

**READERS' EXPECTATION TO MOVIE ADAPTATION: READER
RESPONSE ANALYSIS ON NICK CASSAVETES *MY SISTER'S KEEPER*
MOVIE (2009)**



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APPROVAL

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PUBLICATION ARTICLE

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READERS' EXPECTATION TO MOVIE ADAPTATION:

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The Researcher



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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini termasuk penelitian sastra. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui pengharapan pembaca terhadap film *My Sister's Keeper* (2009) karya Nick Cassavetes menggunakan analisis respon pembaca. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif dan menggunakan dua sumber data yaitu sumber data utama dan sumber data kedua. Sumber data utama penelitian ini adalah ulasan penonton film *My Sister's Keeper* (2009) karya Nick Cassavetes diambil dari situs IMDb (Internet Movie database). Data kedua penelitian ini adalah beberapa referensi terkait penelitian seperti beberapa buku, jurnal, penelitian sebelumnya dan beberapa sumber lain. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada ikatan yang kuat antara harapan pembaca tentang film *My Sister's Keeper* dengan latar belakang para pemberi ulasan yaitu latar belakang pembaca sebelumnya, latar belakang jenis kelamin dan latar belakang kebangsaan yang mana sebagian besar pembaca tidak puas dengan versi film *My Sister's Keeper* dan ini menunjukkan bahwa harapan pembaca tidak terpenuhi.

Kata kunci: Harapan Pembaca, Respon Pembaca, *My Sister's Keeper*

ABSTRACT

This research belongs to the literary study. The objective of the study is to know what the reader's expectation to movie adaptation *My Sister's Keeper* (2009) by Nick Cassavetes using reader response analysis. This research is qualitative research and using two data sources that is primary data and secondary data source. The primary data source of this study is the reviewers' response of *My Sister's Keeper* movie (2009) by Nick Cassavetes taken from IMDb (Internet Movie database) website. Then the secondary data source is some references related to this analysis such as books, journals, previous researches and other sources. The result shows that there is tight relation between readers' expectation about *My Sister's Keeper* movie with reviewers' data background that is prior reading background, gender background and nationality background in which most of the readers dissatisfied with *My Sister's Keeper* movie version and it means their expectation to the movie is unfulfilled.

Keywords: Readers' Expectation, Reader Response, *My Sister's Keeper*

1. INTRODUCTION

My Sister's Keeper movie (2009) by Nick Cassavetes has been analyzed by many researchers. This research provides some previous studies related to the topic *My Sister's Keeper* movie. The first previous study is by Sari (2011) from State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah which conducted her research in order to find motivation of the main character in life and solve the problem in the *My Sister's Keeper* movie using Hierarchy of Human Needs of Abraham H. Maslow's theory. The second previous study is by Mayasari and Ayu (2014) from State University of Surabaya. They analyzed the altruism of Anna Fitzgerald as the main character in Jodi Picoult's novel *My Sister's Keeper*. The third previous study is by Purwaningtyas (2013) from Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. She analyzed the survival instinct in Cassavetes' movie *My Sister's Keeper* by using psychoanalytic approach.

In conclusion, previous study focusing *My Sister's Keeper* story mostly applied descriptive qualitative research in which the data collected through document analysis and observation. The topics of the researches were mostly focus on the main character of *My Sister's Keeper* story. The result shows that *My Sister's Keeper* is analyzed by various approaches. Unfortunately, no one conducted using reader-response analysis.

This research aims to explain what the major issue responded by the reviewers on *My Sister's Keeper* movie, how the users' review are related to their background, what the reviewers' evaluation to the movie and what the readers' expectation to the movie. What makes this research different with the other is first the theory which is used. The second is the issue of the study. The third is the data analysis in which many of the researchers are conducted to analyze *My Sister's Keeper* novel by Jodi Picoult meanwhile this research focus to analyze the reader response through *My Sister's Keeper* movie adapted by Nick Cassavetes.

