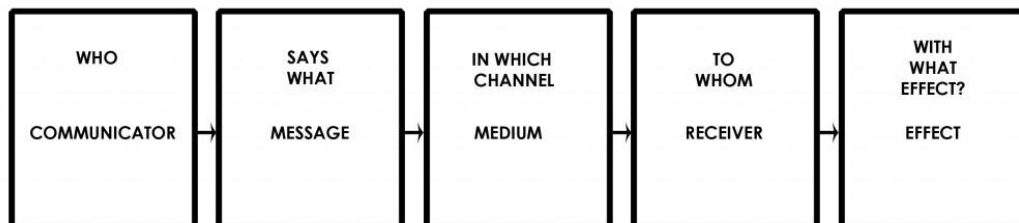


CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I.1. Background of the Problem

Mass communication is a major source of information and entertainment (Wood, 2011, p.41). Other explanation of mass communication comes from Traudt, he noted that “mass communication is the process by which individual audience members engage and give meaning to media content” (2005, p.6). In addition of mass communication studies, Lasswell (1948) linked mass communication with the linear model of communication.



Picture I.1.1. Elements of mass communication studies by Harold Lasswell

Source: Google Images

Lasswell explains the elements in studying mass communication: the communicator (who); media content (says what); the medium (through which channel); the audience (to whom); and the effect (with what effect).

West & Turner (2009, p.9), p.explains that mass communication refers to communication to a large audience via various channel. Furthermore, Nurudin (2007) noted various channel in mass communication called mass media, which are television, radio, internet, magazine, newspaper, tabloid, books, and film (cinema, not camera negative film) as the media or medium. Mass media have an important role in mass communication studies. According to Jay Black and Whitney (1998) cited from Nurudin (2007), there are four functions of mass media which are (1) to inform, (2) to entertain, (3) to persuade, (4) transmission of the culture.

In addition of four functions of mass media, McLuhan (1964, p.7) explain further explanation of the importance of mass media, “The medium is the message.”, which means messages will be constructed if the media is fully utilized. Griffin added, messages do not interpret themselves, the meaning that a message holds for both the creators and receivers doesn’t reside in the words that are spoken, written, or acted out (2012). To conclude, cited from Griffin book, Blumes (2012, p.8) stated, “Humans act toward people or things on the basis of the meanings they assign to those people or things.”

On this media research, the researcher focused on film as one of various media channel in mass communication studies. Cambridge Dictionary (2017) noted, film is a series of moving pictures, usually shown in a cinema or on television and often telling a story. West and Turner (2014) explains, film came from the electronic era which allows different communities in different parts of the world to remain connected.

The researcher examine the portrayal of racial stereotype in “Aladdin” movie by Walt Disney (Clements & Musker, 1992) which is a cartoon or animation film. Habib and Soliman explains that cartoons can also be described as the making of movies by filming a sequence of slightly varying drawings or models so that they appear to move and change when the sequence is shown (2015). These are the elements that keep viewers, (mostly children) sticked to their seats. In such instances, “Film is not even the final target of enquiry, but part of a wider argument about representation, the social process of making images, sounds, signs, stand for something in film or television” (Turner, 2006, p.59).

Traudt explains that mass media had an immediate, direct, and identical effect on audience member (2005). Shoemaker and Reese (1996, p.24) added, “Media content is the basis of media effect”. In effect, film theory becomes part of cultural studies. Turner (2006, p.59) explains, “Culture came to be redefined as the processes which construct a society’s way of life: its systems for producing meaning, sense, or consciousness, especially those systems and media of representation which give images their cultural significance.” In addition, Wood (2011) explains that media sometimes reinforce cultural stereotypes about race and ethnicity, it can be positive and negative. According to University of Notre Dame (2017), racial stereotypes are automatic and exaggerated mental pictures that we hold about all members of a particular racial group. Wood (2011) added, that a stereotype is a predictive generalization about a person or situation. Of course, there are positive and negative stereotypes, whether things heard or seen in the mass media represent positive or negative message (Traudt, 2005).

