## CHAPTER II

## REVIEW RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH METHOD

In this chapter will discuss the theoretical framework, previous study and research method.

### 2.1. Theoretical Framework

In the theoretical framework, the writer will explain the theories related to analyzing superhero in *Batman v Superman* film. Superhero itself has been living in American literature since the 1930s and growth significantly. Even though, the Comic creator has developed comic in the late 1800s, since the appearance superhero in comic, it raised rapidly. This study is kind of popular cultural research because the superhero is the product of a popular culture which the genre has well-known. By knowing the concept, this research will break the concept itself behind find the factors that killed superheroes and find out the meaning of their death.

### 2.1.1. American Superhero Concept

The concept of American superhero is embedded in popular culture since the first creation in 1938 and at the same time makes this concept a stereotype that develops in society about "what is a superhero?" and "what is it look like?". The concept is derived from the patriotic traits and social culture that live alongside with the life in America. Then, those traits are combined with the mythology that developed long ago and became the main basis of the concept of American superhero. Coogan state that "These mythological and legendary heroes provide the

deep background, roots, and prototypes for the superhero. Sometimes they offer immediate inspiration to the creators" (p.124-125). Through the inspiration, the creator creates The Flash who "draws on the iconography of the Greek god Hermes with his winged helmet and boots"(p.117) and also the abilities in running fast. To clarify the concept of Superhero, the concept has separated into three characteristics which are mission, power, and identity. these three aspects have agreed after the convention of Superhero genre based on the popularity.

Mission is the first characteristic of Superhero concept where it consists of pro-social job where his duty is to do many things in order to give benefits to people. Thus, his job should far away from evilness while he is the figure of fighting crime. Therefore, this mission brings him into a character with patriotic traits and do some justice action in the world. In line with this argument, Vollum and Adkinson (2003, p.96) have supported with their statement that, "for decades, young Americans have looked to the world of comic book superheroes for a sense of justice". This is an impact of the popularity of Superhero where it has brought the people into the specific concept about their existence. It is good assessment related to a very interesting presentation of the superhero whose production is addressed through entertaining stories. Bjørkan (2013, p.14) agreed that "heroes served as embodiments of American national ideals and symbols of patriotism". From that statement, Superhero uses to be the label for American's power who can make America a sample of a great country in the world. As the example, the stories of Captain America have told about his patriotic actions who symbolize American ideology to the world. Afterward, Wright (2001, p.42) strengthens this argument

with his statement where "It is clear enough Captain America as superhero opposed the militarism, oppression, and intolerance perpetrated by the Axis powers, ...". This is an image of American Superhero which implicitly depicts American ideology in the world where it aims to be peacekeepers and act because they care about people.

The second characteristic is the power that exists within the Superhero's body. Power is the aspect of the attraction of Superhero. Through that power, Superhero becomes a symbol which is exalted, because people know and love Superhero, not because of the looks or costumes that wear, but what is owned and can be done by the superhero. Fortunately, being born with extraordinary powers, Superheroes always succeeded in kicking their enemies, be they from the common kind of criminals to the supervillain. The victorious that Superhero reached from his fight with his enemies have generated good reaction or excitement from the people, especially children. Ducan and Smith (2009, p.227) explain that power is becoming a cool aspect when "the generations of children who have tied towels around their necks, extended their arms, and pretended to fly are a testimony to the fundamental appeal of superpowers". Thus, the popularity of Superhero is influenced by the power within Superhero that applied in his/her actions. This makes the children idolize him/her by express themselves as superheroes or dreaming becoming a Superhero. Therefore, superhero figures are mostly asked by children rather than adults. Behind it all, even though the superhero's power is amazing, in some series the comic illustrates that the power has limits. As an example of Superman's power, he remains subdued with a mineral called kryptonite. But according to Ducan and Smith, the limitations also sometimes stem

from their own personalities such as: "pride (Thor), insolent (Human Torch), addictive personality (Iron Man), self-doubt (Spider-Man), and even some cases of haters self (Hulk) "(ibid).

The third characteristic is identity. Identity includes the codename and costume, then used as an alter ego of the original figure of the Superhero. the costume depicted in the superhero's identity is a representation of the special personality or the symbol of Superhero's own power, like the Flash that describes its power in costume, the attitude on Daredevil, and the role on Captain America. Afterward, Superhero also cover his face with a mask. Why does superhero wear a mask? In defending his identity from the villain, superhero should wear a mask and pair with the costume which can give flexibility and defense in combat. Another function of the use of mask and costume is to keep their family, friends, or relative from their enemy. Christian Bale as Batman in *The Dark Knight Rises* (Nolan, 2012) has declared that "if you are working alone, wear a mask... I am asking out for you, it's to protect the people you care about". To be a superhero, someone should need a new character and live with a dual identity.

