CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology used in this research. This chapter includes research questions, purpose of the research, data source, research design data collection and data analysis, and data presentation.

3.1 Research Question

Only a few studies on the construction of fear in documentary films have been conducted. Focusing on the act of fear constructed through the documentary film *The Social Dilemma* (2020), the research question for this study has been formulated as follows:

How is fear constructed in this documentary film?

3.2 Research Design

As has been elaborated in the previous chapter, this research is for the purpose of understanding the construction of fear in the documentary film *The Social Dilemma* (2020). This research used qualitative descriptive methods to analyze the social issues associated with the scenes because it examined the object more in depth to gain an understanding of the object of the study. Creswell (2014) states that qualitative research is an approach for inquiring into and conceiving the meaning of a person or party regarding a social or human problem. The processes involved in this type of research include answering the questions and procedures that arise, collecting data that is usually in the participant's setting, analyzing the data inductively from specific themes to general themes, and making interpretations of the meaning of the data. The final report has a flexible structure. Those involved in this way of doing research agree with a way of looking at research that respects the inductive style, focuses on individual meaning, and emphasizes the importance of translating the

complexity of a situation. However, the present study does not have participants in the research process because it will be explained through text.

This study used a documentary analysis approach, as this paper wants to examine how the construction of fear occurs in a specific text, in this case the documentary film *The Social Dilemma* (2020). More specifically, textual analysis is used as a form of this study. According to Smith (2017), textual analysis is a study method for examining messages that appear through various media. Documents, films, newspapers, paintings, web pages, and so on are sources that can be used to generate data for textual analysis. These forms of data are used as "text" to be studied and used in assessing the meaning, values, and messages sent through it. This method is also referred to as transdisciplinary, which is also present in a number of social sciences and humanities. There are also sociology, psychology, political science, health, history, and media studies included. Various theoretical traditions that fall under the interpretative umbrella are utilized by qualitative textual analysis. Symbolic interaction, phenomenology, critical theory, and ethnography are the theoretical foundations for textual analysis in communication science. Therefore, this present study of *The Social Dilemma* (2020) uses textual analysis because film is a text which has visual and narrative elements.

3.3 Data Source

A documentary film entitled *The Social Dilemma* (2020) is the main source of data for this research. This documentary film was directed by Jeff Orlowski and released on Netflix in September 2020. The duration of this documentary film is 94 minutes. This film got 38 million viewers in its first week and obtained two Primetime Emmy Awards and a Webby Award. This documentary film is particularly chosen as the data source for this study since it presents the issue of social media, which has become one of the most common phenomena in this era.

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This documentary talks about how the design of social media can generate addiction to maximize profits. This design also has the ability to manipulate people's views, emotions, and behaviors. This film claims that social media is able to spread conspiracy theories and disinformation. It also discusses the effects of social media on mental health, especially in the case of adolescents. Interviews from some experts that have a lot of experience in the social media and network field are shown as sources and proof for the statements involving the bad side of social media. According to this documentary, the dominant role of social media is closely related to the existence of these various phenomena in shaping individual behavior and the collective world in which we live. *The Social Dilemma* (2020) shows us that behind the rise of big technology and free services lies an increasingly powerful, exploitative, profit-maximizing engine. A number of widespread social problems fueled by this manipulative technology are highlighted in this film, for instance, smartphone addiction, depression and mental health issues, data privacy and surveillance, fake news, and political polarization.

To convey its message to the fullest, this documentary presents a fictional story about a suburban family with two teenagers and shows how social media has a lot of influence on our families, especially young people. Silent dinners, compulsive use of smartphones, self-image issues, and radicalization of ideas are just a few examples of things that happened to this fictional family. Our digital footprint becomes an important asset, which is taken by those behind social media and later transferred to the prediction factories of big technology companies. The social dilemma addresses many symptoms but, unfortunately, not the underlying causes. It ends up raising a lot of questions but has few solutions. Even so, this documentary film is quite effective in giving a warning to the public about exploitative technologies that hijack humanity.
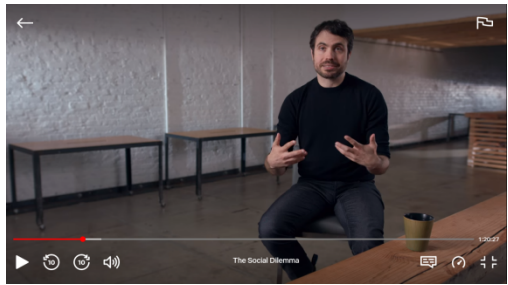
3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

The data were collected in the form of shots, dialogue, and expert speeches acquired from the documentary film *The Social Dilemma* (2020). It was analyzed using the theory of fear by Starkstein (2019). In collecting and analyzing the data, the writer took several steps, as seen below.

1. Thoroughly watching the documentary film several times.
2. Segmenting the film to categorize the scenes.
3. Capturing and noting down the chosen scenes that have lines and acts that allude to facts that have the potential to build fear.
4. After finding all of the needed data, it categorized it into some tables in order to interpret and analyze the data under the proposed theory.
5. Correlating the findings and results with the literature reviews in Chapter 2.
6. Drawing a conclusion and making suggestions.

3.5 Data Presentation

The categorized data presented in the following table. The table is divided in four columns to provide specific information from the film.

	Textual Evidence	Description	Discussion	Effect of Fear

| Expert Speech |

[00:13:03,950 – 00:14:18,358]

"For the last ten years, the biggest companies in Silicon Valley have been in the business of **selling their users.**"

"It's a little even trite to say now, but... because we don't pay for the products that we use, advertisers pay for the products that we use. Advertisers are the customers. **We're the thing being sold.**" | **Camera work:**
Mostly medium shot. In order to make the viewers focus on the speaker and what they explained.

Mise-en-scene | The whole scene provides us the information that the products on the internet that we think are free actually are not free. There are people who paid for it in exchange for our attention, which means we are the product.

Knowing that some experts explained some information is probably a new knowledge for some people, especially a brutal fact might project some realization and distrust towards the viewers about how social media works behind their backs. It is directly proportional with the theory from Hobbes in Starkstein (2019) about the emotions that are related with fear, distrust is included. | **Distrust** towards social media. |
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		Costumes: Formal (Shirt and suit). It makes the experts look more trustworthy. The viewers will know that these people are experts in their field. **Lighting:** Natural light. This way, the scene looks more natural and realistic like there is not much setting up behind it. **Setting:**		

		In a room with a simple backdrop and sometimes in a simple room that does not have a lot of stuff in order to give the impression of a convincing and serious interview. Most of the speakers are always interviewed in the one location from the start of their interview.		

| Fictional Scene | [00:34:05,961 – 00:35:28,376] | **Camera work:** Mostly medium shot. In order to make the audiences focus on their dialogues and act. *Mise-en-scene* | In this scene, the film shows us how it is hard for the adolescents to be separated from their phone even for an hour. Both Ben and Isla immediately respond when getting notifications on their cell phones. When forbidden to use their cell phones, Isla even broke the container used to store their cell phones because she felt anxious and afraid as if her mother would not give her phone back. It shows that Isla distrusts her mother even though she has promised to give back her phone after dinner. | **Distrust** towards family members. |

		Lighting: Soft lighting with the color brown. The vibe is a little bit gloomy with this lighting and color. **Setting:** Dining room. **Figure movement:** Tense. Some of the characters feel awkward and burdened when they need to talk with each other.		