

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A.1 Background of the Research

The hierarchy of needs appears in real life, and the characters are depicted in literary works, including films. Writers create characters that exhibit human behaviour, emotions, and thought processes, creating a sense of realism for the audience. The researcher is interested in exploring the hierarchy of human needs in the main character and the challenges faced in fulfilling this hierarchy.

Ellen Pastorino and Susann Doyle Portillo (2010) explain that psychology studies behaviour and mental processes, encompassing biological functions, emotions, and conditions. Cognitive processes involve activities such as problem-solving, intelligence, and memory. This field examines human behaviour and actions to explore expressions of the human mind, encompassing actions, emotions, and biological states.

Psychology explains and studies the mental processes typically experienced by adults and individuals considered normal, such as perception, determination, emotions, motivation, and more. It addresses human actions in terms of physical movement and a wide range of behaviours, including talking, running, observing, remembering, and other activities. Exploring psychology involves trying to understand humans as individual and social entities.

Literature is a powerful tool for understanding humanity, yet individuals are much more intricate than how they are represented in literary works. Many

aspects of human life remain hidden and cannot be easily seen on the surface. Like the psychological perspective, a focused approach is essential to thoroughly explore these concealed facets. There is a significant connection between literature and psychology. According to Aras (2015), a profound connection exists between literature and psychology since both fields address human beings and their responses, hardships, hopes, fears, and conflicts.

Psychology and literature can be used together to study many different topics. What is special about this approach is that it can also examine people's basic desires and needs. The researcher can see that a person's needs affect how they live their lives. This relationship between needs and human behaviour is well explained in Abraham Maslow's theory, which shows how different levels of needs drive people throughout their lives. Someone has to survive and have a good quality of life; someone's necessities must be met.

According to Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs, the following demands are prioritised: physiological, safety, love and belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. Maslow referred to these needs as instinctual, indicating that they are inherited. However, these needs can be influenced or suppressed by experiences, societal norms, and fear of rejection. While we are born with these needs, the ways we meet them are learned and can vary between individuals. The needs are organised from most to least important, meaning that basic needs must be somewhat met before higher needs start to matter. (Schultz & Schultz, 2017).

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People who have fulfilled their needs and reached the peak of the hierarchy of needs are called self-actualized individuals. According to Schultz & Schultz (2017) "The self-actualised process may take many forms, but each person, regardless of occupation or interests, is capable of maximising personal abilities and reaching the fullest personality development."

The information in this research is based on an animated movie entitled Moana. "Moana" is an animated movie released on November 25th 2016, in Indonesia. Disney's Moana is an animated movie produced by Walt Disney Animation Studios and released in 2016. John Musker and Ron Clements directed it. It quickly became an international bestseller, mesmerizing the movie audience with its story that blends animation, adventure, comedy, family, fantasy, and musical elements. This animated movie has a strong background in wildlife research. It brings a unique and authentic perspective in describing the sea environment and natural life, which is the primary setting of the animated movie. The story is centred around the fictional island of Motunui.

Moana is a brave and determined girl from Disney's animated movie Moana (2016). She is 16 years old and the daughter of Chief Tui, making her the future leader of Motunui Island. Her father has a strict rule that no one should venture beyond the reef, but Moana loves the ocean and dreams of exploring what lies beyond. One day, her island begins to experience problems: fish stop coming, and crops don't grow. Moana's grandmother, Tala, tells her an old story about how the demigod Maui stole the heart of the goddess Te Fiti, which caused the natural balance to become unbalanced. Moana realises she must journey across the sea, locate Maui, and bring back the heart to save her island and her people of Motunui.

Moana begins her adventure across the ocean, facing storms and formidable challenges. She finds Maui and asks him to help her, even though he initially doesn't want to. Together, they face dangers like coconut pirates and a giant crab named Tamatoa. As they travel, Moana learns how to sail and find her way using the skills of her ancestors. Over time, Moana and Maui begin to trust each other, and Moana becomes increasingly confident in herself and her journey.

Moana and Maui face Te Ka, a fiery lava monster who protects Te Fiti's island. At first, they lose the fight, and Maui's magical fishhook gets damaged. Feeling sad, Moana almost gives up but finds new courage and decides to face Te Ka alone. She discovers that Te Ka is actually Te Fiti, who has changed after losing her heart. With kindness and bravery, Moana returns the heart to Te Ka, transforming it back into Te Fiti and restoring peace and balance to the world.