## 2.1.2. The Establishment of Superhero

Superhero is a genre of a hero with a superpower. Until today, Superhero has been the product of a popular culture that raises many inquiries and meanings about why it was created. This genre may create some interesting discussion because its creation is related to reality and portrayed in an icon that understandable. The creator of Superhero uses it to reveal real-life tragedy which packed in

interesting ways with simple drawings and dialogs in comic. With this work also, the creator shows his critics to the world like the creation of a Superhero called Almighty Dollar. This Superhero has an ability to throw money at every problem he has. Sarcastically, this Superhero is an icon used to satirize the authorized officials who are corrupt. It's not only about that, Peter Coogan in his Superhero genre theory book has written enough about problems which influencing superheroes' life, such as war, love, politic, and rebellion. The aim of creating a superhero is to represents the ideal positive values in American society and to represent the negative values in American society, the superhero's creator creates the villain.

The modern creators create villains to be more powerful where it does not only have physical strength, but they also supported with intelligence and magic. In terms of strength, Coogan has given an example that ' *Thanos, Darkseid*, and *Dormammu* are all evil gods and enemy commanders, all rule their own worlds, command massive forces, and threaten the Earth with invasion' (Coogan, p.74-75). With this example has explained the abilities of the villain which can conquer the world he wants and have large of armies. *Thanos* and *Darkseid* are using technology to support their invasion of the Earth, different from *Dormammu* who use his magic power to enter the Earth. Development of villain's power has changed together with the evolution of Superhero. By this evolution, the villains have separated into some type, such as 'the monster, the enemy commander, the criminal mastermind and the inverted superhero-supervillain' (Coogan, p.61). Through these types, there are many conflicts and enemies that have faced with Superhero, Lex Luthor is the

example of the human kind villain who cannot be underestimated. He is the mad scientist type of villain who claims as the "most gifted man alive" (Encyclopaedia DC) and called evil genius. Along with his life, he tries to destroy Justice league and especially Superman where they together have fought each other as eternal enemies.

In animated movie Justice league doom (2012), its story about the justice league was defeated once by the villain. When the enemies know about the weakness of the justice league member, this will be a serious problem for Superheroes. This movie creates a conclusion that there is a moment where superheroes defeated even though they were undefeated. But, this argument contradicts with the concept of the superhero because the concept has explained that Superhero should be powerful than the villain, moreover this case is a fact about the Justice League member ever defeated once. If we look back into the history of the evolution of Superhero, there is a stage called Iron Age of Superhero (started in 1980). Since the iron age, the story began to change. The creator of Superhero started to make a story where the Superhero's death includes to be the main conflict. This is what happens in comic Avengers vs X-men, (2012) when Charles Xavier lost his life and in comic Superman #75, (1992) Superman is dead in battle with Doomsday. Coogan supported this statement where "the Iron Age of superhero comics is marked by the deaths of numerous superheroes" (p.217) and in the same pages also, Iron ages has shown s Batman (*Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*) and Rorschach (*Watchmen*), both died at the end of their series, however Batman figuratively and Rorschach literally. Even though they are Superheroes with great

power where their enemies are afraid of them, the creator has made new history about them at once break the stereotype about Superhero is undefeatable even God-like. Iron ages create Superhero's story to be different, it used to prevent the boredom toward the people where Coogan believes if the ending of the story is won by the Superhero and constantly like that, it will trigger the exhaustion of the genre.

Coogan's theory is also closely related to the concept of American Superhero, in which the concept has actually been presented by Coogan in his book. He illustrated the concept with compared the character of Wonder Man and Superman, while he argued that the creation of Wonder Man is cited from the characteristic of Superman which covered mission, power, and identity. From this statement, the existence of Superman as the first Superhero is very important, as the reference for creates another Superhero, for example is Captain Marvel, Black Adam, Wonder woman, etc. Then, the emergence of Superman as the first Superhero confirmed that the popularity of Superhero in the golden age of Superhero is very high, so the concept of Superhero itself is inherited from through the character of Superman directly. Reflecting on the character of Superman, is there a Superhero character before Superman? This question answers about the presence of Hugo Danner who became a reflection of the character creation Superman. This argument has been approved by Ducan and Smith (2009, p.223) where they have told that "Superman's abilities are directly influenced by a character named Hugo Danner, who appeared in Phillip Wylie's 1930 novel Gladiator, a book which Jerry Siegel had given a very favorable review in his fanzine". Along with this, Siegel was inspired to make Superman as a superhero

