

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theory below is exposed from *The Consumer Society* (Baudrillard, 1998) that will be explored further in this part and it will be inserted by researcher works to strengthen the idea. In Jean Baudrillard's view, the early history of consumerism is rooted in the social changes that occurred in society at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the late 19th century. It began with the concept of Happiness. He describes that the definition of happiness shifts to consumerism, all starting from the rise of the Industrial Revolution and the revolution of the late nineteenth century. This ideology of Happiness has changed (Baudrillard, 1998:49) to

"Happiness has to be measurable. It has to be a well-being measurable in terms of objects and signs; it has to be 'comfort,' as Tocqueville put it, already noting this trend of democratic societies towards ever more well-being as a reduction of the impact of social misfortune and equalization of all destinies'."

It means consumerism equates Happiness with visible and measurable consumption, which creates an illusion for consumerism about the value of an object.

Happiness develops into a myth. Baudrillard emphasizes that '*myth of happiness*' concept unconsciously forms a social control that replaces traditional roles with symbols of consumer success. He writes, "*The democratic principle is then transferred from a real equality of capacities... to an equality before the objects and other manifest signs of social success and happiness...*" (Baudrillard, 1998:50).

This statement confirms that modern democracy has shifted to the ability of an individual to have equal access to goods consumed and produce signs of social status, ownership of which symbolizes success and Happiness.

Baudrillard also highlights the shift in thinking since the Industrial Revolution; people believe that from an idealized view, economic Growth will improve society with more equality and democracy, but from a realistic view, it creates a capitalist society that maintains unequal. He posits that “*Growth is not democracy. Profusion is a function of discrimination,*” (Baudrillard, 1998:66) Underlining that consumption does not democratize society, but maintains social stratification that accentuates symbolic wealth. Captivated by Baudrillard's framework, Meng Qin demonstrates that symbolic consumption constitutes a pseudo-reality that obscures the exploitation inherent to the capitalist system (2020). In addition, it attracts considerable attention regarding the role of symbolic consumption in the formation of identity and the maintenance of customer loyalty across a wide range of sectors and timeframes Guzmán et al. (2023).

Baudrillard also explained about the period of abundance at the end of the 19th century along with the modern industrialization period, women became the central figure that influenced the pattern of marketing marketing strategy. This commercial marketing strategy is also explained by Baudrillard (1998, 122) who states that such advertising strategy is a communication medium that can shape the consumption patterns of society at large. Baudrillard reveals that the appeal of advertising refracts the real needs of society, in the sense that advertising is made to shape people's perceptions of an object (1998, 123-125). Baudrillard's criticism

of advertising described by experts who say that advertising can possess the soul and sell dreams, in Baudrillard's view advertising creates a narrative as if fantasy and dreams have meaning (1998, 145). Advertisements created by modern industry have crossed the line of truth and are mostly false and illusory (Baudrillard, 1998:126).

During the era of abundance that became the stage of the shift to the modern industrial era, Baudrillard (1998, 26) views that although the percentage of production has increased and from economic data has progressed, it does not mean that all people are prosperous yet; increasing the percentage of production makes social inequality more visible. Baudrillard states that the progress of production only disguises the social inequality that occurs in society (1998, 53).

Excessive consumption is born from the development of a new economic system, thus according to Baudrillard (1998, 69) consumption is not only due to personal will but is a collective activity driven by the system formed by society itself. In the era of economic shift from traditional to modern society, according to Baudrillard (1998: 83) began to leave the free market culture and began to use monopoly control in order to dominate the industrial market. This collective impulse is perceived through the sign system, in Baudrillard's study (1998, 133) in modern society the perception of the concept of beauty and something attractive is a form of social system and marketing strategy that is masked in society.

The judgment of beauty that is actually formed from the social system causes consumption patterns to change in society, in Baudrillard's view (1998, 87)

mass consumption is caused by the image of an object and makes consumption in society increase due to the pursuit of aesthetic tastes formed by the social system. According to Baudrillard (1998:166), this increased consumption is triggered by the art of display carried out by modern industry by displaying luxury and arousing the desire for consumption, in other words, the image of luxury displayed by department stores is something that is considered a socially accepted image in the social system.

The image displayed by department stores at the end of the 19th century is a contradiction of the modern capitalism system, in Baudrillard's view (1998: 71-72) in industry actors carry out various competitions to achieve profits in this case the company carries out various controls to achieve profits. In this case, the modern economic system has changed in the regulation of the system, becoming more abstract, uncertain, and systematic.

