

An Analysis Of Self-Confidence In The Main Character Of I Feel Pretty (2018) Movie**Ibnu Subroto**

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Abstract: Self-confidence is a crucial psychological attribute that significantly shapes how individuals view themselves and engage with their surroundings. It has a profound impact on personal motivation, decision-making processes, and overall self-development. This study explores the psychological factors influencing the self-confidence of the central character in the film *I Feel Pretty*, directed by Abby Kohn and Marc Silverstein. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the research centers on Renee Bennett and analyzes key scenes that reflect her progression in building self-confidence. The analysis reveals that Renee's confidence is shaped by several core elements, including her self-concept, sense of self-worth, and lived experiences. The study further highlights the strategies she adopts to nurture her confidence, such as cultivating a positive self-image, embracing her capabilities, fostering optimistic thoughts, aligning actions with beliefs, and acknowledging her inner strengths. The results emphasize that while external beauty norms may remain fixed, personal transformation is possible through changes in self-perception. This research offers meaningful insights for those seeking to understand or enhance their own sense of confidence.

Keywords: Self-confidence, Main Character, Self-perception, *I Feel Pretty*, Movie Analysis

INTRODUCTION

Film and literature serve as artistic mirrors reflecting the depth and range of human experience. These mediums are shaped by the creative impulses of individuals who seek to communicate the realities of life in compelling and expressive ways. Fitzpatrick (2013) notes that film, in particular, represents a unique synthesis of audio and visual storytelling, making it a powerful vehicle for delivering messages that resonate with broad audiences. Whether aimed at educating, informing, or entertaining, films often speak to deeper emotional and psychological dimensions of the human condition.

As a form of mass communication, film possesses the ability to portray complex human struggles and triumphs through visual narratives. Characters in cinematic storytelling act as vessels through which key themes are expressed and the storyline advances. The protagonist, often placed at the center of this narrative, typically embodies the primary conflict and growth arc. In *I Feel Pretty* (2018), the protagonist Renee Bennett becomes the focal point through which themes of self-perception, self-confidence, and societal expectations are explored.

In many films, inner transformation becomes as important as external events. This is particularly true in *I Feel Pretty*, where Renee's personal journey offers a commentary on body image and the pursuit of confidence in a world shaped by narrow beauty standards. Her evolution highlights how psychological growth can drive outward change, even when physical appearances remain unaltered. The audience is

invited to question what it means to feel confident and how much of that feeling stems from within rather than from external validation.

Self-confidence, as defined in psychological theory, refers to an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in specific tasks or situations. Sunyoto (2015) emphasizes the importance of self-efficacy as the foundation of this belief—suggesting that confidence stems from one's perception of control and competence in life situations. Self-confidence not only shapes how individuals perceive themselves but also how they relate to others and respond to challenges.

The relevance of self-confidence extends into one's emotional stability and life satisfaction. According to Al-Hebaish (2012), self-confidence is closely linked to happiness and the ability to manage everyday situations effectively. Saidah (2024) adds that confidence is more than just surface-level assurance; it represents a person's judgment about their self-worth and capability. Conversely, a lack of confidence may result in persistent insecurity, negative self-talk, and missed opportunities for personal growth.

In *I Feel Pretty*, Renee Bennett, played by Amy Schumer, is initially portrayed as an average woman plagued by insecurities about her body. Her lack of confidence is not due to a lack of talent or potential, but rather to internalized social pressures and unrealistic standards of beauty. The film shows how Renee's self-image inhibits her from pursuing opportunities, forming deeper relationships, and embracing her individuality.

A turning point in the film occurs when Renee experiences a head injury that leads her to perceive herself differently. Although there is no physical transformation, Renee begins to see herself as beautiful, capable, and worthy. This perceived shift in identity dramatically alters her behavior, she becomes more assertive, takes professional risks, and navigates social situations with newfound ease. This narrative emphasizes that confidence arises not solely from external change, but from internal belief.

