



## **An Analysis of Psychological Aspect of The Main Character in Shadow and Bone Movie**

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: 30 November 2024	This study investigates the psychological dimensions of the main character in the film <i>Shadow and Bone</i> using Bernhardt’s (1953) theory of human motivation. The analysis focuses on five key motivational categories: organic needs, desire, emotions as motives, feelings and attitudes as motives, and social motives. Through qualitative descriptive methods, 24 instances of psychological motivation were identified from the film. The findings indicate that desire-related motivations (33.3%) and organic needs (29.1%) are most dominant in shaping the character of Alina, the protagonist. These motivations are closely tied to Alina’s experiences of personal conflict, social rejection, and emotional struggle, which drive her actions and development throughout the narrative. The study highlights how cinematic characters can serve as complex psychological representations, enriching narrative depth and enhancing audience empathy. This research contributes to the interdisciplinary discourse between psychology, literature, and film studies, emphasizing the importance of psychological realism in character construction.
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### **1. Introduction**

Film is a form of modern art expression that combines visual and audio elements to creatively convey messages to the audience. As a mass communication medium, film not only offers entertainment, but also voices cultural, social, and psychological values that live in society. Sumarno (1996) emphasized that film is a powerful medium in conveying complex messages in the modern era, making it an important means of forming public opinion while broadening the audience's horizons. The uniqueness of film lies in its ability to combine visual movement with narrative to create a symbolic

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reality that is easy to understand and accept. Technically, film consists of a series of still images that are arranged and projected quickly to create the illusion of movement known as persistence of vision. This optical illusion is a cinematic foundation that allows the audience to be visually and emotionally involved in the story being presented. This makes film a unique medium that relies not only on the power of the story, but also on the power of images and sound to create a profound psychological impact. In the structure of the film, characters play an important role as a link between the narrative world and the real experience of the audience. These characters are not just tools to drive the story, but also a representation of the complexity of human psychology that is manifested in visual and behavioral forms. Each character in the film has a personality, motives, and internal conflicts that depict authentic psychological dynamics. According to Romanenko (2020), characters in audiovisual narratives are built through a series of actions and dialogues that reflect certain psychological conditions, allowing the audience to connect emotionally through empathy. In this context, psychological aspects become an important foundation in developing realistic and believable characters. The personalities of characters in films reflect the internal structure of humans in the form of emotions, motivations, and inner conflicts, as explained in various approaches to personality psychology (Aras, 2015). One relevant approach to understanding the behavior of film characters is the motivation theory proposed by Bernhardt (1953). He identified five main categories of motivation, namely organic needs, desires, feelings as intentions, sentiments and mentalities, and social intentions. Each of these categories provides a conceptual framework that can be used to analyze the drives behind the actions of characters in films. Through this approach, researchers can uncover the psychological reasons behind the decisions and conflicts of characters, and how these motivations develop along with the film's narrative. For example, in films that raise the theme of struggle or trauma, organic motivations and social sentiments are often the main drivers of character dynamics.

Studying characters in films through a psychological perspective not only enriches understanding of narrative structure, but also opens up space for interdisciplinary analysis between psychology, literature, and media studies. Films are an effective medium for exploring complex psychological phenomena in a particular cultural context. Kihlstrom and Park (2016) in his research stated that the emotional involvement of the audience is greatly influenced by strong and realistic psychological representations in characters. Therefore, films that are able to depict the psychological condition of characters in depth tend to be more effective in building empathy and social reflection among the audience (see Gilman et al., 2017).

In line with that, research on psychological elements in films requires a systematic and theoretical scientific approach. Analysis of film characters cannot be separated from the framework of narrative psychology, personality psychology, and the theory of motivation that underlies human action. Previous research has shown that understanding character motivation can provide new insights into screenwriting, directing, and film criticism (Can, 2016; Falkum, 2022). Therefore, it is important for researchers to not

only assess the visual and technical elements of the film, but also explore how characters are constructed psychologically and ideologically.

Finally, the psychological approach in film studies can expand the direction of interdisciplinary research that combines narrative, visual, and psychological dimensions. Film is not only a medium for telling stories, but also a reflection of human complexity depicted through its characters. By understanding the psychological dimensions of characters, researchers can identify social values, inner conflicts, and personality transformations experienced by characters during the development of the narrative. The implications of this research are not only important in an academic context, but also in film production that is more oriented towards realism and character depth.

