

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

B.1 Hegemonic Femininity

Hegemonic femininity refers to the socially constructed ideals of what it means to be a "proper" woman, reinforcing a gender hierarchy where women are expected to embody traits that complement and support male dominance. The term was developed by R.W. Connell as an extension of hegemonic masculinity, which describes the dominant ideals of masculinity that uphold male power in patriarchal societies. According to Connell, hegemonic femininity serves to justify and reinforce male superiority by promoting characteristics such as passivity, nurturing behavior, emotional sensitivity, and physical attractiveness.

Hegemonic femininity is not biologically determined but culturally constructed, meaning that societies define and shape what is considered "appropriate" behavior for women based on historical, economic, and social contexts. Connell argues that this dominant form of femininity exists in opposition to hegemonic masculinity, ensuring that women remain subordinate in social structures. One way this occurs is through rigid gender roles that distinguish male and female expectations. Tong explains that in patriarchal societies, women are traditionally encouraged to be gentle, obedient, supportive, and emotionally expressive, while men are expected to be assertive, dominant, and ambitious.

These social expectations are not only reinforced in everyday interactions but are also embedded in institutions such as family, education, work, and mass media.

Sylvia Walby expands on this by identifying systematic gender inequalities that arise from hegemonic femininity, particularly in the economic sector. For example, the gender wage gap persists because women's labor has historically been undervalued. The gendered division of labor continues to expect women to perform most unpaid domestic work, even when they participate in professional fields. Additionally, societal double standards judge women more harshly than men for displaying traits associated with masculinity, such as ambition or assertiveness. These inequalities show that hegemonic femininity is not only a set of gender expectations but also a structural system that reinforces male privilege and limits women's opportunities.

One of the most powerful ways hegemonic femininity is reinforced is through media representation, particularly in film, television, literature, and advertisements. Gill explains that media plays a significant role in constructing femininity by repeatedly portraying women in roles that align with hegemonic ideals. This is particularly evident in animated films, where female characters have traditionally been depicted as damsels in distress, love interests, or secondary figures who exist to support male protagonists. Traditional animated films often show women as dependent on male protection, prioritizing beauty and romance over personal ambition, and being rescued rather than being the hero of their own story. However, in recent years, some animated films have begun challenging

these portrayals, introducing female protagonists who defy hegemonic femininity and assert their independence.

B.2 Judith Butler's Performativity

Butler (1999) explains that gender does not stay the same over time and varies with race, class and region, the reason that it is impossible to view gender separately from the "cultural intersections" that "produced and maintained" gender. She states that gender is performative. Gender "is real only to the extent that it is performed." Gender is performative gives explanation of how gender identity is formed through a set of acts.

Judith Butler's concept of performativity, particularly presented in her work "Gender Trouble," is primarily linked to her perspectives on gender. She posits that gender is not an inherent or unchanging identity but rather a socially constructed phenomenon performed and reiterated through actions, behaviors, and language. Butler's performativity theory challenges conventional notions of gender as a stable or essential identity, highlighting that gender is an ongoing performance that evolves with each repetition. This perspective rejects essentialist views, stable identities, as well as notions of authenticity, authority, universality, and objectivity. Butler's performativity theory has played a crucial role in critiquing traditional power structures and opening up new avenues for understanding gender expression and identity. It has triggered extensive academic discussions and significantly influenced contemporary perspectives on gender and identity.

B.3 Cinematography

Cinematography is the aspect of filmmaking that determines how the world of a story is visually presented to an audience. The most important aspect of story telling is the portrayal of characters with whom the audience is invited to identify (Nicholson, 2010). Cinematography can be used to represent female characters in movies by employing various techniques to develop and convey the traits of the characters. Some of these techniques include:

- a. Camera angles:** Filmmakers can use specific camera angles to emphasize the emotions, physicality, or actions of female characters, such as close-ups, over-the-shoulder shots, or high angles.
- b. Lighting:** The choice of lighting can influence the appearance and mood of female characters, highlighting their emotions or physical attributes
- c. Editing:** Editing techniques can be used to emphasize or diminish certain aspects of a female character's portrayal, such as her emotions, actions, or relationships with other characters
- d. Mise en scene:** The arrangement of objects, settings, and props within the frame can contribute to the development of female characters, as well as the portrayal of their emotions and relationships
- e. Costume and makeup:** These elements can be used to emphasize the femininity, power, or vulnerability of female characters, shaping the audience's perception of their roles and emotions

f. **Movement:** Camera movement, such as tracking shots, pans, or zooms, can follow or emphasize the actions and emotions of female characters, further developing their portrayal.

