

**SELF-RELIANCE IN CRAZY RICH ASIANS  
BY KEVIN KWAN (2013)**

Thesis

*Submitted as Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement to Obtain  
Strata One (S1) Degree*



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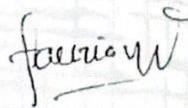
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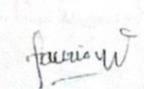
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## ABSTRACT

**Ruswandi, Sakuntala Ariesti. 2022. Self-Reliance In *Crazy Rich Asians* By Kevin Kwan (2013). Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni. Universitas Negeri Padang.**

The purpose of this analysis is to expose the issue of self-reliance in the Novel *Crazy Rich Asian* by Kevin Kwan (2013). The issue of self-reliance refers to the way the character when the character gets bad treatment from the people but she is able to manage it. This analysis is text-based interpretation based on the concept of Self-reliance theory proposed by Elizabeth B. Hurlock. This analysis uses fictional devices such as character, plot (conflict) and setting that contribute in revealing the issue. The result of the study reveals the woman develops her self-reliance. It can be seen through behaviour and way of thinking.

**Key words:** Self-reliance, Behaviour, Way of Thinking, Crazy Rich Asian

## ABSTRAK

**Ruswandi, Sakuntala Ariesti. 2022. Self-Reliance In *Crazy Rich Asians* By Kevin Kwan (2013). Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni. Universitas Negeri Padang.**

Tujuan dari analisis ini adalah untuk mengungkap isu kemandirian dalam Novel *Crazy Rich Asian* karya Kevin Kwan (2013). Isu kemandirian mengacu pada cara karakter ketika karakter mendapat perlakuan buruk dari orang-orang tetapi dia mampu mengelolanya. Analisis ini merupakan interpretasi berbasis teks berdasarkan konsep teori kemandirian yang dikemukakan oleh Elizabeth B. Hurlock. Analisis ini menggunakan perangkat fiktif seperti karakter, plot (konflik) dan setting yang berkontribusi dalam mengungkap masalah. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan wanita mengembangkan kemandiriannya. Hal itu dapat dilihat melalui perilaku dan cara berpikir.

Kata kunci: Kemandirian, Perilaku, Cara Berpikir, Crazy Rich Asian

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The writer

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## **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of The Research**

Living in Asian countries, especially in Singapore, people should be independent. Singaporean culture is heavily influenced by Chinese values and one's ethnicity is a strong social identifier. Singaporeans often attribute social behaviour and characteristics to people's race as well. For example, Chinese and Indian Singaporeans are generally regarded as business-savvy ethnic groups as they tend to be profit-oriented, dominating the political and economic facets of society. The Malay population are often considered to be less economically competitive and more content with making ends meet.

Despite being socially organised to a degree by ethnicity, Singaporeans don't consider entitlement to be inheritable through family or ethnicity. They like to think of their culture as 'meritocratic' where people aren't privileged over others due to their background. It is acknowledged that those who are academically qualified or well-educated loosely constitute an upper class. However, status is thought to be merit-based as a result of work ethic. Thus, to cope up with this culture, people need to develop self-reliance to be accepted.

A person's self-reliance can be seen from how they live their lives. Self-reliance will develop differently in each person depends on the child rearing (Hurlock:1987). Childrearing is the process of how to bring up a child from birth through adulthood. The child will have successful development of self-reliance when the parents have a skill in a good parenting. Such as giving some morals, character and values education. However, when the parents donot have good

parenting and spoil the kids with a lot of ease, then the kids will be growing up dependent.

Self-reliance, or also defined as the quality of depending on yourself for things instead of relying on others, is one of the manners that need to be applied throughout the life. Hurlock (1980) stated that someone who has self-reliance can impact the way of thinking. They are able to make their own decision, be able to pursue the hopes that might make them successful. Thus, people who have self-reliance will be able to communicate with others easily, control their emotions, be assertive and be wise.