While enjoying and analyzing the literary work in the form of an animated movie from Disney, entitled Moana, the researcher identifies an issue suitable for analysis using a humanistic psychological approach, specifically the hierarchy of needs concept by Abraham Maslow. All the earlier referenced studies form the groundwork for the researcher's analysis. The hierarchy of needs is depicted in the Moana Movie (2016). Both the first and second research articles discuss the Moana Movie. The first article is written by Chew (2022) Entitled *'Humanity rising from the depths of brine': an oceanic politics in Disney's New Review of Film and Television Studies*. Meanwhile, the second study was written by Hollowell (2021) *Chief Tui Makes Way: Moana, Misogyny, and the Possibility of a Pro feminist Ethic*. The second article explores misogyny and the potential for a pro-feminist ethic. The researcher found an unresolved gap, as no research had analyzed the hierarchy of needs by Maslow in the Moana Movie. This indicates the hierarchy of needs, which can be explored further to understand how the character Moana utilizes them to fulfill her self-actualization through the return of Te Fiti's heart. Applying Maslow's theory to analyze Moana's character can also offer new insights into the representation of humanistic psychology in animated movies, while enriching our understanding of the intersection between individual needs and social responsibility.

The main character, Moana, is the daughter of the Chief of Motunui, Polynesia. This made the researcher curious to see if she could still fulfill her needs and become self-actualized. Therefore, the researcher employed a psychological

humanistic approach, as seen in Psychological Growth: A Maslowian Reading of Character Development in *Moana* (2016).

A.2 Problems of the Research

1. How does Moana's Character in Disney's *Moana* align with the stages of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs?
2. What traits of self-actualization are depicted in Moana's actions during her quest to restore Te Fiti's heart?

A.3 Objectives of the Research

1. This research aims to explain how Moana's Character in Disney's *Moana* aligns with the stages of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.
2. This research aims to explain the traits of self-actualization reflected by Moana, the main character, in achieving self-actualization through the return of Te Fiti's heart.

A.4 Significance of the Research

As a reference to English Literature students of the Faculty of Culture Science and Communication at Muhammadiyah University Purwokerto, who are to analyse a literary work, especially a movie, as an object, this research holds significant value in bridging the fields of psychology and scholarly analysis, offering a unique lens through which to understand character development in popular media. By applying Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the study systematically unpacks Moana's journey, illustrating how the fulfillment of basic

human needs progressively leads to higher-level aspirations, culminating in self-actualization. This not only provides a concrete example of Maslow's theory in action within a fictional narrative but also enriches the understanding of character arcs, making complex psychological concepts more accessible and relatable for students of literature and general audiences alike. Ultimately, it demonstrates the enduring relevance of humanistic psychology in interpreting the art of storytelling.

Furthermore, the study contributes to the growing body of academic work that explores the psychological depth of animated films, particularly those from Disney. Often perceived as mere children's entertainment, films like *Moana* are rich with intricate themes and character complexities that mirror real-world human experiences. By meticulously analyzing *Moana's* motivations, challenges, and ultimate triumphs through a Maslowian framework, this research elevates the discussion around animated narratives, showcasing their potential as powerful vehicles for exploring psychological growth and identity formation. This encourages a more critical and appreciative engagement with popular culture, highlighting its capacity for profound humanistic insight.

A.5 Limitations of the Research

Based on the problems identified in problem identification, the researcher limited this research to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which reflects the journey of self-actualization, as found in *Moana* (2016).

A.6 Definition of the Key Terms

1. **Psychological Needs:** Physiological needs sit at the foundation of the hierarchy of needs, indicating that they must be met before an individual can concentrate on other needs, like safety, affection, or self-esteem. This need is crucial because individuals cannot engage in other activities effectively without meeting basic needs or striving for higher life objectives.
2. **Safety Needs:** Safety needs refer to the second level in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, right after physiological needs like food, water, and shelter are met. In short, once people feel their basic needs are met, they will seek safety and protection to ensure their long-term survival and well-being.
3. **Love and Belongingness Needs:** Love and belongingness needs constitute the third level in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Once physiological (basic survival) and safety needs are reasonably satisfied, individuals are motivated by the desire for social connection and affection.
4. **Self-esteem Needs:** Self-esteem needs are the fourth level in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, appearing after physiological, safety, and love/belongingness needs have been reasonably satisfied. Individuals tend to feel confident, capable, and valuable when self-esteem needs are met. They are more likely to be productive, contribute positively to society, and pursue higher goals.

5. Self-actualization: Self-actualization is the highest level in Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. It represents the realization of one's full potential and the drive to become everything one is capable of becoming. It's important to remember that self-actualization is a lifelong journey, few people consistently operate at this level. However, motivated towards self-actualization can lead to a more fulfilling, meaningful, and purposeful life.

A.7 Organisation of the Research Report

This final project is divided into five chapters. Chapter one presents the Background of the Research, Problem Formulations, Objectives of the Research, Significance of the Research, Limitations of the Research, and Organisation of the Study. Chapter two explains Review Literature and related study that consists of the Theoretical Framework, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and Character Development. Chapter three describes the Research Method, which includes the Type of Research, Data, and Source of the Data, Methods of Collecting Data, Techniques of Collecting Data, and Methods of Analysing Data. Chapter four conducts Data Description, Data Analysis, and Discussion. Chapter five consists of the Conclusion and Suggestions.