The research focused on the Middle-Eastern racial stereotype portrayal in media, the researcher examined common racial stereotype faced by the Middle-Easterner. Middle-Easterner faced sweeping stereotypes about their culture and religion even before the terrorist attacks on 9/11 Tragedy at the World Trade Center. From this incident, anyone who resembled terrorist seen on media from their feature, dress, and accent, be a target of retaliation. Media portrayal of Middle-Easterner often stresses on terrorism and violence. According to Nittle, the media's racial stereotyping of Middle-Eastern people has something produced unfortunate consequences, including hate crimes, racial profiling, discrimination, and bullying (2017). Shaheen (2006) highlighted that American media that portray Arabs and the Middle-East with the same repetitive negative stereotypes over the last century. Shaheen (1983) presented how the American media's ugly and negative stereotypes of Arabs accompany a child from his early years to graduating from college. Through "editorial cartoons, television shows, comic strips, comic books, college and school textbooks, novels, magazine, newspaper, and in novelty merchandise" (p. 328), Arabs were dehumanized and presented as the "bad guys". Shaheen (2006) stated, "I looked at more than 1000 films. Films ranging from earliest obscure days of Hollywood to today's biggest blockbusters."

Aladdin fictional animation movie produced by Walt Disney and released on 25 November 1992 in United States of America. Aladdin is one of the stories compiled in *The Thousand and One Nights*, a collection of Middle-Eastern and Indian folk tales. Middle-East chosen by Walt Disney as Aladdin movie setting,

and cause the Middle-Eastern stereotyping through the film. Cited from BBC

Culture explained:

The film was criticised for perpetuating Orientalist stereotypes of the Middle East and Asia. The American-Arab Anti Discrimination Committee saw light-skinned, Anglicised features in the heroes Aladdin and Jasmine that contrasted sharply with the swarthy, greedy street merchants who had Arabic accents and grotesque facial features (Galer, 2017).

The report queries why a children's cartoon describes Aladdin's homeland as "barbaric", and notes that "good Arabs" including Aladdin are given American accents while the rest of the cast have "exaggerated and ridiculous Arab accents" (Ward, 2007). National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) explains, children between 2 and 5 years of age start to become aware of race, ethnicity, gender, and disabilities. However, Middle-Eastern negative racial stereotype portrayed exaggeratedly in the animation movie. Aladdin (1992) original version by Walt Disney supposed to be the entertainment which is suitable for all ages.

I.2. Identification of the Problem

Media form a pattern in human activities. Mass media affects cultural stereotypes about race and ethnicity, neither positive or negative stereotyping. Usually, the negative racial stereotype addressed to those who have less power in mass media. In Western media, Middle-Easterner are the minority race, and they are the target of negative stereotype. Middle-Easterner faced negative stereotyping even before 9/11 Tragedy of terrorism attack. Anyone who resembles the terrorist on media will be the target of retaliation. Aladdin movie from Walt Disney supposed to be a family movie. However, Aladdin movie portrayed Middle-Easterner, in exact Arabs negative racial stereotyping.

I.3. Statement of the Problem

How Middle-East racial stereotypes as portrayed in “Aladdin” movie by Walt Disney?

I.4. Purpose of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem, this particular study aimed at finding out:

The media portrayal of Middle-East racial stereotype in “Aladdin” Movie by Walt Disney.

I.5. Significance of the Study

There are three significances of the study:

- 1) social significances: to serve the common knowledge about Middle-Eastern racial stereotypes in positive and negative term to the reader.
- 2) academic significances: to motivate other researchers to research media portrayal research.
- 3) practical significances: to give the contribution to the movie production in minimazing the portrayal of negative racial stereotypes towards Middle-Eastern or others.

I.6. Organization of the Study

Chapter I : INTRODUCTION

The researcher describes background of the problem, identification of the problem, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significances of the study, the organization of the study, and the state of the art.

Chapter II : RESEARCH OBJECT

Researcher describes scope of research object which is “Aladdin” Movie and the description of Middle-Eastern race in the movie.

Chapter III : LITERATURE REVIEW

The third chapter consists of literature review, which contains concept and theory related in the research. Theoretical basis used is related theory and support the researcher to measure the findings of research. In this chapter, framework of research included

Chapter IV : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, researcher elaborates the concept of operationalization method, research methodology used, gathering data and data source, triangulation method, data analysis, and the constraint of research.

Chapter V : RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research describes the research findings and will discuss the overall findings and how the findings answer the statement of the problem.

Chapter VI : CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In the last chapter, the researcher will give the conclusion of research and suggestion related to the research.

