Film entertainment:

exploiting misery as a means for escapism from the realities of life

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ABSTRACT:

The relationship of people to entertainment covers many aspects. On one aspect, an artistic work can be something providing people pleasure while at the same time be a vehicle for emotional escape. A study shows that using music, people can wallow in sadness they deliberately seek out to feel happy. Likewise, a work of film, working its cognitive and psychosocial aspects, is capable of dishing out melodrama that provides the audience a motive to get emotional, and a cognitive mechanism that allows them to enjoy the negative emotional experience in the context of the film's narrative esthetic.

Keywords: Entertainment, Melodrama, Emotion, Film Perception

ABSTRAK:

Hubungan manusia dan hiburan selalu melibatkan banyak aspek. Dalam hal ini, karya seni menjadi salah satu elemen yang mampu memberi kesenangan pada manusia dan sekaligus menjadi wadah pelarian emosi. Sebuah penelitian menawarkan pandangan bahwa melalui musik, manusia larut dalam kesedihan yang sengaja mereka cari untuk membahagiakan. Begitu pula dengan karya film, lewat aspek kognitif dan psikososial, menawarkan melodrama yang pada akhirnya memberikan motivasi bagi emosi penontonnya, dan mekanisme kognitif yang memungkinkan untuk menikmati pengalaman emosi negatif dalam konteks estetika penceritaan dalam film.

Kata kunci: Hiburan, Melodrama, Musik, Emosi, Persepsi Film

INTRODUCTION

Entertainment has the capacity to bring joy to people and be a means to fulfil certain needs as they live out their lives. Entertainment provides people emotional escape after the grind of daily existence. People live in time and space, and their lives are a series of situations and conditions. These conditions build the person, making them capable of thinking, growing, and surviving. Francis Hsu, an American graduate of Chinese descent, in his work *Psychological Homoestatic and Jen* (1971), describes how the construct of an eastern personality and soul can be depicted in concentric circles. Each circle depicts what makes up the landscape of the soul, including perception, response, knowledge, memory, basic human needs, and desires. The eastern personality concept makes it possible to analyze a person in relation to their social and cultural background. Thus, we can circumvent limiting ourselves to employing only Western psychology which sees the person as individualistic, a separate entity. Hu's theory inspects the personality using a social and cultural approach he calls a homoestatic psychogram (Hsu 23-44).

People need entertainment, at the very least during each developmental stage, as they go through physical and psychological changes. Because we have different emotional reactions to different dynamics, we can feel psychologically unstable. Entertainment is useful because it can provide comfort, give motivation, and even boost our energy to go on with daily life.

This idea of entertainment was formed as human thinking, technology, and environmental infrastructure developed simultaneously and were supportive of each other, and because people wanted to progress and live better existences. People tend to see the same things differently. This can be the result of several factors coupled with the influence of science, human experience, and progress in thinking. Perception also plays a part. People interpret objects with their senses. Data of both positive and negative perceptions is then stored in the subconscious. It immediately bubbles up as soon as stimulus occurs. Perception is the result of the brain working to understand or assess something happening around it (Waidi 118).

As space and time move forward, things occur which become naturally recorded assemblages of information in the human brain. All this information is processed and form perception. Perception is the process of interpreting information received through the senses. How do we know what we know and do not know? Referring to the notion of *tabula rasa*, a

person is a blank sheet. From since birth and growing up a person continually interacts with their surroundings. They possess cognizance derived from the three aspects of perception, namely sensory record, pattern recognition, and human attention (Suharman 23). British philosopher, David Hume (1711-1776), said humans possess two types of perception, impression and ideas. "Impressions" are direct sensory capture of physical things, while "ideas" are memories of these impressions. If we touch a flame, we get the "impression" of heat and immediately avoid it. After, we remember our hand was burned. Impressions are stronger and livelier than reflective memory of that impression (idea). (Puspitasari 31)

This framework underscores that the reality of daily existence, or physical reality, is the format of all complex ideas which in fact are reflections of sensory responses "stored" in the mind. Going along with this notion, the things we consider "real" are relative and modifiable. This area is also what information technology grapples with, offering and selling alternative reality alongside real life. How humans move and grow in the ecosystem wherein they were born provides much to observe.

