

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Moana (2016) is an animation film directed by Ron Clements, John Musker, Don Hall (co-director), and Chris Williams (co-director). It was produced by Walt Disney Animation Studios and distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures (Tamaira et al., 2018). It was released on 25th November 2016 in Indonesia. The characters of this film were voiced by famous western artists, such as Auli'i Cravalho as Moana, Dwayne Johnson as Maui, Rachel House as Gramma Tala, Temuera Morrison as Chief Tui, Nicole Scherzinger as Sina, and many more. The genres of this film are animation, adventure, comedy, family, fantasy, and musical.

Moana tells the life story of the village chief's daughter, Moana, who struggles to save and protect the village and her family from the thief named Maui. Moana was born in the island village of Motunui, and she is the daughter of Chief Tui and Sina, who grew up with love. Motunui is a mythical island, which existed about 3,000 years ago. The story and culture of Moana are based on the very genuine heritage and history of Polynesian islands like Hawaii, Samoa, Tonga, and Tahiti. As a girl, Moana is not like most girls, when many girls are quiet and only do trivial things, Moana likes to help solve the problems experienced by her people. Moana helps people because as an only child of the village head, she is expected to be the next leader.

The film starts with Moana's grandmother telling her about the deadly darkness caused by the thieving of the heart of the goddess Te Fiti by the demigod, Maui. As a result, the fishermen cannot catch any fish, the crops fail, and the coconut is poisonous. To solve the problem, Moana takes a boat to cross the sea to find Maui, the thief, and restore the heart together, even though she does not know how to sail.

Before Moana goes, her father forbids her. He says that Moana should learn to be a chief by the land, not a sea voyager. As a young woman, Moana has a tough choice, whether she needs to follow her wishes or the traditions of her village. She proves that she does not fall into the stereotypes of her group's expectations as chief. She fights for her freedom and stubbornly follows her heart to sail and restore Te Fiti's heart. She proves that she has the power to become a leader who does not forget what has become the tradition of her ancestors, which are the sea voyagers. After Moana restores Te Fiti's heart to its place, Motunui becomes as sustainable as before. At the end of the film, Moana can prove that as a woman, she can be a chief and also a sea voyager.

Moana is important to research because the film represents how a woman can be a leader and make her own choices. The writer wants to focus on the problems faced by Moana and how she fights for her freedom. Moana is an excellent example of a girl with freedom who can prove that freedom for a woman exists. Moana, growing up as a teenager, must face various challenges in determining her life path. She is a teenager who behaves firmly and stubbornly, but she likes to help people who need help. She will disapprove if she feels what she does or thinks is right.

This study aims to find out the problems encountered by Moana and how she fights for her freedom in *Moana*. The writer will use the theory which focuses on problems faced by women and women's freedom to examine this film. Fadhillah (2012) mentioned that girls are related to enthusiasm, self-assurance, and, in many cases, beauty. Feminism is related to a woman's freedom since it depicted a woman as someone who is tough and can make her own choices. It is a movement whose goals are to give women their voice in making life decisions, to have equality with males, and to achieve racial, political, and economic equality.

Moana film has been discussed by other researchers. The first research comes from Streiff & Dundes (2017), titled *From Shapeshifter to Lava Monster: Gender Stereotypes in Disney's Moana*. They discussed the gender stereotypes in the *Moana* film. This paper explains three characters in the film. The first one is Moana, a girl who proves her independence to her protective father. The second one is Maui, a thief who

attaches great importance to his hook as a form of hypermasculinity. The last is Mother Island, an island full of sustainability and tenderness, who turns into a vengeful lava monster (Te Kā). This paper concludes that Moana confirms the return of the earth's fertility when Maui is given the gift of his much-loved hook, which symbolizes his manhood. Another research comes from Sumana (2022) with the title *The Girl Power of Disney Princesses in Brave and Moana*. She discussed the girl power shown by Merida and Moana based on the characteristics of girl power. She concluded that Merida and Moana represented the characteristics of girl power, allowing them to show a different side of the princess characteristics that Disney normally presents.

This study is different from the works of previous studies. Streiff & Dundes (2017) spoke about the gender stereotypes of the characters in *Moana*. They found that stereotypical gender tropes also include female abuse of power and a limited conception of masculinity merit analysis to make progress in identifying and addressing patterns of gender hegemony in well-known Disney movies. Meanwhile, Sumana (2022) talked about the girl power in *Brave* and *Moana*. She found that Moana and Merida demonstrated the characteristics of girl power, allowing them to show a different side of the typical Disney princess. The argument in this thesis is that as a woman Moana can fight for her freedom to do what she wants without restrictions from anyone as long as what is done is the right thing.

1.2 Field of the Study

The field of this study is literature, especially film.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the problems faced by Moana and how Moana fights for her freedom when she saves her island from danger.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions are

1. What are the problems faced by Moana?
2. How does Moana fight for her freedom?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are

1. To find out the problems faced by Moana.
2. To find out the way Moana fights for her freedom.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The writer hopes the readers will get some benefits from reading this article. The writer also hopes that the readers can understand the problems faced by Moana and the way Moana fights for her freedom. This research contributes to the readers that women have women's freedom and should fight for their freedom because they are essential for their future choices that will bring a big change in their lives. Hopefully, there will be no more problems for a person's future decisions, especially women.

1.7 Definition of Term

1. Feminism

Feminism is a social movement, theory, ideology, worldview, philosophy, and way of life (Fadhilah, 2012). Cambridge Advanced Learner Dictionary the third edition defined feminism as "the belief that women should get the same privileges, powers, and opportunities as men and be treated equally, or the set of activities designed to reach this condition" (p. 6).

2. Women's Freedom

Women's freedom is an assumption that women can act freely on themselves in all situations (Thongon, 2010).