Throughout the film, Renee's confidence grows through several psychological mechanisms. She develops a positive self-concept, nurtures a sense of self-worth, and begins to act in alignment with her newly embraced identity. These factors align with what psychologists identify as core drivers of self-confidence: belief in one's abilities, self-acceptance, and the courage to take action despite fear or doubt. The film suggests that how one views oneself can either limit or liberate personal growth.

Renee's journey is also shaped by her interactions with others, which reflect how social feedback and relational experiences can reinforce or challenge self-perceptions. Encouragement, recognition, and personal achievement all contribute to her confidence. However, the most lasting transformation occurs when Renee learns to validate herself independent of external approval. Her story demonstrates that sustainable self-confidence is rooted in internal affirmation rather than fluctuating social cues.

Ultimately, this study aims to analyze the psychological transformation of Renee Bennett as she builds self-confidence in *I Feel Pretty*. It focuses on the contributing factors that shape her mindset and the process through which she redefines her self-worth. By examining Renee's development, the research seeks to offer insights into real-life experiences of self-perception, encouraging individuals to explore how confidence can be cultivated through shifts in thought and belief, rather than through conformity to societal ideals.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach to explore how self-confidence is portrayed and developed in the main character of the film *I Feel Pretty* (2018). The qualitative method is particularly suitable for examining emotional and psychological dimensions because it allows the researcher to focus on subjective experiences and human behavior. As explained by Ugwu and Eze Val (2023), qualitative research aims to gain deeper insights into feelings, thoughts, and perceptions, often presented in narrative form. This makes it an ideal framework for analyzing character development within a film.

The subject of analysis in this research is Renee Bennett, the protagonist portrayed by Amy Schumer. Renee's character provides a compelling case study for observing the dynamics of self-confidence, especially in relation to appearance, self-image, and social acceptance. Through careful observation of her

behaviors, facial expressions, verbal interactions, and emotional responses, the study aims to trace the trajectory of her confidence throughout the storyline. The main source of data is the film itself, particularly scenes in which Renee's confidence is either heightened or diminished. These visual and verbal cues form the basis for understanding the psychological changes she undergoes. Each moment where Renee reacts to social pressure or personal doubt is closely examined to assess the inner shift in her self-perception.

In addition to the film, secondary data were collected from a range of supporting literature, including academic journals, psychological theories, and previous studies on self-confidence. These sources help to contextualize Renee's experience and provide a theoretical foundation for interpreting her transformation. They also allow the researcher to draw parallels between cinematic representation and real-world psychological principles. To gather comprehensive and meaningful data, the film was watched multiple times to identify scenes that explicitly convey themes of self-doubt, confidence, and acceptance. Key dialogues were transcribed and selected for analysis based on their emotional weight and relevance to the study's focus. This careful screening process ensured that only the most representative scenes were included in the discussion.

In addition to film analysis, a literature review was conducted to deepen the understanding of concepts such as self-concept, self-esteem, and the influence of personal experience on confidence. Theoretical insights were used to frame Renee's journey and link it to broader psychological constructs. These perspectives enriched the analysis and helped to validate the interpretation of character development. For data analysis, content analysis was employed, which involved interpreting both the spoken words and visual storytelling elements. This method allowed for a detailed examination of the layers within each scene, from tone and gesture to implied meaning.

The goal was to uncover how Renee's confidence is constructed or challenged in specific contexts, and how those moments reflect internalized beliefs about identity and self-worth. Ultimately, the findings were categorized into key factors that shape self-confidence, including self-concept, self-esteem, and lived experience. Each selected scene was not only analyzed for its narrative value but also for its psychological significance. Through this approach, the study captures the complexity of Renee's internal transformation and demonstrates how film can serve as a mirror for examining the intricate layers of human confidence.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this part, the writer would analyze several problems such as what does the Self-Confidence of the main character in *I Feel Pretty* movie. The Main Character Build Her Self-Confidence. There are ways to build self-confidence based on characteristics of self-confidence:

Having a Positive Perspective on Yourself



Figure 1. Renee sees her photos (Scene: 01.40.13-01.40.50)

Renee:

"Now when I see.."