The view of the massive consumption culture carried out by the characters in *The Ladies' Paradise* is in line with Baudrillard's (1998:61) :view of objects that *"you never consume the object in itself (in its use-value); you are always manipulating objects (in the broadest sense) as signs which distinguish you either by affiliating you to your own group taken as an ideal reference or by marking you off from your group by reference to a group of higher status."*

It draws attention to Chen (2022) in investigating Baudrillard's theory, which refers to a consumptive society in which the symbols of material and status do not directly relate to reality but rather the consumption of different symbols presence in commodities.

From Baudliard's theory, there is a classification of social classes in consumerism, which is divided into the following classes (Baudrillard, 1998:58-59)

1. Economic class refers to those with the financial ability to buy consumer goods. The difference is in who can access and own certain goods.
2. Social class refers to social status based on an individual's later background, education obtained, and access to goods consumed. This social class can be seen in the way people consume and use goods and how these goods function as a symbol of status.
3. Educational class refers to the group that has access to education. Individuals with a higher educational background can access science and rational culture, while those who do not have the same access may see education as a symbol of power.
4. Cultural class: This is the class of individuals who use access to knowledge and culture; there is a separation between those who can understand culture and knowledge productively and those who only see it as a symbol of social status.
5. Consumer class: Which class of individuals can access certain consumer goods and individuals who are only trapped in symbolic consumption without an understanding of effectiveness? This class illustrates the difference in how goods are viewed as functional tools or just symbols.

Baudrillard (Baudrillard, 1998:60) also discusses the attainment of social status in society, which is divided into two categories: Salvation by grace and Salvation by works. These two forms of social hierarchy are based on consumption effort.

1. Salvation by grace is a form of social status obtained through lineage inheritance. This exclusive status is obtained without any effort and is innate. In this social hierarchy, an individual does not need to show his strength by buying consumer goods on a large scale because the symbol possessed since birth is considered eternal, thus creating a social distance that is difficult to penetrate.
2. On the other hand, there is Salvation by Works, in which an individual achieves social power by consuming goods and other symbols and status. This is more common among the middle and lower classes, who were not born with aristocratic blessings. Although this consumption gives the illusion of achievement, it can never surpass Salvation by grace. As a result, the middle and lower classes are trapped in massive consumption to pursue recognition from society.

The change in consumerist culture at the end of the 19th century was a significant transformation due to industrial advancement and increased availability of consumer goods, where the '*egalitarian ideology of well-being*' was rooted in social values and attached to objects that became measurable symbols of success. Baudrillard's insights help to illustrate that such a setting in literature reflects the shifting transformation of society in the late 19th century. The department store environment emphasizes the shift from value for money to symbolic consumption; this aligns with Baudrillard's state opinion that '*the logic of consumption is by no means the logic of individual satisfaction... it is the production and manipulation of social signifiers*' (Baudrillard, 1998:60)

Baudliard's view, which draws on Duesenberry (1949:19) theory, emphasizes that the position in society that a consumer holds determines their choice of consumption level. This theory can reveal that people's consumption patterns emerge from the dynamics of society that influence each other rather than just individual consumption drives. Therefore, Baudliard's analysis shows that the impact of this social change is the creation of material objects valued in the social context of the new modern industrial world. Through Baudliard's (1998:75) analysis, the evolution of the industrial system unfolds into four core parts, each of which characterizes a different pattern of consumption:

1. The abandonment of the traditional system favoring a new, more modern industrial system with the advent of more sophisticated machinery and expanding the division of labor.
2. Rationalizations of production capital: Capital rationalization is achieved by targeted investment and division of labor resources, which is a departure from the old traditional system, where capital was used for consumption, but the new industrial system uses capital to generate more value through investment. This is important in modern industry; this capital allocation forms a solid economic foundation. Economic growth is not just the accumulation of wealth, but it is a way to expand a more efficient and more structured economy.
3. The advent of wage labor, an abstract and systematic production force, saw the emergence of a system in which workers do not have complete control over their work. Under the capitalist system, where the owners of capital

own the means of production, workers work for wages. In this system, labor becomes a production and sales force that the company can move, organize, and utilize.

4. The modern industrial system is one in which the rationalization of needs and demands is a defining feature. It is in stark contrast to the traditional economic activities of the past, which were primarily localized and focused on meeting individual or community needs through producing goods. In the current system, needs and demands are met through a complex network of organizations, and market interest analyses give this an important position structure, consumer demand, and mass production.

Overall, this literature review investigates the changing culture of consumption in the late 19th century, using Baudliard's theoretical framework of symbolic consumption and its effects on the social structure of society. Baudliard's concept of consumerism as the gratification of desire for possession of goods is a symbol of social power. Previous research related to *The Ladies' Paradise* explores various phenomena, but research that focuses on the phenomenon of symbolic consumption that affects the culture of consumption of society has not been carried out; with this urgency, the researcher seeks to provide a role in understanding the excessive consumption formed through modern capitalism, which forms a new social structure and symbolic consumption in society in the late 19th century.