My Sister's Keeper movie is an adaptation from a novel with the same title which according to Meyer (in Phillips, 2005) what makes adaptation movie difference is its additions, deletions and modifications of scenes in movie which could not be found in its source. This research belongs to experiential reader response by Richard Beach which concerns on self's experience of the readers while understand some certain texts. There are similarity between Beach and Tyson (Beach, 1993; Tyson, 2006) that the existence of reader response is because the readers are actively making meaning of the literary works in which the readers' may give feedback, opinion, and build social relation between them. Otherwise it is quite different with Klarer (1999) that he believes the existence of reader response is more complex which includes "examine the readership of a text and investigate why, where and when it is read. They also examine certain reading practices of social, ethnic or national groups. Many of these investigations also deal with and try to explain the physiological aspect of the actual reading process".

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In conducting this research, the researcher applied descriptive qualitative method which guided the researchers to be more sensitive utilizing their intellectual capacities (Hatch, 2002) and diligently attempting to make sense or interpreting phenomena to get representation of people meaning to support qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). The primary data source in this study is reviewers' responses of *My Sister's Keeper* movie (2009) by Nick Cassavetes from IMDb. The secondary data is from some related references that support this analysis. Miles and Huberman (1994) have defined analysis into three concurrent flows of activities: a) data reduction, such as writing summaries, coding, teasing out themes, making clusters, making partitions, and writing memos; b) data display can be explained such as making matrices, graphs, charts and networks which make the analyst easier to see what happening; c) conclusion drawing/ verification is making conclusion after whole analysis done by the

researcher. This research also has been analyzed through steps: a) collecting the data from IMDb; b) reading and classifying the reviewers' issue, reviewers' nationality, and reviewers' gender by using Microsoft Excel to help in counting all data; c) determining the issues into seven main issues and selecting evidence to prove the accuracy; d) explaining how relation between the issues and the background of the reviewers; e) explaining what the reviewers' evaluation; f) discussing what the readers' expectation to the movie; g) and the last, researcher draws a conclusion, suggestion and pedagogical implication.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1 MAIN FINDING

3.1.1 The Dominant Issue

There are 185 reviews for *My Sister's Keeper* in IMDb since the first time it released in Cinema in June 2009 until the end of November 2016. The researcher decided to take them all or 185 reviewers to be the object of this analysis. The reviewers were brought more than two issues in their response, so the researcher included all issues into some categories. At last, the researcher found 880 for the total issue. The issues are explained as follow:

Table 1. Issues found in IMDb from June 2009- November 2016.

No	Issues	Freq	Percentage (%)
1.	Excranisation/Adaptation	289	40,50%
2.	Predictable or Unpredictable Ending	60	6,80%
3.	Reviewers' Evaluation to the Movie	117	13,30%
4.	Giving Information	85	9,70%
5.	Influence viewers' Psychology	124	14,10%
6.	Controversial issue	50	5,70%
7.	Viewers' persepction	87	9,90%
	Total	880	100%

Based on the data that had been mention above, the researcher has found the major issue discussed on IMDb about *My Sister's Keeper* that is excranisation/adaptation of the movie. Audience who has given response to the

excranisation/adaptation issue from 67 pages and 185 viewers are 289 reviewers. The explanation can be seen as follow:

3.1.1.1 Excranisation/ Adaptation

There are 289 reviews for the issue. The researcher divided this issue into five parts of discussion.

3.1.1.1.1 Authorship

There are 63 reviewers comment to the authorship issue. They are mostly comment about the movie director, but they also comment to the author of the novel and the script writer. The researcher then divided the authorship into three focuses that is;

3.1.1.1.1.1 The director

The comment for the director Nick Cassavetes is 36 reviewers. Reviewers comment in the way how he made a very good plot because the heavy issue which he delivered seems simple but very real. A man from Brazil who did not read the novel had given positive comment to Cassavetes that he is good director which can guide the actors and actress in good performance though *My Sister's Keeper* movie.

3.1.1.1.1.2 The novel's writer

There are 19 reviewers who also give comment to Judi Picout for the reasons she is the original author of *My Sister's Keeper* story. They mostly comment that they prefer like on Jodi's novel version. Someone from United State that support on Jodi's work had said that if the director kept the novel ending version, the movie ending might be more poignant and ironic.