## **2. Literature Review**

The study of the psychological aspects of characters in films has been widely studied using various theoretical approaches, one of which is Bernhardt's (1953) motivation theory. This theory views that human actions are based on psychological needs, such as desires, emotional intentions, and social intentions. Research by Sain et al. (2023) revealed that external conflict has a significant impact on the psychological condition of the main character in the film *Gone Girl*, especially in determining the responses and decisions taken by the character. In the analysis of the film *Cruella*, Amnesi and Skolastika (2023) emphasized that the drive for desire is the main motivation that drives the actions of the main character, showing a close relationship between emotional needs and character behavior. Meanwhile, Empawi et al. (2024) used the intrinsic motivation approach from Self-Determination Theory and found that autonomy and competence are two important psychological factors that shape the main character in the film *Joy*. A similar study was conducted by Natalia et al. (2019) who applied Maslow's theory of needs to the character Stefan in the film *Maleficent*, finding that the character's ambition was greatly influenced by the need for self-actualization.

Research on the relationship between internal conflict and character motivation was also conducted by Krisnawari (2016) through an analysis of the film *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*. She found that the inner conflict experienced by the main character directly reflects complex and significant psychological dynamics. Putra (2017) also showed that the characterization method in the film *Begin Again* is very effective in depicting psychological motivation, especially in forming a narrative that centers on the character's personal transformation. From an Adlerian perspective, Dharma et al. (2022) examined how the character Willy Wonka in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* shows a compensation mechanism for feelings of inferiority with extraordinary creativity, highlighting the importance of psychological aspects in character formation. In the context of Indonesian films, Sukma et al. (2024) examined the psychological dimensions of the character Pertiwi in the film *Kejarlah Janji*, and found that the dynamics of emotions and internal motivation of the character are at the center of narrative conflict.

Furthermore, Rahmani et al. (2024) confirmed previous findings related to the film Joy, that the need for autonomy and social connectedness play an important role in the formation of character identity and motivation. Meanwhile, Pramita et al. (2017) in their study of the drama Bang Bang You're Dead highlighted that the characters' actions were heavily influenced by psychological pressure and identity conflict, in line with Bernhardt's framework. In general, these studies confirm that the psychological aspects in films not only enrich characterization, but also provide thematic depth that impacts the audience's understanding of the meaning of the story. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the psychological aspect of foreign movies called 'Shadow and Bone'. This study aims to analyze the physiological aspect of the main actor in "Shadow and Bone" movie.

### 3. Method

The data were analyzed qualitatively and presented in a descriptive manner. All data are analyzed on the theoretical basis of psychological aspects applied from the theory of Bernhardt 1953. Data collection was carried out in four steps, namely downloading films and film scripts, watching films, and recording information by stopping the film in every scene connected with the mental parts of human inspiration.

Shadow and Bone film released on April 23, 2021, is a series taking the background of a war-torn world, the Russian Empire, and machine guns as weapons, this series tells the story of people who are often underestimated but can prove otherwise. Alina, the protagonist of this story, is an orphan girl and a First Army soldier with hidden abilities, which makes this film very suitable for this exploration. Shadow and Bone is an Action, Adventure, and Drama film directed by Dan Liu, Jeremy Webb, Lee Toland Krieger, and Mairzee Almas and produced by 21 Laps Entertainment, Chronology, and Loom Studios.

### 4. Results and Discussion

This study used the movie Shadow and Bone as a source of data, the existence of five types of psychological aspects by Bernhardt. The table below describes five aspects of the Shadow and Bone film.

**Table 1.** Type of Psychological Aspect of Human

No	Type of Psychological Aspect of Human	Occurrences	Percentage
1	Organic Needs	7	29.1%
2	Desire Aspect	8	33.3%
3	Emotions as motives	1	4.1%
4	Feelings and Attitudes as Motives	3	12.5%
5	Social Motives	5	20.8%
	Total	24	99.8%

The Table 1 detected 24 psychological aspects of human motivation. 7 (29.1%)

data show an organic side. 8 (33.3%) in the desirable aspect. One person (4.1%) cited emotional aspects as a motivation. Data 3 (12.5%) refers to aspects of feeling and attitudes as motives and Data 5 (20.8%) refers to aspects of social motives. The data above, one with highest frequency, is Aspect. Aspect dominates the protagonist in *Shadow and Bone* because of the conflicts and incidents that the protagonist has to go through and the emotional side of the protagonist makes him want anything can relieve his anger. and achieve your goals.