"There is no magic.."

"That is me"

"That is me, both of me. That is me"

"I do this as myself."

Having a positive outlook generally reflects an optimistic mindset, allowing individuals to remain hopeful and resilient even in challenging circumstances. In contrast, a negative perspective often leads to pessimism and self-doubt. This contrast is powerfully portrayed in *I Feel Pretty* during Renee's speech at the launch event of Lily LeClaire's newest product line. As she reflects on two images of herself, Renee comes to a profound realization.

When she declares, "There is no magic, that is me," Renee acknowledges that her confidence was never the result of any external transformation, it was within her all along. Her statement, "That is me, both of me," signifies a turning point in her journey toward self-acceptance. By embracing both her insecurities and strengths, Renee begins to rebuild her confidence authentically. This moment underscores the film's core message: genuine self-confidence arises not from illusion or appearance but from embracing one's true self.

Think Positively in Life



Figure 2. Renee gives a speech (Scene 01.41.37-01.41.43)

Renee:

"What if we are stronger than that?"

"Right? What if we don't care how we look?"

The habit of positive thinking significantly contributes to shaping personality, particularly in fostering self-confidence. Developing a positive mindset helps individuals strengthen their belief in their own abilities, forming the foundation of confidence and resilience. In one crucial scene, Renee delivers a heartfelt message to the audience, encouraging them to build their confidence without relying on external validation or conforming to appearance-based judgments.

When Renee poses the question, "What if we are stronger than that?" she challenges the idea that our confidence should be diminished by how others perceive us. Her rhetorical question invites self-reflection, urging individuals to recognize their inherent worth beyond physical appearance. Further, her statement, "What if we don't care how we look?" emphasizes the power of self-acceptance. Renee's message centers on the belief that true confidence comes from within, when individuals embrace themselves fully and stop allowing external opinions to dictate their self-worth. The scene serves as a powerful reminder that inner strength and self-knowledge are key to authentic self-confidence.

Believe in The Abilities They Have

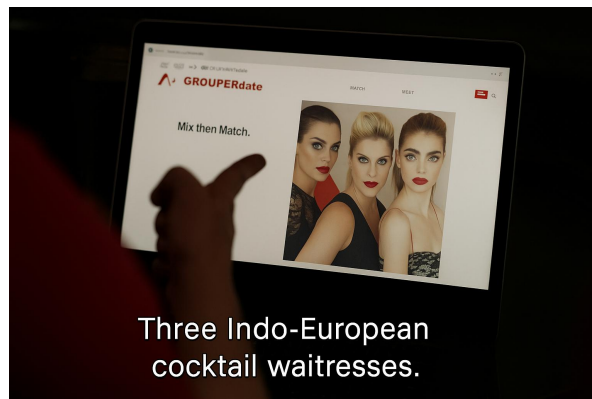


Figure 3. See the rival from Grouperdate (Scene 00.10.25-00.10.45)

Renee:

"Look at this! Three Indo-European cocktail waitresses, three Australian riders... and the Hadids! Is that their mother?"

Jane and Vivian:

"Yes."

Renee:

"I can't compete with that. I'm not doing this."

Jane:

"Renee, the truth is, everyone's looking for something different."

Some argue that success stems from wealth, connections, or privileged backgrounds. While these elements can indeed influence a person's path, the most essential factor remains self-belief. Without it, external advantages often fall short. In the film *I Feel Pretty*, this message is depicted during a pivotal moment when Renee, Jane, and Vivian intend to join the Grouperdate Contest. Upon seeing their competitors—women who appear conventionally attractive and confident—Renee instantly feels defeated. Her reaction, "I'm not competing with this, I'm not doing this," reflects deep-rooted self-doubt driven by comparison. This moment reveals how easily self-perception can be shaken by societal beauty standards. However, her friend Jane offers a powerful reminder: "Everyone is looking for different things." This statement challenges Renee to embrace her individuality and regain her confidence. The scene highlights how external validation is less important than self-acceptance, and how supportive relationships can help rebuild inner strength in the face of insecurity.

