CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of The Study

In the realm of film analysis, understanding and appreciating the audience perspective is a fundamental aspect that enriches the exploration of cinematic works. Viewers, who are made up of individuals with diverse backgrounds, experiences and cultural contexts, bring subjective lenses to interpret and interact with films. The dynamic interaction between a film and its audience forms the core of audience perspective, a diverse concept that includes emotional responses, cultural influences, and personal biases (Mulvey, 1975). One of the key elements in examining the audience's perspective is the concept of identification. Viewers often connect with characters, themes and narratives on a personal level, projecting their own experiences onto the cinematic canvas. This identification can greatly shape their emotional investment in the story, influencing their likes, dislikes and interpretations of the film as a whole. Whether through empathy, relatability, or aspirational elements, the viewer's perspective is intricately woven into the fabric of the cinematic story.

Furthermore, audience perspectives are not static; they evolve over time and can be affected by social change. A film that resonates with audiences in one era may be perceived differently in another, as societal norms, values and sensibilities shift (Mulvey, 1975). Examining a film's enduring appeal or changing

reception over time provides a dynamic lens to understand its impact on society. In the contemporary era, the rise of social media has amplified audience perspectives, providing a platform for immediate and widespread reactions. Audience discussions, reviews and memes contribute to a collective understanding of a film's impact, creating virtual communities that enhance the overall cinematic experience. One of the platforms is the websites that are specifically intended for movie reviews, like IMDb, Rotten tomatoes, Google Reviews, etc. Filmmakers, in turn, are increasingly accustomed to this instant feedback, shaping their storytelling decisions based on audience expectations and responses. In essence, investigating the audience perspective in film analysis opens a rich tapestry of emotions, cultural dynamics and social reflections. It adds a layer of complexity to the understanding of cinema as an art form, highlighting the interplay between the vision of the creator and the diverse interpretations of those who experience it.

In this analysis, the writer will use IMDb as the primary platform to gather audience perspectives. IMDb, the Internet Movie Database, is an online repository for movies, TV shows, and related content. Its review system allows users to rate movies and TV shows on a scale from 1 to 10 stars. The review mechanism empowers users to express their opinions and critique cinematic experiences. These reviews reflect individual perspectives on various aspects of a production, including acting, storytelling, visuals, sound design, and overall impact. The written reviews are essential to IMDb's community ethic, beyond the numerical ratings. Users write insightful and comprehensive reviews that offer fellow enthusiasts a deeper understanding of a particular title. These reviews explore

themes, character development, directorial styles, and cultural relevance, providing a wide range of opinions and analysis. The review system thrives on interaction, allowing users to vote on the helpfulness of reviews and promoting a collaborative environment where valuable insights surface and resonate. IMDb also recognizes top reviewers, celebrating their dedication and contribution to the platform, offering recognition for their thoughtful assessments and in-depth engagement. These user-generated reviews play a pivotal role in shaping the platform's aggregated ratings. While the individual ratings offer a snapshot of personal preferences, the cumulative effect of these reviews leads to an overall score that guides other users in their entertainment choices.

Thus, the audience perspective can be studied using the reader response approach, in this study the writer will use the Reader Response theory by Wolfgang Iser. Reader response theory is a literary and critical theory that emphasizes the role of the reader in interpreting a text. Originating in the mid-20th century, this approach diverges from earlier theories that predominantly focused on the author's intent or the text itself as the sole source of meaning. Instead, reader response theory places significance on the reader's subjective experience, understanding, and emotional response to a literary work (Tyson, 2006).

Moreover, many audiences have been attracted to *A Man Called Otto*, a 2022 American comedy-drama film directed by Marc Forster and written by David Magee, is a charming remake of the 2015 Swedish film A Man Called Ove, inspired by the 2012 novel by Fredrik Backman. The film follows the life of Otto

Anderson, a 63-year-old widower played by legendary actor Tom Hanks. Set in the suburbs of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Otto's journey is characterized by grief, solitude and unexpected relationships. The film's narrative begins six months after the death of Otto's wife Sonya, an important figure who shaped Otto's worldview, even in her absence. After retiring from his job at the steel mill and grappling with the void Sonya left behind, Otto contemplates a tragic end. However, fate has other plans when a new neighbor, the jovial Marisol and her family, inadvertently disrupts Otto's solitary existence.

The audience is ushered into Otto's complicated world, where bitterness and cynicism envelop a history filled with moving moments. The film skillfully weaves together flashbacks of Otto's youth, his courtship with Sonya, and the challenges that shaped his angry attitude. Otto's suicide attempt is a poignant reflection of his past, revealing the many layers of his character. Amid his struggle, Otto finds himself reluctantly drawn into the lives of those around him. From helping his neighbor suffering from a stroke to befriending a transgender student and even adopting a stray cat, Otto's journey becomes a testament to the transformative power of human connection. The film navigates Otto's evolution from a loner to a pillar of support for his neighbors, each interaction peeling back the layers of his complex personality.