Based on Hurlock's idea, the main point of "self-reliance" is that one should be true to oneself, making the best of one's own talents and following one's own instincts. Moreover, someone who has self-reliance will be able to stand in their own feet without anyone's help. They will have an effort to see things clearly and censorious in order to do something fairly. When people can show their self-reliance, they can make decisions and opinions with primary respect to their own experience of the world. This is because self-reliance is something that can be developed and be found within ourselves. Developing self-reliance can make people believe on their own thought or their conviction that's true for them. Furthermore, self-reliance has emerged as a key ethical concept that provides the basis for our lives.

However, when someone fails to develop self-reliance they will rely on others for help, which means there will be when someone get stuck thus the help is not available. They will usually find it difficult to solve problems and protect

themselves. They cannot think clearly and make decisions. When someone lost the self-reliance, they will be easily humiliated and insulted by others. This cannot be avoided when a person cannot defend and make themselves a shield.

The issue of self-reliance that related to real life phenomenon is the case of *Star Wars* actress, Kelly Marie Tran, the actress who played 'Rose' in the film. She received many hate comments because she looked different. The actress has left the "Star Wars" bullies behind to star as Disney's first Southeast Asian princess in "*Raya and the Last Dragon*." She says, "I am not afraid anymore. I am finally asking for the things I want." Moreover, according to *The New York Times* (2020), Kelly Marie Tran is a person who is owning self-reliance. She is confident and eager to show herself as young Asian-American girl. She can assure everyone who bullied her that her ethnicity has nothing to do with her career. She wanted to show her skill in acting and her intelligence to everyone who brought her down. When Tran wrote a scathing essay in *The New York Times* in August 2018 excoriating a culture that had marginalized her for her differences, she just deleted her social media and lived a life without being annoyed. She proved to people who bullied her that she can be whatever she wants, she can choose whatever the path she wants to choose. Her intelligence shows that she owns self-reliance as someone who can protect herself. She said "their words (bullies) reinforced a narrative I had heard my whole life that I was 'other', that I did not belong to, that I was not good enough, simply because I was not like them." Her words describe her brilliance of how she can develop her self-reliance and not getting into hard feelings of how other people try to bring her down. She can protect herself and also her mental integrity to stay

in line with her career. She never shows to be disturbed. She takes the bullies' comments as her way to evaluate herself to be better.

The issue of Self-reliance is also exposed in many literary works. One of them is the novel *Crazy Rich Asians* (2013) by Kevin Kwan. In this novel, there is a main (female) character named Rachel Chu who shows her self-reliance well. She gets different and bad treatments and also humiliation from different people and situations. She remains calm and proposes her intelligence to show that she owns self-reliance. When people tend to bring her down, she does not bother. She keeps doing things as it should be. She strives for her goal and proves that she is capable to be respected. She thinks rationally and acts smartly when facing a lot of difficulties. She lets herself do whatever path she chose. She does not feel worthless of how people treat her, rather she becomes stronger and worth to be respected. The factor that makes her develop her self-reliance is because she was raised by a very strong mother who never spoiled her. The parenting ways that her mother gives influence her self-reliance to emerge. This case relates to Hurlock's theory about developmental psychology in self-reliance. The theory of self-reliance is related to Sigmund Freud's theory of the human personality. According to Hilgard (2009), Freud discovered the human personality in three main systems that determine human behaviour: the id, the ego and the superego. The id is the most primitive part of the personality, and it is also the part that later developed the ego and the super-ego.

## 1.2 Focus of the Problems

The issue of self-reliance has been exposed in the novel written by Kevin Kwan *Crazy Rich Asians*. His novel shows how the female character in this novel shows her self-reliance. The female character is Rachel. Through the character, setting, plot and conflict in this novel, the acts of self-reliance can be seen in how the character be independent and use her intelligence to be respected and honoured. The female character gets different treatments from other people. Instead of feeling worthless, she comes up with her intellectuality to solve the problems. As a matter of fact, the female character cannot let the people who try to bring her down. Thus, self-reliance in this study refers to the female character's behaviour and way of thinking.

