of others over their own.

According to Eagly and Becker, altruistic motivation emphasizes the essential quality of unselfish care for others as the primary factor that propels people to perform heroic deeds. It emphasizes the idea that becoming a hero involves more than just bravery or skill, it involves the deep human ability for moral fortitude and empathy in the face of difficulty. Zimbardo (2017) also added that "Heroes are often motivated by altruism, which involves acting for the good of others without expecting personal gain or reward. This altruistic motivation is a fundamental aspect of heroic behavior, as it involves a willingness to sacrifice for the greater good.

B.1.4 Textual Analysis

Textual analysis is the process of analyzing text. A text is something we make meaning from. A text is an object that we draw upon when we interpret it. Anytime we create an interpretation of a meaning through a book, movie, magazine, T-shirt, or even piece of furniture, we treat it as a text. (McKee, 2003)

Robert McKee provides a thorough framework for comprehending and crafting compelling narratives in his textual analysis approach, which is mainly covered in his book "Story: Substance, Structure, Style, and the

Principles of Screenwriting" (1997). McKee's textual analysis focuses on breaking down a story's structural components to see how they interact to produce meaning and elicit feelings. He highlights how important the "story spine" is, which is the series of events that make up the main plot, and how different aspects of the story, like character development, conflict, and theme, work together within this framework. According to McKee, "progressive complications," or a sequence of escalating conflicts and obstacles that gradually heighten tension, are the foundation of effective stories. His analysis also emphasizes the importance of "beats" or "turning points" that change the course of the narrative and encourage character development. Beyond plot structure, McKee's approach looks at dialogue, subtext, and the work's general "controlling idea" or main theme. This thorough method of textual analysis has influenced literary criticism, narrative theory, and screenwriting by offering a structured framework for comprehending the creation of stories and the reasons behind their appeal to audiences. (McKee, 1997)

Textual analysis focuses on the specific details of the text, such as its structure and the vocabulary and style employed to convey meaning. We looked through the codes to find places where knowledge and power were discussed, along with who was using them and how.

As stated by McKee (2003), textual analysis is a method that researchers may use to learn more about how other people interpret the

world. Because there is no fixed connection between the signifier and the signified, media texts can be interpreted in a variety of ways.

In this research, textual analysis will be used to analyze the film *The Guardian* (2006) which tells the story of Champion swimmer Jake learning the true meaning of heroism and sacrifice when he meets Ben Randall. After a devastating storm caused him to lose his crew, Ben was sent to train other swimmers at the academy.

B.2 Review of Related Research

The first study came from Kohen (2013), in his book entitled "Untangling Heroism: Classical Philosophy and the Concept of the Hero." He explains in detail how and why the suffering hero, Odysseus, and the warrior hero, Achilles, were replaced by the other-regarding hero, Socrates. Lastly, he delves further into four modern-day heroic situations that exemplify Plato's achievements. According to Kohen, we have decided to value heroes who make selfless decisions over those who prioritize others in a post-Socratic society. Kohen contends that only when people accept their deaths will they be able to reflect clearly on the kind of life they wish to have led, and only then will heroic deeds become possible.

Another study entitled "Heroism as Seen in Sequel Movie *Spiderman 2: A Semiotic Analysis*" in the form of a thesis or final project by Suana (2014). This research found that symbols in physical appearance are

symbolic and iconic. All symbols have their own meaning. For example, the physical appearance of costumes and accessories are symbols of the identity of Spider-Man. In the category of social relations, dialogue is symbolic, and activity is an index that symbolizes Spiderman's nature.

Another study that analyzed heroism comes from William Nico Saptono (2015) entitled "Heroism of Roberts Neville in *I am a Legend* Movie." The results of this research analysis show that Neville's heroic qualities as a protagonist include being assertive, creative in finding solutions, religious, and actively helping and fighting enemies. This type of research is library research with the support of analysis of intrinsic elements such as cinematography. Meanwhile, to analyze extrinsic elements, researchers used heroism theory.