who for his mission and strength is not much different from Hugo. Unfortunately, reality is not standing on Hugo's side, because its existence is not as popular as Superman, so it is not used as a benchmark for the first superhero depiction in general. Then, in development of the creation of Superhero, elements of science and technology also join up to make the character become more contemporary. It can be said that after the advent of the Superman in Action # 23 comic, the creation of superheroes went hand in hand with developments in America in terms of science and politic. In connection with politics in America, Superman editor Mort Weisinger has been working on a cross-promotion between Superman and the White House where Superman supports the Kennedy government by training children's physical fitness on behalf of the Kennedy Government. Afterward, The Hulk and X-men are clear about its creation that rooted from the development of science concerning the genetic mutation. Then the appearance of a highly sophisticated Batmobile as well as robot-shaped enemies on the Batman's story is very clearly illustrating the expansion of America in technology and science. This is the points that Coogan want to describe the existence of Superhero.

Related to the points to be conveyed Coogan in theory, can be concluded that Coogan's theory is tied to the American Superhero concept in it. By focusing on Superhero, Coogan explains the meaning of Superhero presence in America from its birth to its development seen through the evolution of Superhero. Then give the facts and the background that Superhero (including its conflicts and tragedy are screamed) is an expression and criticism made by comic creators on the reality that happened in America in particular.

### 2.1.3. Film study

Film has been ruling the important part of popular culture. It is proven by massive enthusiast viewer in cinema globally. People receive film as popular culture as the way of escape from reality, because movie gives more enjoyment. The study of movie is needed to create understanding and larger the value of entertainment. Abrams, et. al (2001, p.1) add that, "studying film can also develop an understanding of production techniques, how films communicate meaning, how we as audiences both respond to films and influence the types of films made, and how the industry functions in terms of ownership, control, finance, marketing, and exhibition". Therefore, the course about film begins to introduce in school. This action will teach student about the knowledge of making film and criticize it.

Abrams, et al (2001, p.2) state again that, "Studying Film aims to stimulate appreciation, enjoyment, and understanding of a wide range of different types of film together with an awareness of the nature of cinema as a medium, art form, and social and economic institution. It aims to encourage an understanding of the nature of personal responses to film and to deploy the critical languages that have been developed to analyze the ways in which films and spectators construct meaning.". according to Abrams's second statement, the needs of understanding has pushed us to easily criticize consciously about the meaning beyond the story in the film. There are some aspects of analyzing film that need to be discussed by the writer, that *is mise-en-scene* and dialogue.

### 2.1.3.1. Mise-en-scene

Corrigan (2001, p.55) said that *mise-en-scene*,"as'what is input into scene'(before the camera), refers to those properties of a cinematic image that exist independently of camera position, camera movement and editing ... includes lighting, costume, sets, the quality of the acting and other shapes and characters in the scene".

According to Corrigan argument, it can be said that all those elements that appear in front of the camera are *mise-en-scene*, of course, the position of the camera, movement and effect also contribute to it. This strengthens the content which shows visually gives significant effect in telling the story in the film. the *mise-en-scene*, along with the cinematography and editing of a film, influence the believability of a film in the eyes of its viewers. It helps express a film's vision by generating a sense of time and space, as well as setting a mood, and sometimes suggesting a character's state of mind. *Mise-en-scene* is the area overseen by the director as one of the most important people in operating the film.

### 2.1.3.2. Dialogue

Dialogue is referring to the words spoken by the characters in the film. The dialog created to tell the story. Rauma (2004, p.26) said that "Countless other theorists and researchers refer to cinematic dialogue as 'ordinary language', 'everyday talk' or 'conversation' without examining the implications further". Then, Kozloff (2000:18) argue that "dialogue in narrative cinema is never equal to spontaneous speech, even though it commonly strives to create an impression of real-life conversation. Film dialogue has been "scripted, written and rewritten,

censored, polished, rehearsed and performed". It can be seen that dialogue doesn't appear as natural but it is controlled by the script. The writer is aware that dialogue also the important element for film because it can determine the topic and conflict from the words which spoken by the characters.