In terms of her way of thinking, she can think critically when she comes into some choices. She can choose the best option she has by considering the cause and effect that she will get. In addition she can also face her problem without feeling the valueless humiliation she gets. She cannot let people who humiliate her see her flaws by being afraid of being treated badly.

In terms of her behaviour, she can make her own choices. She is free from the influence or control of another. She lives on her own and supports herself without being helped by other people. She determines herself to be able to do or decide things on her own, rather than depending on other people for help. She has self-confidence without having to rely on another person or society for validation.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

There are two research questions used to reveal the issue of selfreliance in the novel *Crazy Rich Asian* by Kevin Kwang, they are:

1. How far does the novel *Crazy Rich Asians (2013)* expose the issue of self-reliance?
2. To what extend does action, plot, conflict, setting and character in the novel contribute in revealing the form of self-reliance in novel *Crazy Rich Asians (2013)*?

### **1.4 Purpose of The Research**

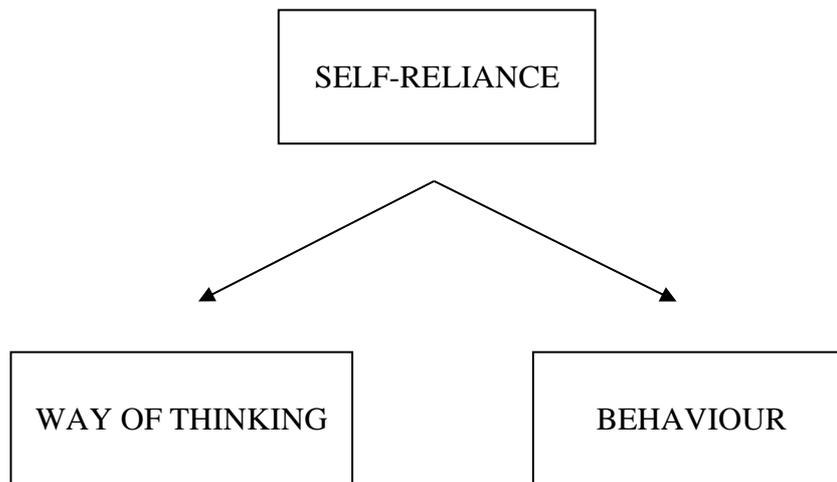
This study is to find out how far the main character expose the issue of self-reliance. In addition, this study figures out how far the action, plot, conflict, setting and character reveal the issue of self-reliance.

### **1.5 Conceptual Framework**

There is one key word from the terminology in this study. Itis "Self-reliance". According to Collins Dictionary (2021), self-reliance is the ability to do things and make decisions by yourself, without needing other people to help you. It can be concluded that being self-reliant is presented to have the ability to take control over one's life, being motivated from within, and being able to take care of one's self. Furthermore, according to Gentry (1995), from Psychological Assessmentand Treatment Specialist in American Fork, Utah, self-relianceis not synonymous with total independence from others; instead, it includes selective

reliance on them. It involves knowing how to access needed resources and using them in a responsible way.

In this analysis, self-reliance can be seen from the main character's behaviour and way of thinking. Her personality develops well because she always thinks independently, embraces her individuality and strives forward for her goal. The existence of self-reliance allows her to make her own choices, to have confidence in her own capabilities and to seek for her own security within herself toward the society.



## **CHAPTER II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.1 Review of Related Studies**

The focus of the analysis in this novel is self-reliance. The major of the topic is related to the theory of Psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud which will connect with the theory of self-development by Elizabeth B Hurlock. According to Guerin (2005), Freud explains that there are three psychic zones in the mental process: the Id, the ego, and the Superego. The Id is the reservoir of libido, the primary source of all psychic energy. The id houses basic needs, impulses, and desires. Simply, the id acts as a hedonistic pleasure center whose primary goal is to satisfy basic needs and drives. It fulfils the primordial life principle, which Freud considers to be the pleasure principle. It is the source of all our aggressions and desire. The ego is the other psychic agencies to protect the individual and society in a view of the id's dangerous potentialities. This is the rational governing agent of the psyche. The ego is responsible for how we react to, function in, and make sense of the external world. The ego controls the demands of impulses of the id and is home to our consciousness.