Doing Something According to What You Think



Figure 4. Renee realized there is no magic in her life (Scene: 01.40.50-01.43.00)

Renee:

“I do this as myself. When we were little girls, we were the most confident people in the world. We let our stomachs hang out, we danced freely, we played without fear, and we chose our own clothes without concern. But then, something changes. Someone says something cruel to us on the playground, and over time, those moments of judgment pile up. As we grow older, we begin to doubt ourselves, again and again, until, eventually, we lose that confidence, that self-respect. The beliefs we once held about who we are slowly fade away.

But what if we don't let those moments define us? What if we're stronger than that? What if we stop caring about how we look or how we sound? What if we held on to the unshakable confidence of that little girl we once were? And if someone tells us we're not enough, not thin enough, not beautiful enough, we have the power and the wisdom to say: 'I am better than that. Because I am myself.'”

In moments of self-doubt, when others question the validity of our dreams or belittle our aspirations, it is easy to internalize those criticisms. These external judgments often echo the insecurities already present within our own minds. Renee's experience in *I Feel Pretty* reflects this struggle. Faced with the realization that her confidence was not rooted in a physical transformation, she confronts a powerful internal truth. Her turning point comes when she declares that being herself is enough, saying, “I am better than that because I am myself.” This scene marks a significant moment of psychological growth, where Renee embraces her identity and reclaims her self-worth. The film emphasizes that genuine self-confidence does not come from how we appear to others or from their validation, but from self-acceptance and internal strength. Renee's journey shows that personal belief and self-love are the foundations of authentic confidence, even when external voices attempt to diminish it. Ultimately, it is not about becoming someone else, but about realizing and affirming the value of who we already are.

Have Potential and Ability



Figure 5. Renee apply her application for receptionist job (Scene 00.26.51-00.27.00)

Renee:

“To Lisa in HR”

“My name is Renee Bennett, and I applied for a receptionist job”

Human beings are inherently driven by aspirations, both modest and ambitious, that are deeply embedded in our identity. This intrinsic motivation reflects a collective desire not merely to survive, but to thrive and fulfill meaningful goals. In the film *I Feel Pretty*, Renee demonstrates this internal drive after a transformative moment at SoulCycle. Gaining newfound self-confidence, she dares to apply for a receptionist position at the prestigious Lily LeClaire cosmetics company. When she boldly introduces herself by saying, “My name is Renee Bennett, and I applied for a receptionist job,” it marks a pivotal point where she overcomes self-doubt and embraces her potential. Renee's determination symbolizes how belief in oneself can unlock opportunities, even in the face of perceived inadequacy. This moment illustrates the broader theme that confidence, rooted in personal growth rather than external validation, can empower individuals to pursue their goals and take bold steps forward.

Factors The Main Character Unconfident

Unconfidence/insecure with appearance often happens. Feeling unconfident it horrible, it is bad. Some factors make self unconfident:

Self-Concept



Figure 6. Renee meets Mallory in a grocery (Scene 00.19.40-00.20.07)

Renee:

"I always wondered what if felt like to be truly beautiful and all those parts of life are open to you that you can only experience when you have a face like you.. just once."

Mallory:

"I mean.."

Renee:

"I am not sure if this mascara or Wet n Wild can do things like that."

In a particular scene, Renee encounters Mallory, a woman she knows from SoulCycle, at a grocery store. During their conversation, Renee observes Mallory's effortless interaction with a man, which sparks a moment of reflection. Renee expresses her longing to experience life through the lens of someone considered conventionally beautiful. When she says, "I always wondered what it felt like to be truly beautiful... just once," it reveals her internalized desire and perception of ideal beauty.