There is also research on important aspects of heroism, especially about bravery. Research entitled, "On the Bravery and Courage of Heroes: Considering Gender" by Kinsella, Ritchie, and Igou (2017) they stated that, Heroes are frequently characterized as both brave and courageous, with these terms often used interchangeably in public and academic contexts despite their historical and philosophical differences. Although research on heroes and heroism is growing, detailed analyses of specific heroic traits are scarce, highlighting the need for more precise terminology and conceptual clarity. This article focuses on the characteristics of bravery and courage, examining these concepts and the common gender stereotypes

associated with each. They aim to initiate critical discussions on the personal traits, motivations, and behaviors linked to heroes and heroism, and to propose directions for future research, they explore the role of gender and gender stereotypes in shaping future theory and research on heroism.

The study of novels that researchers found during this literature review. It belongs to Sawira, Jumino Suhadi, and M. Manugeran (2017) published through Language Literacy journal, entitled "Heroism in Lin Carter's Novel *The Quest of Kadji*". This study uses Krathwohl's qualitative descriptive method and Kohen's theory of heroism. This study aims to describe, explain, and validate things about heroism in the novel *The Quest of Kadji*. This study found that there are three forms of heroism shown by Kadji, the protagonist in the novel, namely courage, sacrifice, and suffering.

Another study is entitled "Heroism in Harry Potter Series" by Anja Štravs (2019). The paper examines multiple concepts of heroism in the Harry Potter series and provides a discussion of the heroic traits of the main character as well as a few other characters. It also looks at how the series' bravery affects young people and the transition from traditional hero stories to postmodern hero development.

Rani Meilia Pratiwi's (2018) thesis is entitled "Heroism as Seen in *Big Hero 6* Movie." This research uses Joseph Campbell's heroic adventure theory. The results of this research are to explain the footage in the film

Big Hero 6, which contains the heroic adventures of the characters, including their victories in crises and the transformation of the heroic characters in the film.

Allison and Goethals, *The Social Scientific Study of Heroism: A Systematic Review and Research Agenda* (2020): This comprehensive review looks at heroism research from the perspectives of psychology, sociology, and anthropology, among other social science fields. According to the study, bravery is a crucial element of heroism and is frequently demonstrated by taking risks for the good of others. The researchers stressed the significance of situational elements in encouraging heroic behavior, arguing that heroic acts require context. Based on their research, Allison and Goethals offer a thorough framework for comprehending heroism that takes into account individual traits, contextual elements, and cultural influences, offering a comprehensive method for researching this intricate phenomenon.

The study was entitled "*The "Super" Traditional Dancer: Her Shared Destiny with Common Superhero*" by Widya Nirmalawati, Andrik Purwasito, and Sri Kusumo Habsari (2021). The purpose of the study is to understand the heroic values contained in folklore and to expose Srintil's heroic qualities and the factors that undermined her bravery. The notion of heroism is employed in the research, and data was gathered via reading, taking notes, and recording dialogue and narration. The study highlights

the importance of understanding the concept of a superhero in the context of traditional dancers and their shared destiny with common superheroes.

The study belongs to Ria Yuliasari and Rika Virtianti (2021) entitled "Type of Heroism of Main Character and The Cause of Emergence of Heroism in the Movie *"Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters."* This research aims to analyze the types of the heroism of the main character and the causes of the emergence of heroism in the film "Percy Jackson: Sea of Monster." The research method used is qualitative descriptive to analyze the type of heroism of the main character and the causes of the emergence of heroes in the film. To answer the question of types of heroism, Morison and Labiak's theoretical analysis is used, while to analyze the causes of heroism, Restivo and Cherry's theory is used. This research found that the main character Percy Jackson is included in the type of perfect hero and epic hero. Meanwhile, the causes of heroism are bad situations, injustice, and self-sacrifice.

Through the references above, it can be concluded that there are at least two differences between previous studies and my study, namely: First, the object of study in my research takes the character of "normal" humans, not superhumans which have been studied by many previous researchers. This take on "ordinary" human characters is a researcher's consideration for shifting the paradigm of exclusivity of heroic acts that have been perpetuated through superhero films. Second, even though the

grounded theory has been used in several of the studies above, the focus of the analysis that I use is different by adding a psychological perspective from the main character to understand the heroic acts represented in the film *The Guardian*.