As they grow up, people connect to each other, individually and in crowds. Scientists of development studied the three main domains of the individual brain, comprising physical development, cognitive development, and psychosocial development. Physical development is related to the growth of the body and the brain, sensory capacity, and motoric skills and health. Cognitive development is the ability to learn, observe, remember, think, rationalize and be creative. Psychosocial development covers emotional, personality, and social interaction aspects.

In regard to the relationship between emotions and art, contemporary studies in emotion and music have categorized three main topics: exploring how music can be used to organize and influence the self, focusing on how musical description can have influence, and studies examining how music influences the conveyance of something. Further studies looked at wider aspects of music and self-regulation.

In a study by Durham University, Britain, and Jyväskylä University, Finland, published in PLOS ONETrusted source, Tuomas Eerola announced their findings have implication on how music therapy and rehabilitation can help put a person at ease. Music researchers looked at the emotional experiences connected with sad music on 2,436 people in three large scale surveys in Britain and Finland. They identified the reasons for listening to the sad music, and the emotions involving unforgettable experience while listening to the sad

music. The researchers said that the majority of the subjects surveyed highlighted the pleasure they derived from the experience, which in general clearly led to the sense of feeling better afterwards.[1]

The argument can be divided into cognitive and emotional. Cognizance, as Kivy (2002) concluded, is we do not really experience the emotion expressed by the music, but rather feel it in the musical structure. In contrast, the emotionalists, though differing in the details, agreed there were some things related between the emotions expressed by the music and those things experienced by the listeners (Levinson, 1996, Robinson, 1994).

So, is entertainment a means to channel "feel-good" tears? It seems counter-intuitive that people would voluntarily seek out entertainment or other esthetic experience to make themselves cry, when we usually try our best to avoid things that could make us cry in "real life". The emotion generally thought of as "negative" is normally connected to discomfort (Colombetti 12). This is a paradox that has confused philosophers at least since Aristoteles. Yet, despite mulling over it for centuries, philosophers reached little consensus about the matter. A major discussion between cognizance and the emotional appears to hinge on the definition of each emotion. They tended to not agree whether people really did feel sad when listening to sad music (Garrido and Schubert, 110). It could well be there is no single answer. Instead, an interaction of complex unique factors is probably involved each particular individual.

The relationship of people and entertainment always relates to many aspects as already mentioned. Yet in this article, the writer wishes to focus on the entertainment of film, limiting it to two aspects: the cognitive, a process of accepting information when watching a film, and the psychosocial aspect, which provides an emotional reaction based on the movie watched. Research by the Creative Economy Body on audience segmentation, when categorizing movies, viewers divide them in two, films that "entertain" and films that "make one think". Films that entertain in general connect to life's tiresome daily grind, while films that cause reflection fulfil a need to enrich the mind and soul. This article aims to describe the connection between music and film. How do films influence the mood of the individual watching a work that exploits dramatic sadness, usually a popular genre? How do films of the melodramatic genre motivate viewer emotions and the cognitive mechanism, making it

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[1] Penelitian ini didanai oleh Akademi Finlandia. Sumber: https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/06/160614155914.html)

possible to enjoy the experience of negative emotion in the context of the film's storytelling esthetic.

FILM

Film is one of the art forms, possessing characteristics on par with painting, sculpture, drama, music, poetry, and the novel. As an art form, film is also a medium of communication alongside newspapers, magazines, radio, and television. As a mass communication medium, film is produced with specific aims, with the product later screened for public viewing using technical equipment.

Film replicates the social life of a specific community. Film possesses the reality of the community supporting it in the reality of the imagination, and reality in the real sense. Films show us the footsteps of the period when the film was made. Narrative in film continues to develop, so film is no longer only an endeavor to show a moving image. It has realized many creative achievements which combine narrative content to politics capitalism, human rights, and lifestyle. The narrative content served up in a film is varied, from offering a slice of life, or give a projection how life will be in the future. Film has established itself as the offspring of modern technology,

Besides being a mass communication medium, film is also a medium of artistic expression, a tool for filmmakers to convey their thoughts and ideas using storytelling techniques and moving picture technology (Sani 21).

The 'word' in spoken language has the same function as the 'shot' or the frame in the medium of film through the process of photography. Film, using photography techniques as the basis of work, captures the images wishing to be created, That image in its frame is the space for the narrative. It is important to note the frame, before trying to convey the message. We recognize the importance of the frame for paintings which tells us the dimensions of the canvas. Storytelling in a film is about creating representation of an idea from written form into visual and audio form, later to be physically experienced by human eyes and ears, making the idea or message or narrative served through film become comprehensible to the audience.