This moment highlights how Renee's self-concept plays a significant role in shaping her confidence. Her statement reflects the notion that physical beauty opens doors to experiences she believes are otherwise inaccessible to someone like her. Self-concept, which encompasses an individual's perception and evaluation of themselves, directly influences self-confidence. When one's self-concept is defined by comparison or feelings of inadequacy, it can lead to diminished self-worth.

Thus, this interaction emphasizes the psychological influence of self-concept as both a barrier and a motivator in developing confidence. Renee's desire to be someone else, even momentarily, underscores the need for individuals to recognize and reshape their self-concept to build authentic confidence from within.



Figure 7. Renee gives a speech (Scene 01.41.59-01.42.14)

Renee:

"We have the strength and wisdom to say I am better than all that. Because what I am is me. I am me. And I am proud to be me."

Self-esteem plays a pivotal role in determining individual achievement, particularly in educational or personal success. It is closely linked to self-confidence and functions as a motivational force that encourages individuals to value themselves, pursue their potential, and remain committed to their goals. In the film *I Feel Pretty*, Renee delivers a powerful speech during a cosmetics launch event held by Lily LeClaire, where she reflects on the meaning of true confidence and self-respect.

Her message emphasizes the importance of accepting oneself without relying on external validation or superficial transformation. When Renee declares, "We have the strength and wisdom to say I am better than all that. Because what I am is me. I am me. And I am proud to be me," it signifies a turning point in her self-perception. Rather than seeking societal approval, she embraces her identity and builds self-esteem from within. This moment illustrates the psychological journey of recognizing intrinsic worth and demonstrates how genuine confidence can emerge from self-acceptance.

Experience



Figure 8. Renee interviews for her job (Scene 00.36.04-00)

Renee:

"I get it. Because I already work for the company, and this job would be a pay cut to my current salary. It does not make much sense why I am here."

Helen:

"So what your goals, exactly?"

Renee:

"To work here as a receptionist."

Self-confidence is closely linked to individual experience and upbringing. Confidence often emerges from our ability to interpret and learn from previous situations. In the film *I Feel Pretty*, Renee demonstrates this confidence when she applies for a receptionist position at Lily LeClaire, despite previously working in the company's online division with a higher salary. Her conversation with Helen Gray and Avery LeClaire reflects her firm conviction in pursuing a role aligned with her current identity. When asked about her motivation, Renee simply states that her goal is "to work here as a receptionist," indicating that her decision is not driven by financial gain, but rather by self-assurance and clarity of purpose. This scene illustrates how personal growth and life experience can empower someone to act with confidence, regardless of external expectations. Renee's ability to embrace her past and make intentional choices for her future underscores the essence of authentic self-confidence.

CONCLUSION

The film *I Feel Pretty* offers valuable insight into the psychological dimensions of self-confidence, self-concept, self-esteem, and personal transformation. Through the character of Renee Bennett, the narrative illustrates how internal perceptions significantly influence external behavior and decision-making. Renee's journey reflects a broader social phenomenon, where individuals often equate self-worth with societal standards of physical appearance. However, her experiences demonstrate that confidence is not the result of external validation, but rather emerges from a sincere acceptance of oneself.

Renee's evolving dialogue, particularly when she states, "Because I am myself", encapsulates the shift from insecurity to empowerment. Despite not fitting conventional beauty ideals, she asserts her right to pursue professional goals, embrace her uniqueness, and redefine success on her own terms. This transformation underscores the role of self-belief as a critical driver of motivation and achievement.

Furthermore, the film promotes the importance of positive thinking, resilience, and authenticity. Renee's refusal to compare herself to others, and her ultimate realization that confidence comes from within, aligns with psychological theories emphasizing the intrinsic nature of self-worth. In the end, *I Feel Pretty* not only entertains but also educates, reminding viewers that self-confidence is not about becoming someone else, it is about embracing who you already are.

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