B.4 Review of Related Researches

Literature review begins with examining previous research that is related and relevant to the research that the researcher will conduct. Thus, researchers get references, supporters, complements, and comparisons in compiling this research so that it is more appropriate. Previous research that has similarities with the research study topic "*A Woman's Struggle Against Hegemonic Femininity in The Croods 1 (2013) Movie*" The study titled "*Hypermasculinity in The Croods Film: A Descriptive Study*" by Budianto Lestari examines the concept of hypermasculinity in the 3D animated film *The Croods*, focusing on the character of Grug. The research contributes to understanding hypermasculinity as portrayed in *The Croods* film, emphasizing positive aspects for the individual and their surroundings. However, further investigations into hypermasculinity representation across different media forms are warranted to provide a comprehensive perspective on this subject within the context of Femininity Hegemony.

One relevant study that informs this research is the work titled "*Performativitas Gender dan Narasi Queer dalam Film: Kajian Komparatif atas 'Portrait of a Lady on Fire,' 'Brokeback Mountain,' dan 'Memories of My Body' Berdasarkan Pemikiran Judith Butler*" by Salman Al Farisi, Nasruddin Suyuti, Raisah, and La Aso. This study investigates the concept of gender performativity and queer

narratives in three films using Judith Butler's framework. The comparative approach highlights how gender identities are constructed performatively and how queer narratives are represented and managed in these films. The study identifies key themes, including the diverse ways gender performativity and queer narratives unfold in visual media, and emphasizes the iterative and performative nature of gender construction. By analyzing characters in the three films, the study provides insights into how gender identities and queer experiences are portrayed artistically, reflecting the nuances and complexities of individual identities within societal contexts.

This research contributes to understanding gender performativity and its intersections with queer theory, illustrating the potential of Butler's theoretical lens in revealing the iterative acts that constitute identity. The study also critically evaluates hegemonic norms, such as heteronormativity, and how these norms are resisted or reinforced through film narratives.

The referenced study provides a foundational framework for understanding the application of Judith Butler's Performativity Theory in media analysis, particularly in exploring how gender identity is constructed through performative acts. While the study by Salman Al Farisi et al. focuses on gender performativity and queer narratives within live-action films, my research adapts these theoretical insights to an animated film, *The Croods*. Specifically, it examines the character of *Eep* and her portrayal of femininity, offering a focused exploration of how performative acts shape her gender identity within the narrative.

Moreover, the concept of hegemonic femininity—which is intertwined with Butler’s ideas on gender performativity—is also central to both studies. The referenced study critiques how films either reinforce or challenge heteronormative and gendered societal norms. Similarly, The researcher investigates how *Eep’s* character conforms to or deviates from the ideals of hegemonic femininity. This involves analyzing her behaviors, interactions, and appearance to uncover how her femininity is constructed and whether it perpetuates or resists dominant norms of femininity in media.

Additionally, the comparative approach used by Salman Al Farisi et al. inspires a layered analysis of how performativity operates in different contexts. While their study draws comparisons across multiple films, my research focuses on a single character to deeply analyze her performative acts, situating the findings within the broader discourse on gender performativity and representation in visual media. This complementary approach enriches the understanding of how gender identities are represented and provides a nuanced perspective on the implications of media portrayals of femininity for societal norms.

Another significant study that aligns with this research is titled "*Pemaknaan Khalayak Terhadap Performativty Gender dalam Film Kucumbu Tubuh Indahku*" by Emilia Erica Pinasthika, Nurul Hasfi, and Rouli Manalu. This research explores the interpretation of gender performativity in the Indonesian film *Kucumbu Tubuh Indahku* through the lens of Judith Butler’s theoretical framework. The study posits that gender is not a fixed or binary concept but a fluid and socially

constructed identity that emerges through repeated performative acts. These acts are shaped by individual experiences, societal expectations, and cultural norms, emphasizing Butler's idea that gender is an ongoing process rather than an inherent attribute. The research highlights how performative acts in the film illustrate the fluidity of gender identity and challenge the rigid binaries often upheld by traditional norms.

The findings underscore the potential of media to provoke reflection and dialogue about the diversity of gender experiences, while also acknowledging the challenges posed by cultural and religious constraints in achieving full acceptance of gender fluidity. By focusing on the performative nature of gender as depicted in *Kucumbu Tubuh Indahku*, the study enriches the understanding of how media representations can shape perceptions and provide a space for renegotiating societal norms. This aligns directly with Butler's argument that gender performativity is an iterative process, constructed through repeated actions within a social framework that constantly redefines the boundaries of identity.

This study serves as a crucial foundation for the analysis conducted by the researcher, as both are grounded in Judith Butler's Performativity Theory. While Pinasthika et al. analyze performativity in the context of an Indonesian live-action film, the researcher applies the same theoretical framework to the animated character *Eep* in *The Croods*. Both studies seek to uncover how gender identities are constructed, performed, and mediated through visual storytelling.