I.7. State of the Art

- 1) Big-screen aftershock: How 9/11 changed Hollywood's Middle Eastern characters by Matthew Dana on 2009 (The Rochester Institute of Technology)

Table I.7.1. State of the Art 1

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Literature Review | Media Representation |
| Research Method | Content Analysis. Content Coding Sheet based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) physical attributes b) behavioral attributes c) appearance attributes d) terrorism |
| Research Result | Middle Eastern characters in post 9/11 films: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) darker-skinned b) more likely to wear traditional clothing c) less intelligent d) more likely to commit acts of terrorism than their pre-9/11 counterparts. |
| Conclusion and Recommendation | <u>Conclusion:</u> Hollywood's film portrays Middle Eastern character in post 9/11 in to more negative stereotypes than pre-9/11 tragedy. |

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| | <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>Researchers could analyze films from “Bollywood” or other markets.</p> |
| Similarity | <p>a) research on Middle Eastern racial stereotype as portrayed in US media, films.</p> <p>b) use the same characteristics of Middle-Eastern racial stereotype in term of traditional clothing and likely to commit acts of terrorism.</p> |
| Differences | <p>a) researcher specify the reseach of how Middle Eastern portrayed in US media, animation movie from Walt Disney, “Aladdin”</p> <p>b) researcher use Roland Barthes semiology as the research methodology.</p> <p>c) researcher media effect theory, stereotype theory.</p> |

Source: created by the researcher

- 2) Stereotypes of Arab and Arab-Americans Presented in Hollywood Movies Reselased during 1994 to 2000 (“True Lies”, “Executive Decision”, “The Siege”, “The Mummy”, “Three Kings”, “Rules of Engagement”) by Yasmeen Elayan on 2005 (East Tennessee State University)

Table I.7.2. State of the Art 2

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Literature Review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) stereotypes and myths about Arabs and Arab-Americans b) historical, cultural, and religious information about Arabs and Arab-Americans. c) current event involving Arabs/Arab-Americans. d) effects of stereotypes |
| Research Method | <p>Content Analysis.</p> <p>Content Coding Sheet based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) noticeable accent b) traditional/native attire c) acts of aggression d) acts of hostility e) terrorism f) victimizers g) Arab/arab-americans victims |
| Research Result | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) fail in offering balanced viewpoints or other characters that may present more positive representations of the Arabic heritage and ethnic group as a whole. b) negative opinions of Arabs, Arab-Americans, and Islam. |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Conclusion and Recommendation</p> | <p><u>Conclusion:</u></p> <p>Negative stereotypical of Arabs and Arab-Americans in connection with hostility, aggression, speech patterns, traditional/native dress, and victimization.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>In order to retain positive portrayals and balance within the movie industry, filmmakers can counter consistently negative portrayals by placing Arab and/or Arab- American characters in the protagonist's role rather than solely the antagonistic role.</p> |
| <p>Similarity</p> | <p>a) research of Stereotypes of Arabs and Arab-Americans from film using similar literature review.</p> <p>b) use the same characteristics of Middle-Eastern racial stereotype in term of noticeable accent, traditional/native attire, acts of aggression, and terrorism.</p> |
| <p>Differences</p> | <p>a) researcher specify the reseach of how Middle Eastern portrayed in US media, Walt Disney films, "Aladdin"</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | b) researcher use Roland Barthes semiology as the research methodology |
|--|--|

Source: created by the researcher

3) Before and After 9/11: The Portrayal of Arab-Americans in U.S. Newspaper by Cherie Jessica Parker on 2008 (University of Central Florida)

Table I.7.3. State of the Art 3

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Literature Review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the role and influence of mass media b) in-group and out-group theory c) the mass media's stereotypical Arab |
| Research Method | <p>Content Analysis based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Wealth b) Barbarism c) Aggression d) Culture e) Antisocial f) Politics g) Terrorism h) Religion |
| Research Result | <p>Search period in comparison to each of the eight out-group variables, six of the variables (wealth, barbarism, aggression, culture, antisocial, and politics)</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>increased following 9/11 and only two of the variables (terrorism and religion) decreased following 9/11.</p> |
| <p>Conclusion and Recommendation</p> | <p><u>Conclusion:</u></p> <p>In the year immediately following 9/11, the newspapers increased the portrayal of Arab Americans as members of an in group.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>In a future study, it may be beneficial to actually perform a textual analysis of the articles in order to understand the articles beyond their initial content.</p> |
| <p>Similarity</p> | <p>a) research of the portrayal of Arab-Americans in U.S. media.</p> <p>b) use the same characteristics of Middle-Eastern racial stereotype in term of wealt, barbarism, aggression, terrorism.</p> |
| <p>Differences</p> | <p>a) researcher specify the reseach of how Middle Eastern portrayed in US media, Walt Disney films, “Aladdin”</p> <p>b) researcher use Roland Barthes semiology as the research methodology.</p> <p>c) researcher media effect theory, stereotype</p> |

| | |
|--|---------|
| | theory. |
|--|---------|

Source: created by the researcher