3.1.1.1.1.3 The script writer

There are 8 reviewers who have given comment to script writer Nicholas Leven. They mostly dissatisfied with Leven's writing because he has not keep the novel's ending, but some of them were like that it is unpredictable ending. Someone from United State describe his unsatisfied review that illustrated the

script written by Leven as a poor writing which detract the contentment of the movie.

3.1.1.2 Addition and Reduction

There are many events in the novel story, so when it changed into movie version some events be reduced or narrated but simplified. There are 32 reviewers for this issue. Some reviewers satisfied and the other disappointed. Someone form United State realized that the director shifted some events and gave additions after the movie is wrapped.

3.1.1.3 Actor and Actress Selection

There are 12 reviewers for this issue. Someone from Tennessee delivered his comment that the actress and actor performance are all good. He admired Cameron Diaz outstanding acting which means the selection of the characters had been doing well.

3.1.1.4 Characterization

There are 137 reviewers for this issue. They are mostly gave good impression to the characters. Someone from Edinburgh said that the acting of the characters is fair enough to be praised. Cameron Diaz has become stellar in a dramatic role and all characters performed well in which we can understand each of their perspective.

3.1.1.5 Recommended or Not Recommended Movie

There are 45 reviews who discuss this issue. They who satisfy to the movie are automatically recommending this movie to the other people. One of reviewer form United State has given her recommendation of this movie which although it is not happy movie but this movie will help people to appreciate life.

3.1.1.6 Transition

This issue covers everything which discuss about the process of making the movie such as lighting, visualization, design and others. There are 68 reviews who discuss this issue. Someone from United Kingdom declare his comment about poor quality of cinematography of the movie nor the soft golden lighting.

3.1.1.7 Predictable or Unpredictable Ending

There are 60 reviews who discuss this issue. Some of the reviewers are dissappointed because this movie has different ending compared with the novel. Many of the readers are disappointed because its movie ending. The novel ends with the dead of the designer's girl but the movie ends with the dead of the girl with cancer.

3.1.1.8 Reviewers' Evaluation to the Movie

The researcher tries to find who is given positive and who is given negative evaluation to the movie. There are 117 reviews talking about this issue. Many of the reviewers gave their evaluation about good or bad the movie was. Reviewers who have given positive evaluation mostly from they who did not read the novel before and on the contrary.

3.1.1.9 Giving Information

Reviewers who discuss in this position are 85 people. It was probably have purpose to inform the reader who did not know the story before. The reviewers who did not read the novel before mostly give information about what the story and the conflict on it movie while the reviewers who have read the novel mostly explained their disagreement about the movie changing or about the differences between the movie and the novel.

3.1.1.10 Influence Viewers' Psychology

Reviewers for this issue are about 124 people. But the researcher has divided this issue into four parts of discussion. They are as follows:

3.1.1.10.1 Emotionally Touch

There are 89 reviewers discussing about this issue. This evidence is given by women from Egypt who explain her estimation about the movie and how the movie made her cry.

3.1.1.10.2 Rekindle the Fight

There are only 1 reviewer discussing about this issue. This movie also caused someone from Canada wanted to rekindle his fight since it movie gave strength how people should stay alive without fear about the death.

3.1.1.10.3 Changing World View

There are 22 reviewers talking about this issue. A woman in Malaysia gave her comment which from this movie people can learn something that people should appreciate life they have and not to control other with a decision of unilateral.

3.1.1.10.4 Life Choice

There are 12 reviewers talking about this issue. Someone in Tennessee stated that *My Sister's Keeper* story is movie about the choice people make in life which all choices have its consequences.

3.1.1.11 Controversial issue

There are 50 reviewers talking about this issue. The reviewers also give comment how issue about having in-vitro baby to save a leukemia kid will give impact to the whole family. Beside issue about having in-vitro baby, surgeries which done by Anna to help Kate is also controversial.

3.1.1.12 Reviewers' Perception

There are 87 people discussing about this issue. They give their own perspective based on what they have experienced while watching the movie without declaring are they read or did not read the novel before watching the movie. Someone from Germany explained that from this movie people can understand a cancer sufferer's feeling and how people have to treat them.