Furthermore, superego is other regulating agent which primarily functions to protect society. Largely unconscious, the super egois the moral censoring agency, the repository of conscience and pride. The superego houses all the rules that we have learned throughout our life and uses these to control the ego. The superego is also home to the expectations of the ego: the way we should behave and think. The three psychic zones have an important role in shaping the personality of someone.

When someone can apply superego in their life properly, they can control their self-development and try to activate self-reliance in their life. They can be able to control their way of thinking and behaviour.

The analysis of the issue of Self-reliance in this study is also related to the concept of Self-reliance by Elizabeth Bergner Hurlock (1953). *Self-Reliance*, one of Hurlock's most impressive and influential works, provides an outstanding contribution to the personal development of individuals in someone's personality. The relevance of independence addressed in *Self-Reliance* makes it an appropriate context for the issue discussed in this research. The study of *Self-Reliance* reveals the expression of some values, the main ones being trust, responsibility, commitment, creativity, autonomy, independence, determination and individual talents that relates to the parents' childrearing.

In 1953, Hurlock wrote *Developmental Psychology*, she seeks to give "as complete a picture as possible of the developmental changes of a normal human being." She describes the major areas of development of each of eleven stages from conception to old age, one of the eleven stages is self-reliance, with considerable emphasis on the adjustments necessitated by the maturational process. Some consideration is given to possible causes for deviation from what she describes as normal development and normal adjustment.

Self-reliance supposes a manifestation of responsibility (Hurlock, 1953). Being a responsible person entails rejecting envy and imitation, and making decisions and assuming their consequences. Life is a struggle and all individual must make the right decision by providing energy and effort in order to earn their

living. Responsibility is an important factor in every aspect of life. For no development can be achieved unless individuals act as responsible people who make important decisions for their own good.

According to Hurlock (1990), one of the factors that can influence someone's self-reliance is parents' childrearing.

“Parents have the best cultural value in treating their child in a democratic way, because of this pattern, parents are able to have a role as a guide who enlighten each activities and their kids' needs, especially things relate to their study and mutual attachment.”

The way parents care for or educate children will affect the development of children's independence. Parents who create a safe atmosphere but still teach in terms of responsibility and independence are able to successfully make their children grow up with complete self-reliance. In this study, the main character lives with her mother. Her mother is a single parent with one daughter. According to Hurlock (1999) single parents are parents who have dubious or widowed whether father or mother, assumes responsibility to look after children after the death of a spouse, divorce or birth of children out of wedlock (Hurlock, 1999). Her mother is a strong, persistent and smart figure. She knows how to raise a kid well with a good parenting way. She is the one responsible for supervising growth, development, and education of children from the womb until the children are considered adults and independent.

Humans have several developmental tasks that will be carried out during their lifetime. The developmental tasks according to Hurlock (1991) are;

a. Developing a personal value system

Humans develop a new value system such as starting a new relationship means having to start from zero with the aim of knowing how to get along with people (Hurlock, 1999).

b. Making preparations for independent living

Humans who really crave for independence, trying to be independent must be supported by the closest person (Hurlock, 1999).

c. Being independent

Emotional independence is related to behavioral independence. Many people who want to be independent, also need an acquired sense of security from parents or other adults. This is prominent in human who status in peer groups who have close relationships with group members can reduce humans' dependence on parents (Hurlock, 1999).

d. Developing decision making skills

Decision-making skills are affected by development in one's own intellectual skills and way of thinking, for example in taking decisions for every problem experienced in his life (Hurlock, 1999).

Self-Reliance closely related to human's way of thinking and behavioural as Hurlock states in the quotation above. She explains that those factors will go along with one's psychological development especially in their self-reliance. Those factors can be achieved once people successfully develop their self-reliance throughout their parents' parenting patterns. In the other hand, if the parents fails to

raise the children to become a self-reliance person, the children will grow dependent.