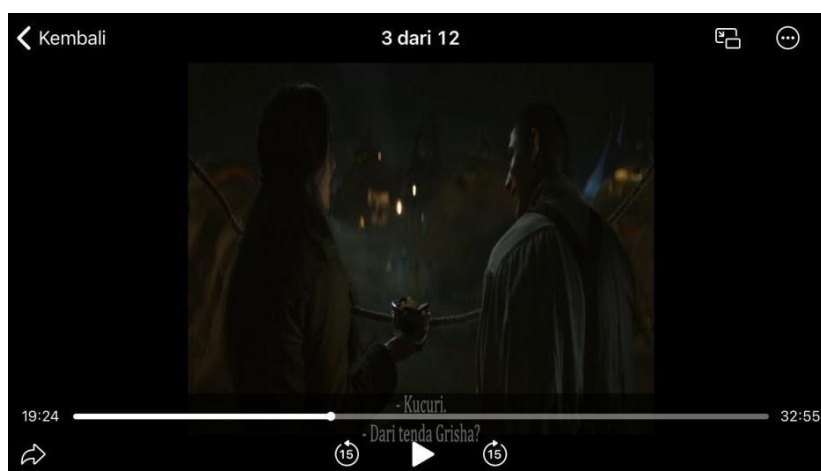
### **Type of Psychological Aspect of Human Motivation**

Psychology has a broad spectrum that deals with psychological aspects of a person producing something. Bernhardt (1953) concludes the division of motivation into five elements, these are the organic need or desire aspects, the need aspect, the emotion as the motive, the affectation, the attitude as the motivation and the social motivation. Society plays an important role in human action.

#### **1) Organic Needs or Appetites**

Organic needs are those that help us to survive because of those needs. Humans need daily food, water, recovery, new activities, adequate sleep and environment. These are all necessary requirements. All living things go through this, including Alina, a normal girl who needs all these basics.

#### **Data 1**



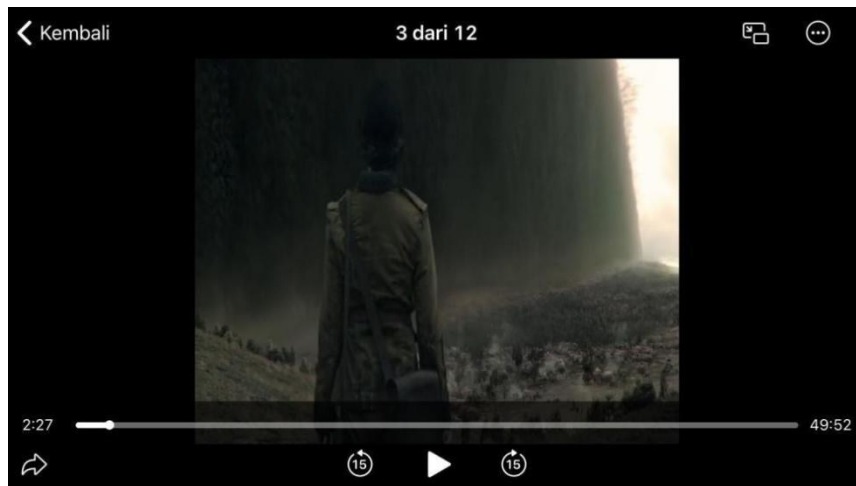
**Figure 1.** Alina was given food by her boyfriend

Based on the picture above, Alina was given food by her boyfriend because at the base she was rejected for reasons not being in the same group. Food is a basic human need. People eat when they are hungry and all these actions must satisfy their desires. This is related to the organic need aspect as Alina has instinctively or subconsciously learned that food is an unconscious need to satisfy and satisfy her needs.

## 2) Desire Aspect

Desired aspect is a pattern that keeps changing with human development from infancy through adulthood and old age. In the movie “Shadow and Bone” there are several aspects of desire that Alina has to experience.