3.1.2 Reviewers' background

In this section the researcher clarify about the reviewers' background which found in IMDB. The reviewers' background will be categorized based on their country and gender. The researcher only found two reviewers' background to identify all the reviewers. It is because the reviewers not explicitly mention what their ages, jobs, religions or other information about themselves.

In the following the researcher gives a table of reviewers' nationality background. This table consists of 26 countries and as many as 19 reviewers with unidentified country.

Table 2. Nationality background of the readers found in IMDB.

No	Nationality	Freq	No	Nationality	Freq
1.	US	88	15.	Rumania	1
2.	UK	28	16.	Swedia	1
3.	Unidentified	19	17.	Singapore	1
4.	Canada	13	18.	Ukraina	1
5.	Polandia	5	19.	Denmark	1
6.	Australia	4	20.	Egypt	1
7.	India	4	21.	Honduras	1
8.	New Zeland	3	22.	Belgia	1
9.	Indonesia	2	23.	Sri Lanka	1
10.	German	2	24.	Republic of China	1
11.	Cyprus	1	25.	Scotland	1
12.	Malaysia	1	26.	Yorkshire	1
13.	Norwegia	1	27.	Republica Argentina	1
14.	Portugal	1		Total	185

The result of the table above shows that the most of reviewers' nationality background is from United States with 88 reviewers. The next is from United Kingdom with 28 reviewers and there are 17 countries with only 1 reviewer.

The following is the last background of the readers, the gender of the reviewers. The gender will be divided into 3 categories:

Table 3. Gender background of the readers found in IMDB.

No	Gender	Readers
1	Unidentified	89
2	Female	48
3	Male	48
	Total	185

Based on the table, unidentified category is dominating. Then the other category between male and female is equal. It shows that there are same amount between male and female reviewers. The researcher thinks that male were also as interested as female in giving response through *My Sister's Keeper* movie.

3.1.3 Reviewers' Evaluation

Looking from the table of reviewers' background above that the total reviewers is 185 and only 117 who give response to issue number three which focus on reviewers' evaluation about the movie, the researcher wants to give more explanation about who have read and who have not read the novel. The researcher also wants to know if there is any influence of reviewers' evaluation after reading the novel before watching the movie. The table will be as follow:

Table 4. Total amount of the readers' evaluation.

No	Gender	Evaluation to Movie after Reading Novel			Evaluation to Movie without Reading Novel			Total	%
		Positive	Negative	Total	Positive	Negative	Total		
1	Unidentified	17	19	36(30,8%)	20	4	24(20,5%)	60	51,3%
2	Female	6	14	20(17,1%)	10	3	13(11,1%)	33	28,2%
3	Male	8	5	13(11,1%)	8	3	11(9,4%)	24	20,5%
	Total	31	38		38	10		117	
	%	26,5%	32,5%		32,5%	8,5%			100%

The table above is based on the issue of reviewers' evaluation to the movie which consist of 117 reviewers' responses. The table shows us that unidentified gender gives big amount of reviewers who give response to *My Sister's Keeper* movie. If we calculate and combine between the evaluation result to movie after

reading the novel and the evaluation to movie without reading the novel we would get as many as 60 or 51,3% response for unidentified, 33 or 28,2% for female and 24 or 20,5% for male. It also can be concluded that who give positive evaluation is dominated by category which not read the novel.

3.1.4 Reviewers' Expectation

The table shows that there are more than half readers who did not satisfy with the movie and the readers are enjoying the novel than the movie. Based on the researcher's sight, it is because the readers already have experienced of the story from the novel and create their own fantasy to illustrate what they have read. It can be concluded that reading influence people in giving evaluation or response. Most of the readers thought that the movie is not as good as the novel and the readers who did not satisfied with the movie is most from female. Looking from the result above shows us that female are dominant than male in evaluating the transformation from novel to the movie.