## 2.2. Previous study

The writer uses three previous studies as the basis and comparison for this study. The First is Putra's Undergraduate thesis (2014) with title Superhero Characterization Comparison between 1938 Superman and 21st Century Iron Man as A Reflected in the American Era. His study explained about Superhero as the representative of American Society. The evolution of figure follows the condition of the era. Afterward, Superhero has become part of popular culture and next, he compares the characterization of Superman and Ironman in a special time. His research uses the theory of entertainment and applies by the qualitative method of analyzing. As the result, he concludes that both Superman and Ironman has expressed the togetherness among society and its function as entertainment.

The second previous study is Crysel, et al's journal (2012) which study about The Antihero in Popular Culture: Life History Theory and the Dark Triad Personality Traits. They are intense to find the three concepts in Dark Triad including, narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism in human traits by comparing Antihero who exist in popular culture. They used life history theory to find the reaction of the appearance of people with these traits in social life. Because people with these traits were mostly living dynamically (easily change), evidently

it created a benefit individually behind the bad impact. The individual supported to act directly (quick response) according to the tragedy happen to the person. This response and traits were illustrated in some antihero/superhero like Batman who actually consists of this traits. The final of this research was found that individual personality was influenced by the evolution of mental owned in that person while dark triad personality was changed/evolved individual rapidly in action among aspects of psychological pressure.

The third is an undergraduate thesis by Javas (2017) that study about The Concept of Anti-hero Represented by Wade Wilson in *Deadpool* Film. His study elaborated the transformation of concept macho hero in new age which portrayed as anti-hero in Deadpool film. He used socio-psychological approach and dark triad concept to analyses the problem. In analyzing the changing concept of the macho hero through society under the psychological condition, he found an outcome for this study that everyone had the possibility to become an anti-hero if they had a superpower. Again, he said that besides being anti-hero with a superpower is great, the superpower can turn someone into psychopath because it was not about following the justice but about desire.

According to both three previous studies, the superhero has shown various characterization. Superhero has contributed in many ways that represent reality, conflict, and identity. Both three previous study is different, but the similarity is about to criticize the concept of the superhero, superhero movie and superhero comics. The correlation within this study is the similarity of the kind of object chosen, Superhero. But for this study focuses on analyzing factors which trigger

Superhero's death and the meaning of superhero's death through the film Batman V Superman. Then, the portrayal of the tragedy will be discussed with the theory of Establishment of Superhero genre.

## 2.3. Research Method

To get an accurate result for this work, there are four main steps taken. They are research design, data source, data collection, analysis and interpreting data and the last making a conclusion.

### 2.3.1. Research design

In the beginning, *Batman V Superman: Dawn of Justice* by Zack Snyder (2016) is chosen as the object for research. To analyzing the data, the writer will use the qualitative method where it "generates words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis" (Patton and Cochran, 2002 p.2). Therefore, this is the reason for the writer chooses qualitative research is the use of words or another object instead of using numbers and statistics, as the data and analyzing the data for the method.

### 2.3.2. Data source

The source of the data to analyze is *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* film is screenshots of important part in the film (showing elements that portrayed the tragedy of the death of superhero). Then, the taking of dialog/text as an element to be a reference in analyzing the meaning and factors related to the problem of study.

### 2.3.3. Data collection

To collect the data, the writer will lead in the following step:

1. Watching *Batman V Superman: Dawn of Justice* in several times to ensure the frame which connected with the research.

2. Collecting the frame in the film that only represents about the factors that trigger Superhero's death and the tragedy of the death of superhero in purposed to find out the meaning.

3. Choosing and Transcribing the dialogue from the main character to another character in the film which represents the conflict.

4. Separating the picture and dialogue which triggers superhero to death and refer it into the meaning of superhero's death

### 2.3.4. Analyzing and Interpreting data

After collecting data, the next step is analyzing and interpreting the data. In analyzing the data, the writer finds out the trigger of Superhero's death from *Batman v Superman* film. The data found will be in the form of screenshots of scenes and dialogues related to the conflict that could be the trigger of the death of Superhero. Then, the findings will be analyzed using American Superhero Concept and Superhero genre theory. Then Film study theory will be used to choose scenes and dialogues that related to the objective of this research so that the explanation of this research is on the right target. Then the last, the writer will interpret the meaning behind the death of Superhero.

### 2.3.5. Making a conclusion

The last step is making the conclusion. This is will show up until the discussion is done and the result will be highlighted according to the objective of the study.