According to Hurlock (1978), a good self-reliance is characterized by the presence of characteristics through real attitudes and behaviour, as well as way of thinking. A person with good self-reliance pays attention to a pleasant attitude towards others and can accept others' weaknesses. He/she will be confident enough and feel free to take any action without feeling inferior, thus it will be easy for them to progress and success. They do not require others' encouragement. They always develop motivation in achieving success and behave as what is needed to obtain the expected results. On the other hand, a person with bad self-reliance can be characterized by the existence of egocentric nature. The person cannot socialize with others and only concern about him/her.

## **2.2 Previous Research**

There are some relevant studies used to support this study. The first one is the study that was done by Hannah Ho Ming Yit (2018) entitled *Capitalist Patriarchy in Singaporean Women's Work and Consumption: Towards a Radical Discourse in Kevin Kwan's Crazy Rich Asians*. This research explains about gender inequality in the city-state's class economy. This analysis engages evaluation of the gendering of capitalism that results in these women's subjugated work for their fathers, husbands and the state. The writer of this analysis argues that significant efforts of female characters at inflecting rigid gender boundaries effectively reclaim women's position in high production and true consumption.

The second study is done by Arifah Ulfa Nasution (2019) entitled *An Analysis of Social Classes and Its Conflicts in Kevin Kwan'S Crazy Rich Asian Novel*. This research explains about how the social class contained in the *Crazy Rich Asian*

novel and its conflict on family life. In this thesis, the writer uses the social class and social conflict theory to analyze the novel. The method used in writing this thesis is a qualitative descriptive method. The findings and analysis that can be found in the novel about social class differences. This class difference is created because of the existence of social class, where they classify their social class, namely the upper class and middle class. Where the upper classes do not want to accept the middle class into their class. The difference in social class is measured by the power or wealth, privileges and prestige that affect the position, lifestyle, habits and behavior between the upper class and middle class so that the gap between the two classes is so striking. The conflict is the gap in social status in a family life or relationship. This gap affects the thinking of upper families who cannot accept any class lower than them to enter their families.

Those previous studies concerned the connection between social class and gender boundaries. In other ways, this study will discuss how a person who gets bad treatment is trying to get the encouragement to develop self-reliance. People should be aware of this issue because if a person accepts that mistreatment without defending themselves, it will make the situation worse. These studies focus on analyzing the female main character named Rachel Chu, but in this research the focus is on her self-reliance.

## **CHAPTER V CONCLUSION**

The issue of self-reliance can be revealed in a novel *Crazy Rich Asian* (2013) by Kevin Kwan. The fictional elements such as character, plot (conflict) and setting contribute in revealing the meaning from the novel. This analysis applies the concept of Elizabeth B. Hurlock about developmental psychology in self-reliance. Self-reliance in this analysis refers to how the main character shows in her actions towards her life. Self-reliance can be seen through behaviour and way of thinking.

In terms of behavior, the main character tries to show a good manner in every activity. She is always polite or refined social behaviour to everyone she meets. Thus, whenever there some moments when she is humiliated by someone, she can manage and control her anger. She respects each other no matter what class and social they belong. she always pay attention to her appearance. Many people like her because of her behaviour. Her good behaviour would consist of being kind and genuine to others.

In terms of way of thinking, she can think clearly and rationally about what to do or what to believe. She is able to engage in reflective and independent thinking. She allows herself to analyze information and make an objective judgment. When she gets a lot of hatred from people, she never directly take everything personally. She always try to manage herself and collecting ideas to show that she can do better.

The analysis proves that the self-reliance owned by the main character is influenced by her mother way of rearing. As Elizabeth B. Hurlock said in her theory, the treatments of raising kids plays important roles in building and developing children's self-reliance and independence. It also influence children's behaviour and critical thinking. The way her mother raised her was the best one. Her mother works hard to be able to survive in the country where they don't belong. Her mother struggled to give the best education and let her choose what every choices she wants to reach. Finally, it proves that a good child-rearing will influence children's development in their self-reliance.

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