

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will discuss background of study, problem of study and objective of the study.

1.1. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Generally, people know that Superhero is a figure such as Superman, Spiderman, Captain Marvel, Batman, X-men and many more. Coogan (2006, p.30) has elaborated superhero in specific definition as,

A heroic character with a selfless, pro-social mission; with superpowers— extraordinary abilities, advanced technology, or highly developed physical, mental, or mystical skills; who has a superhero identity embodied in a codename and iconic costume, which typically express his biography, character, powers, or origin (transformation from ordinary person to superhero); and who is genetically distinct, i.e. can be distinguished from characters of related genres (fantasy, science fiction, detective, etc.) by a preponderance of generic conventions.

In brief, Superhero can be described as a powerful creature and portrayed in human species which follows the national law and policy. The word “super” which means excellent that attributed to the hero to strengthen his extraordinary power. Kakalios cited in Siegel and Shusters (2005, p.22) supports this idea, while “super” has depicted in Superman’s abilities which having “*powers of various visions (Heat, X-ray and others), super-hearing, super-breath and even super-hypnotis*”. The creator of superhero supposes to makes the icon of the good human who purposed to fight against crimes, for examples of the Superhero are Captain America and Wonder Woman, both first appeared during World War II. They

represent the patriotic crime fighter that given hopes toward American at that moment, despite their gender differences. Coogan (2006, p.14) supports with his statement that, “superheroes stand as metaphors for freedom—the freedom to act without consequences and the freedom from the restrictions of gravity, the law, families, and romantic relationships”. That means that the Superhero is intentionally created for certain aims. This is portrayed on Superman’s action in comic or movie, in which he has a series of extraordinary abilities and can fight in the never-ending battle for truth, justice and the American way (Siegel and Shusters in Kakalios, 2005, p.21).

Superhero is the product of popular culture because she/he is "widely liked or well-liked by many people" (Storey, 2011, p.5). When Superhero becomes popular, popular culture makes the superhero an icon for particular aims, perhaps for propaganda, product support, clothing icon, mascot, etc. The use of Superhero is related to this aims because Superheroes have finally managed to get close to people through movies and comics. People love to watch superhero movies. They love to discuss their loving superheroes in the community. This triggers the creation of fans and haters. In the development of Superhero's popularity, fans and haters become benchmark and evaluator from the works which bring Superhero themes. If one of the Superhero creates many of fans, the product that endorses the Superhero will be success. Besides that, the Superhero’s popularity can lead the change of the story. The story changes are actually needed to prevent the story from being boring. If the story does not change, the audience will lose their interest in the movie. The change of the story can be seen in Batman story, in the beginning

Batman is created with “no superpower” then he is changed into the god-like Batman in *Justice League: Darkseid War issue #003* in 2015. The existence of anti-hero also supports this idea that the Superhero lovers actually need the new story which more interesting than the old. The evolution of Superhero genre has become the fact that Superhero’s story is still developed. The evolution is influenced by the culture and condition that happen at that time, therefore, it has separated into some ages; golden age, silver age, bronze age, iron age and renaissance age of superhero genre (Coogan, 2006)

The Golden Age of the superhero was started in the 1930s where Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman Captain Marvel and Captain America were introduced as a savior for American freedom. During the era, comic sales were improved significantly and become popular. Then, the comic has become literary work that extremely influences people moreover children to support the value of struggle without losing any hopes. After the Golden age, it changed in the 1950s into the silver age of superhero. They started with DC comic ‘The flash in Showcase #4 (1956). During this age, the circulation of the comic book decreased since the World War has ended. But it was supported by the contribution of genres; horror, crime, and romance which took bigger scale in the market. Although the issues of war did not exist anymore, the kind of genres had supported Superhero in the comic and had been another way to keep the popularity of Superhero comic. This age was ended in 1970, changed into the Bronze age. Bronze age of superhero was a continuation of the silver age. This age revived the issue shown in the golden age, such as racism, drug use, alcoholism, urban poverty, and environmental pollution.

After this age, it continued to the iron age of superhero, while this period turned Superhero into the darker theme. Throughout this period, comic book characters, by and large, got to be darker and added by elements of psychological. This period also contributes to the rising of anti-hero. The last is renaissance ages, this age exists until today, it is marked by the number of superheroes are allied. The show of the *Justice League* who consist of many Superhero including Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman and the Flash is one of the examples of the existence of this period. Continually, this period is also marked by Superhero stories are restated and packed into fresher than ever. Therefore, the popularity of Superhero is rising up to now.

Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice film (2016) is one of the examples of the rising of the popularity of Superhero. This film succeeds of getting \$873,260,194 worldwide and becomes a blockbuster, which stands in six positions of highest-grossing film in 2016. It tells about the conflict between Batman and Superman until they fight together against Doomsday. Besides that, this film relates to *Man of Steel* (2013) where it has become the crossover of this film so that the story is very related. Continually, the exciting part is the first appearance of Wonder Woman as the sidekick of the main superheroes in this film. The end of the story is showing the Superman's death. With this death, it has brought the other side of the concept of Superhero, although, most of the Superhero's story is bringing victory for Superhero where the victory was marked by the end of the tension occurred during the conflict and the superhero is still alive during the fight even though the fight is very fierce.

The death of Superhero is a rare moment found in Superhero's story. In line with this statement, this study is trying to elaborate the meaning of the death of superhero and how to defeat Superhero that must be the factors of Superhero's death within the tragedy relate with the concept of American Superhero which presented in *Batman v Superman* film. Therefore, the death of Superhero raises questions about the stereotype of Superhero which is; undefeated, strong creature, good-like, difficult to die, etc, that has existed since long ago.

1.2. PROBLEM OF STUDY

According to the background of the study, the problem of study will be:

1.2.1. What are the factors that trigger the death of the superhero?

1.2.2. What is the meaning of the death of superhero?

1.3. OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

The objective of this study is to find out factors which trigger the death of superhero in film *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* and explain the meaning of the death of superhero portrayed in reality.