As the narrative unfolds, Otto's confrontation with a real estate company looking to transform his neighborhood becomes a catalyst for change. The film expertly blends drama with humor, capturing Otto's resistance to modernity, his fight against social injustice, and ultimately his embrace of community and

belonging. In a moving conclusion, Otto's legacy is cemented not only through the friendships he forged, but also in the resolution of conflicts in the neighborhood. His death, marked by heart failure, is a bittersweet moment as Otto leaves behind a community transformed by his presence. *A Man Called Otto* takes the audience through the emotional landscape of its main character, Otto Anderson, offering a lens to understand the intricacies of aging, loss, and the profound impact of human connection.

Many researchers have conducted analysis through the audience perspective. (Wirawan, 2021) examines how the audience perceives and evaluates Joker (2019). Data collected through audiences' statements in IMDb as an online database of information of films and critical reviews. The result of the study reveals that audiences' diverse life experience and background is giving major influence towards their interest, response, and interpretations to Joker (2019) movie.

The following journal, (Ridderstorm, 2018) examines the TV series Downton Abbey (2010-15) from both a class and a reception perspective. Non-professional reviews posted on the website International Movie Database include very critical opinions on class struggles and aristocratic privileges. Some respondents are satiric and forcefully oppose the values and interests of the propertied classes in the series, other reviewers in the same vein present analyses of power and class aspects in the series. These comments and criticisms are relevant to today's class issues in Britain and elsewhere.

Furthermore, (Khaerana et al., 2022) investigate the audience's perspectives about arranged marriage, the existence of arranged marriage and the reason for people conducting arranged marriage nowadays, particularly conducted by the Buginese. The results show that there are various perspectives on arranged marriage as depicted in the Mappasitaro movie. In addition, the practice of arranged marriage is still found nowadays for various reasons.

Additionally, the writer found several journals that analyses the movie *A Man Called Otto* as the source data. (Uzira et al., 2023) analyse the moral values in the movie *A Man Called Otto* (2022) and to find out the most dominant moral values appearing in the movie. The methodology used in this study is descriptive qualitative research. The data was collected from a movie application. The data were gathered by transcribing the dialogue of the movie and then analyzing them based on the classification proposed by Linda and Eyre (1997). The results of this study showed that the movie has some moral values. These values are kindness and friendliness, respect, love and affection, unselfishness and sensitivity, and honesty. The most frequently used moral values are unselfishness and sensitivity.

The following journal, (Davistasya, 2023) focuses on the analysis of flouting and violating maxims in the *A Man Called Otto* movie script. The study examines the impact of these communication breakdowns on the interlocutors and the social consequences of miscommunication. The analysis uses a descriptive qualitative method. This researcher uses *A Man Called Otto* movie script as the source of data. The data derived from the utterances of major characters containing the flouting and violating of maxims. The researcher found 40

utterances that flout and violate all maxims uttered in *A Man Called Otto* movie script. The characters from the movie script flout and violate the Cooperative Principles of Grice's theory which consist of four maxims, including the maxim of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. The dominated non-observance of maxim which appears in the movie script is flouting maxim of quantity, because they tend to create an implied meaning behind their utterances by not giving the exact information to the hearer. The findings of this study may contribute to improving communication strategies leading to more positive social outcomes.

From the explanation above, none of the previous studies examined how audiences perceive "suicide" that depicted in the movie *A Man Called Otto* as the source data. Therefore, the writer will indicate how the audience views the "suicide" portrayed in the movie, from various perspectives such as positive, neutral, or even negative reviews. The writer will use the review section in IMDb websites to see what the responses from the audience are and how they perceive the suicide scenes in the movie. Thus, the responses are the concrete data of the reviews (114 reviews) that are divided into positive, neutral and negative reviews. Meanwhile, perceptions are the subjective interpretations that individuals created from their experiences, beliefs, and biases that are taken from the user's review that they post on the IMDb website.

1.2. Research Question

The study is conducted in order to investigate these following questions:

1. What were the audience's responses to "suicide" on *A Man Called Otto* Movie?

2. How did the audience perceive "suicide" on *A Man Called Otto* Movie?

1.3. Purpose of The Study

The purposes of this study are:

1. To describe the audience's responses to "suicide" on *A Man Called Otto* Movie.

2. To analyze the audience's perception about "suicide" on *A Man Called Otto* Movie.

1.4. Scope of The Study

This study focuses on the audience perspective which was collected from IMDb of "*A Man Called Otto*" movie. The reason why the writer chose the movie to be analyzed is because rather than the other movie with related genre, this movie provides various interesting aspects of the theme to be reviewed by the audiences, especially with the adjustment to modern society. Thus, the main theme that was chosen by the writer is "suicide" because from 699 of User Reviews, there are 114 reviews that talk about "suicide" and it varies from positive, neutral, and negative perspectives.

1.5. Significance of The Study

In its academic benefit, the writer hopes this study would be useful to be a reference study or further research in examining audience perspectives in literature works through reader response analysis.

In its practical benefits, this study is expected to provide information about people's perspective on understanding an entertainment product, especially movie, as it could be a life lesson not just merely an entertainment purpose, especially outside of academic fields.