Film in the beginning was merely the celluloid material on which the reality of an image was replicated from the phenomenon born of technological innovation derived from photography. This was later developed into what came to be known as moving illusions. Law

No. 8 of 1992 on Film defines the basic meaning of film as an artistic and cultural creation in the form of an audiovisual mass communication medium, produced using the principles of cinematography and recorded on celluloid strips, video strips, video discs, and/or other material from technological innovation and developed in all forms, types, and sizes through chemical processes, electronic processes, or other processes, with or without sound, which can be shown and/or screened through a mechanical, electronic, or other projection system. So, the recording medium is not considered, because what construes a film is the creative work contained on celluloid or video strips, and which can be enjoyed by anybody, making a work of film an idea recorded on a medium called film.

If newspapers are visual, and radio is audio, then film is the simultaneous combination of visual and audio. The newer law, Law no.33 of 2009 on general guidelines on film, gives a simpler definition: film is a work of art and culture, produced using the principles of the science of cinematography, and goes on to describe that a nation's culture is the entire system of values, ideas, norms, actions, and creation of the Indonesian people in the entire region of the country in their social, communal, and national way of life.

A film documents the social life of a community. A film owns the reality of the community supporting it both in their imagination and in the reality. Films show to us the footprints of the past, how to handle the present, and what humans want for the future. And so, in its development, film is no longer simply an effort to show "moving images", instead it also extends into other interests, such as politics, capitalism, human rights, and lifestyle. In the course of time, film established itself as the progeny of modern technology. Beginning from when film was defined as a medium of mass communication, i.e. in its conveyance of various manner of messages in modern civilization, it then became defined as a medium of artistic expression, meaning it is a channel for filmmakers to convey a thought, or idea through a perception of beauty.

The Feelings Management Theory

The theory to manage how the heart feels assumes that individuals endeavor to banish bad heart feelings, and try to preserve good heart feelings (Zilmann 328). So, the assumption is that music choices would reflect such a goal. Yet, it does not explain why people sometime choose to listen to sad music or watch sad films. The theory also assumes that any listener choice reflects an emotional regulatory adaptive method. Yet, Strizhakova and Krcmar said,

"..we do not always wish or indeed try to have good, happy feelings of the heart (Strizhakova and Kkremar 110)

The Principle of Sadness Arousal through Music

The principle that underlies arousal of sadness through music shows that emotion can be triggered by music through various ways. Certain researchers (Taruffi and Koelsch 38–40) theoretically introduced several principles with which music can trigger emotions. These principles underlying emotional response to music include for instance; judgement, evaluative conditioning, contagion, memory, hope, imagination or visual imagery, comprehension, rhythmic entertainment, and social function (Taruffi and Koelsch 39). To date, there is no evidence that the most relevant of these principles apply, which in general are used to trigger sadness. Also, there is still the need to determine whether different personality types contribute to this arousal of sadness based on the same principles.

CONCLUSION

The disruption brought about by information and communication technology is encouraging people to consider alternative realities beyond the reality of daily existence. Multimedia information technology introduced hyper-reality, simulation, and virtual reality, which can no longer be looked at as reflecting life realities, but rather 'other realities' possessing their own levels of consciousness on par with the realities of daily life. Such multimedia information technology not only target the visual sense, but is a technology that provides stimulus to the hearing, seeing and touch sense. The technology almost comes near to the stimulation of everyday reality.

The Indonesian public is becoming increasingly familiar with multimedia technology present as hyper-reality, despite most of the time being unconfident when they do face it. Hyper-reality can be a two-sided dagger, positively used or bringing disaster, much like the female character in films in general, who "capture" the idea she is being cornered and judged by the very work she is viewing. Communication in daily life needs a convention or a code widely understood. The convention is called 'language'. All languages have different formats in their verbal and written forms. These differences come from the social-cultural backgrounds or geographical conditions where the person live their life.

Enjoying a good cry while watching a film or listening to music creates a feeling of enjoyment related to pleasure for certain people. Sometime this comfortable feeling from film

or music comes from being reminded of someone. Yet, some people also reported painful experiences while listening to sad music, caused by feelings of loss, from the deaths of a loved one, divorce, separation, or other of life's hardships.

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