

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

A helmet could be crucial for people who actively ride a motorcycle. In this post-modern era, almost everything has its own meaning and value. The majority of people who ride motorcycle assume that helmet can only be used as protective gear to prevent damage especially direct impact to the head that can cause internal fracture and brain damage (Shuaeib, et al. 2002). However, some people use helmet more than its use value.

Consuming helmet for some people who recognize its use value is already a form of consumption. Consumerism is already part of everyday life practices, and there are many forms of consumerism that can be conducted. Featherstone (2007) state that post-modernism bring changes to specific groups that experience everyday activity, in this case, the consumerism activity that uses regimes of signification in a different way and develops new means of orientation and identity structure (Featherstone 2007), from that statement, everyday practice such as consumerism could construct individual identity and communal identity. Identity construction could happen individually and communally. A person identity constructed individually when they produce an expressive effect within social field in which the old coordinates rapidly disappearing, or can taste still be adequately read, socially recognized and mapped onto the class structure, on the other hand, communal identity construction move beyond individual idea of

identity construction, it is generated a new “aesthetic paradigm” when many people come together in temporary emotional communities (Featherstone 2007). For instance, some people tried to test their taste of something whether people accept or deny it in the social field. If their personal taste accepted by some people in a particular social field, they could create communal identity together in that social field.

Helmet designed for head, especially to minimize the damage done by external factors such as heavy impacts or massive scratch from asphalt. Head Injury may be broadly defined as temporary or permanent damage to one or more of the head components from a blow to the head such that encountered in a traffic accident (Shuaeib, et al. 2002). There is a community in Surabaya called Helmet Lovers Surabaya Community that specialize for helmet enthusiast. Helmet Lovers Surabaya Community is a community for people who have an interest in the automotive world. In this case, helmet is a small part of safety gear that has close relation with the automotive world. The member in the community actively consume helmet as part of their life, they consume it in various ways, and those activities construct their identity based on many different factors, they actually shift the use value of the helmet into a sign value to represent themselves. Just like Featherstone (2007) said, in post-modernism, we are again faced with range of meanings. So that everything in this era is the only matter of centrality of culture.

Helmet Lovers Surabaya community established four years ago, and its purpose is to accommodate people who really passionate about the helmet and its function and varieties. The community itself is well acknowledged by many other

communities such as KOINS “Komunitas Cornering Surabaya”, UNICORNS “United Cornering Surabaya”, both of the community KOINS and UNICORNS often held race events and Helmet Lovers Surabaya Community are in the first list to get the personal invitation. Helmet Lovers Surabaya Community has various activity such as KOPDAR “Kopi Darat” or so-called “Cangs”, they use the term when some of the members gather together and they invited the other members to join to gather at some certain spot and simply chatting and sharing, they also conduct KOPDAR with purpose such as to NOBAR or “Nonton Bareng”, it is an activity where the usual KOPDAR is conducted while there is an annual event such as MotoGP or WSBK. MotoGP itself is the premier motorcycle racing World Championship, a nineteen race series visiting over fifteen countries and multiple continents with global television coverage, the race filled with very strict regulation such as no modification that surpassing the standard regulation while WSBK is almost the same but modification on the bike is still allowed so it is like the battle of modification and performance. While watching MotoGP and WSBK, the members of Helmet Lovers Surabaya community always cheer for their favorite rider in the race track sometimes, even some members are willing to buy a helmet as similar as their favorite riders to show their support and love to their favorite riders. It is intriguing that Helmet Lovers Surabaya Community members could value helmet in various ways more than what people do.

The study aims to analyze the consumerism stages that could lead to the identity construction of Helmet Lovers Surabaya Community member. Using Consumer Culture by Featherstone (2007), this study breaks down the perspective

of the member towards how helmet affects the construction of the member identity by applying ethnography approach, Creswell (2014) state that ethnography is the way to study a cultural sharing group. Some related studies have been found by the writer. A study by Matkovic (2015) finds out how consumerism in religion could affect a person psychologically. By using Zygmunt Bauman psychoanalysis theory, and psychoanalytic approach, she found that in the post-modern era, religion becomes an object of consumerism when a person lacks faith. The next related study was Smith and Raymen (2015). They wanted to seek the motivation and meaning behind the action of violent shoppers against the context of social harms associated with the consumer. They apply Criminology and Consumerism by Winlow and Hall (2015) using ethnography approach, they found that extreme shoppers phenomena are the symbol of the triumph of liberal capital that creates the ideology that can cause insecurity and anxiety among individuals that makes violent and barbaric shoppers. Another study by Taylor and his subordinates (2018) analyzing how an English community act towards the prohibition of cannabis. They use Liminality theory by Victor Turner and apply ethnography approach, they found that the use of cannabis effectively decriminalized and it's use (reluctantly) accommodated. In the next related study by Al-Faruq (2018), the aim of the study is to analyze the consumerism pattern towards vapor among college students of Universitas Airlangga. By applying Baudrillard's Consumer Society and supported by the ethnography approach, he discovers that lower social class college students who worship and loyal towards Vapor Culture usually affected by other people. In the last related study stated by

Zain (2018), the study focus to analyze how the brand affects the willingness of SVS (Surabaya Vixion Solidarity) members to consume V-ixion motorcycle and to find out the form of consumption of SVS members constructing identity. Applying consumer culture by Featherstone (2007) and the ethnography approach, the study found that the desire of lower-class people who have sport bikes could be fulfilled by buying V-ixion motorcycle because the price is affordable and its other benefits.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

1. How do the member of Helmet Lovers Surabaya Community consume the helmet?
2. How do the member of Helmet Lovers Surabaya Community construct their identity using their helmet?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the problems that have been mentioned, the objectives of this study are:

1. To reveal how the member of Helmet Lovers Surabaya Community consume helmet.
2. To reveal how helmet used by the member of Helmet Lovers Surabaya Community constructs their identity.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of this research is to acknowledge the issue consumerism towards helmet among the member of Helmet Lovers Surabaya Community. The member that has been chosen are those already joined the community for over at

least three years and also who actively joined the community activity. It creates the perspective of those who experience the growth, ups, and downs of the community based on the participant. The research can reveal the explanation about how helmet affects the participant lifestyle, social impact, and personal pleasure after consuming the helmet. This research could contribute to the development in the field of Cultural Studies especially on ethnography research and consumer behavior.

1.5 Definitions of Key Terms

Consumer culture: The society that are doing excessive and unbalanced consumption not only based on what they need but also based on the objects' value and popular lifestyle. (Featherstone 2007).

Consumer's perspective: The meaning of consumer by the people that different modes of identity and built can get their pleasure by holding up their true identity and hedonism to certain consumption (Featherstone 2007).

Ethnography: Ethnography approach is used for this study, ethnography by definition is a way of studying a culture-sharing group as well as the final, written product of that research (Creswell 2014).

Helmet: Helmet designed for head, especially to minimize the damage done by external factors such as heavy impacts or massive scratch from asphalt. Head Injury may be broadly defined as temporary or permanent damage to one or more of the head components from a blow to the head such that encountered in a traffic accident (Shuaeib, et al. 2002).

Identity: Identity is the qualities, beliefs, personality, looks, and expressions that make a person or group (particular social category or social group) in psychology. (James 2015).