### Data 2



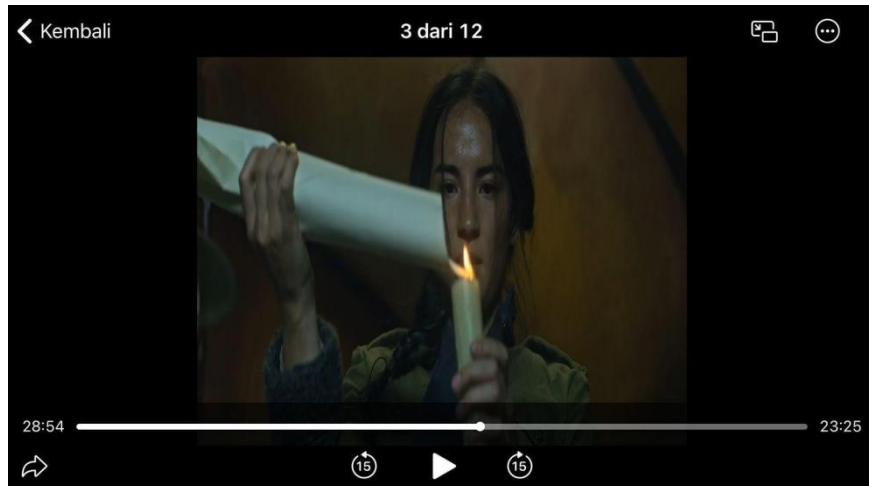
**Figure 2.** Alina as a child had learned the truth behind the death of her parents

In this scene, it is seen that Alina as a child had learned the truth behind the death of her parents which was obliterated by the curve that anyone crossed and mocked the saints. For years Alina thought she would find a way out, now Alina is an adult and knows the only way out is through it. Having gone through an internal conflict with herself, Alina wanted to know more about the curve. This indicates that the psychological aspect experienced by Alina falls into the category of the desire aspect with the desire to know the basic curves of the body.

## 3) Emotions as Motives

Emotions are one of the motivations for human behavior, but emotional experiences can also guide activity. Emotions and moods are milder forms, unlike the intense emotions of fear and anger determine an individual's course of action (Bernhardt, 1953). Because people act based on their emotions, they are often unable to determine whether their actions are correct.

### Data 3



**Figure 3.** Alina and her entire team were not permitted to sail

In this scene, Alina and her entire team were not permitted to sail. Alina is angry because she feels she deserves to be there and paints the right map. because of that Alina burned the map which concluded the existence of the curve and confused the soldiers with the burning map.

#### 4) Feelings and Attitudes as Motives

These behaviors are rated as pleasant or unpleasant, with a tone scale ranging from very pleasant to very unpleasant. This is one of the key motivators, the ubiquitous pleasant or unpleasant emotional tone, always accompanied by a reaction to approach or withdrawal.

#### Data 4



**Figure 4.** Alina meets a knightand needs to learn wizardry

In this scene, Alina is seen who is on her way with troops halting at an area, Alina meets a knightand needs to learn wizardry. This incorporates the Mental Parts of Sentiments

and Perspectives as Thought processes on the grounds that the propensities shown by Alina are fun, agreeable, inquisitive, similar to what he found there and chose to move toward the knight.

#### 5) Social Motives

This social presence also influences certain traits and attitudes of a person. This attitude is either innate or instilled in a person through habits and social upbringing. With a tendency to be assertive, a person strives for excellence and success and persuades others.

#### Data 5



**Figure 5.** Alina is currently a vagrant

In this scene, Alina is currently a vagrant, with no spot to live or food to get by, so her conditions and climate constrained her to join a neighborhood clan. It was a component that urged the author to take an interest. This present circumstance is one of the Mental Perspectives that are remembered for the Social Intention classification, particularly those that attention on Self-Accommodation, this is on the grounds that the conditions and climate around Alina drive her to submit and give up to her circumstance, despite the fact that Alina would rather not. He had to join since he was a vagrant and needed to find data for a guide that would prompt a hazardous bend. having no spot to live and furthermore food to get by, constraining him to join the ancestral district briefly to keep his actual personality, Grisha confidential.

#### 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, psychological aspects of motivation have a great influence on a person's behavior (Sorlin, 2017). The main characters experience some conflicts that indirectly affect their psychological feelings but affect the resulting plot. Twenty-four data relate to these five aspects of the main actor. 1 (0.04%) representing organic needs 8 (0.33%) refers to the desired aspect. Data from 7 (0.29%) emotion as a motivation. 5



(0.20%) motivated by emotions and attitudes. 3 (0.12%) data refer to social motives. In *Shadow and Bone* films, the conflicts and incidents that the protagonist goes through cause the lustful side to dominate the protagonist, and the emotional side of the protagonist makes him want whatever it takes to quench his anger and achieve his goals.

### **Conflict of interest**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this research.

### **Authors' contribution**

The authors made substantial contributions to the conception and design of the study. The authors took responsibility for data analysis, interpretation and discussion of results. The authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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