3.2 DISCUSSION

There is tight relation between reviewers' expectation about *My Sister's Keeper* movie with reviewers' data background. It is not about good or bad *My Sister's Keeper* movie version, but the point that reviewers' expectation much influenced by their own background. The researcher has clarified those reviewers' background that found in imdb.com into three different aspect backgrounds.

First, prior reading background which the reviewers are divided into two categories they are who read the novel and who did not read the novel which the total is 177 people. The reviewers who read the novel before watching the movie mostly give negative response in which they may dissatisfy with the transformation from the novel into movie version. Thus, they who give negative response may because their expectation to the movie is not suitable. In the other hand the reviewers who did not read the novel mostly give positive response

through the movie. They may give positive response because they experienced it for the first time and did not have the comparison to be competed with.

Second, gender background also takes importance role in the way how the reviewers' give response. The reviewers who claim that they read or did not read the novel as many as 117 people in which women reviewers were always dominating then men for number of population. For example, in category which read the novel women reviewers dominated in giving negative response and in category which did not read the novel women reviewers also dominated in giving positive response. Without giving personal estimation, the researcher thinks that what makes the reviewers mostly give response is influenced by their first personal experience. They who give negative response through the movie may because they have enjoyed the novel since the beginning of reading. Moreover, women are also more sensitive than men in which *My Sister's Keeper* story is played by mostly women.

Third is reviewer's nationality background which found in IMDb that United States are dominating and United Kingdom comes after that. The researcher has found the first reason that *My Sister's Keeper* movie made by Nick Cassavetes took setting of place in US. The second is because *My Sister's Keeper* novel written by Jodi Picoult also from US and become best selling novel in US. While for other countries which give a few review because they only enjoyed the movie and the novel with limited access to appreciate more or limited access to give some reviews.

Finally this research support Beach' theory about his experiential reader response theory that the readers are bringing their own first experience through giving response of a text which in this discussion is *My Sister's Keeper* movie. It is proven by their explanation in which some of them prefer the novel or the other reviewers choose the movie version depend on what they have experience first. For example, most of them who read the novel first will declare their dissatisfaction to the movie version in order they found their imagination

illustrated in different imagery. Then according to Rosenblatt's experiential response processes this research belongs to evaluating/ reflecting process in which the reviewers' data is connecting with readers' experience through the text.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion and analysis above, the researcher proposes to give conclusion. First, based on the website IMDB which give response to *My Sister's Keeper* movie, it shows the result that the first major issue is excranisation/ adaptation. Reviewers who discuss in the excranisation/adaptation issue are 40.5%. The second issue is influenced viewers' psychology with 14,1%. Then the third issue is reviewers' evaluation to the movie with 13,3%. The fourth issue is reviewers' perception with 9,9%. The fifth issue is giving information about the story of *My Sister's Keeper* with 9,7%. The sixth issue is about predictable or unpredictable of the movie with 6,8%. And the last is about the controversial issue of *My Sister's Keeper* with 5,7%.

Second, the result of the reviewers' background shows that most of them is from the United States with 88 reviewers. The next is from the United Kingdom with 28 reviewers and there are 17 countries with only 1 reviewer. The main reason why they dominated from US that is because *My Sister's Keeper* by Nick Cassavetes took setting of place in United State. The second is because the novel which become the story of the movie was written by Jodi Picoult who also from United State and become best selling novel in the United state. Then, the researcher classified the reviewers' gender background into three types that is 89 for unidentified reviewers, 48 for female and 48 for male.

The next is about reviewers' evaluation. There are 185 reviewers who give responses to *My Sister's Keeper* movie but only 117 reviewers who give evaluation to the movie. The reviewers who read the novel before watching the movie mostly give negative response in which they may dissatisfy with the transformation from the novel into movie version. Thus, they who give negative

response may be because their expectation to the movie is not suitable. From 69 readers who read the novel before watching the movie, there are more than half readers who did not satisfy with the movie and it means their expectation to the movie is unfulfilled. Female are also dominant than male in evaluating the transformation from novel to the movie version. Researcher estimates it happen because some factor such as female's sensitive feeling or different pattern of thought between male and female. Moreover, the fact shows that the movie is played by mostly female.

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