

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter shows and explains about background of the study, identification of the problem, formulation of the problem, research objectives and the last is research significance.

1.1 Background of the Study

Film or drama is one of the unique literary fields in literature intended as entertainment for the community and society and explaining about the experience both of fictional and non-fictional life stories. Drama is considered a literary work that has sound and visual elements that collaborate into one, including word symbols and visual images. Drama is very interesting to be used as material for textual study because there are words and images, as well as sounds that can be seen at any time. Therefore, literary and textual criticism methods are often applied to cinema and acoustics media with sound, even video clips. Most of drama tells about a slice of life, or humanity.¹

The divergent classification of literature into each genre has been the main focus of literary theory since ancient Roman times. This was done in an attempt to classify literary genres into drama, opera, and theater which proved to be the most popular of modern literary criticism. From this statement, literature in film and drama is proven to have many meanings in various ages, experts, and perspectives. but broadly literature has a meaning as a written expression containing various kinds of feelings as an art to teach the meaning of life in the form of literary works. everyone is free to create and define literary works as their own such as dramas, novels, poetry,

¹ Mario Klarer, *An Introduction to Literary Studies*, Routledge: New York, 2004, p.14

and also films. In many types of literary works, films will be the main study that can represent human feelings and emotions. It depends on what we watch and we get when watching movies.

Film influenced by literature and literary criticism is a major concern that should not be ignored. Previously, film was determined by how literary techniques were used, but this changed because the influence of film made literary practice develop certain characteristics to become a literary work, a phenomenon that occurred in the eighteenth century. Films in old times were usually presented in a theater or opera with actors who played in it and several audiences who enjoyed the opera. There are many genres of drama found in film theater such as comedy, tragedy, tragedy, romance, melodrama, action, and so on. So that people who watch films get a moral value that will be useful in their social life. This indirectly can make films not only entertainment but also a media of communication. When someone watching a film, they will see, observes, and feels the emotion in a film played by several actors. The actor will play an important role as the part that will convey the contents of the story, plot, and produce expressions in order to make the audience succeed in entering the story content. In the twentieth century, the form of drama has evolved into today's film with a more modern visual and graphic depiction that looks more real than theater performances. so that drama in the eighteenth century left its old realism style.

Little Women is a 2019 American film directed by Greta Grewig. It is the film adaptation of the novel written by Louisa May Alcott in 1868. In 1868, patriarchal system is still practiced in the society. *Little Women* talks about March family who has four daughters with different characteristics, March sisters named Margaret, Josephine, Elizabeth, and Amy. In the movie of *Little Women*, we can find the main function of literary works that is to describe, reflect human life, while human life itself is always experiencing growth, as well as the equality of women who will be depicted through the novel *Little Women*.

Little Women also illustrated Jo's and March sister's efforts to gain their dreams and equality roles in their life, especially in the work places and in the society. There is an interesting aspect in Jo's also March sister's efforts. March sister live in small town with their mother who became a leader of her family. The gain to reach equality are not commonly done in 1868. March sister are brave to fight against values in her society, so that it is an extraordinary women's movement. For years, the struggle toward equal roles happened when the March sisters wanted to reach their dreams together. It was very hard because there were many obstacles that occurred when they reached their dream.

There are several factors that makes women in a difficult situation at that time to achieve their dreams or express themselves in the public sphere. They are patriarchal society and inequality. Inequality towards women is not realized or reluctant to be realized by women. The concept of inequality against women includes four things, namely marginalization, stereotypes, subordination, multiple burdens, and violence against women. Marginalization means marginalizing and limiting women's space for movement. Stereotypes are related to the stigma that appears discriminatory between men and women. Subordination, namely the lack of appreciation received by women. This will become a problem that leads to unfair treatment and opportunities for women in society.

Based on the film *Little Women*, it will make society realize the issues of gender inequality experienced by women in social life. To get better understanding, the author writes about one of the conflict of *Little Women* in the Film. The example of conflict are:

Mother: But do you love him?

Jo March: I care more to be loved. I want to be loved. I just feel like, women, they have minds, and they have souls, as well as just hearts. They've got ambition, and they've got talent as well as just beauty. I'm so sick of people saying that love is all a women is fit for. I'm so sick of it. But I'm so lonely.²

From the above dialogue, the writer sees the conflict between Jo and the stigma of her society. Where Jo is fed up by women stereotypes that are only placed in love and synonymous with the stigma of romance. It's really doesn't suit with Jo who is very ambitious and wants to become a famous writer without pressure from society and a man who proposed to her and promised Jo to make a small family together, but Jo will lose her dream to be a writer when she gets married and having a family.

Based on the explanation, to find out the feminism and gender equality in the *Little Women* a film by Louisa May Alcott as the owner of this story, the writer want to analyze : "**Gender Equality in *Little Women* movie.**"

1.2 Identification of The Problem

This research is entitled An Analysis of Gender Equality in the Movie: *Little Women*. This movie was adapted from a popular novel written by Louisa May Alcott in 1868. She was an author who always described the condition of women in her environment. She criticized patriarchal culture from the women's perspective.

Many topics can be analyzed in the *Little Women* movie. This research focuses on women's perspective and efforts to gain equal roles in society. Jo March is a woman who suffered from

² Duration 1.42.01-1.42.51

gender discrimination in public workers and society. This problem occurred because the patriarchal values established by society. As the consequence, women were required to act by following accordance with the values.

The film *Little Women* is very interesting to study because it has certain topics to analyze. First, this film can be studied in terms of feminism, so that an in-depth understanding of the topic can be obtained. It is also very useful for analyzing the patriarchal system in the lives of the March brothers. Second, the stigma of individual women is a product of social life which is determined by what work to do. Jo is a tomboyish woman and considers herself capable of being the head of the family in place of the role of head of the household, while her father is serving as a war soldier, she works hard as a writer in the United States away from her family and helps her mother earn money. Making Jo the main breadwinner for their family. Apart from that, it is also useful to analyze gender roles as the film depicts different views on gender roles that are reflected by March's sister who is busy achieving her dreams.

1.3 Formulation of Problem

Based on the identification above, this research can be formulated into:

1. What kinds of problems does the movie have related to gender equality and feminism?
2. How are women characters depicted in reaching their dreams in patriarchal society?

1.4 Research Objectives

Therefore, the objectives of this research are:

1. To identify the the problems in the movie related to gender equality and feminism.
2. To analyze the struggle of the women character against the patriarchal society.

1.5 Research Significance

The benefits of the study can be practically. This result of this research from analysis *Little Women* mostly about a critique of social work especially on women's problem. It can be used as a reference for students to analyze literacy work in the form of women's issue.

1.5 Definition Key of Terms

In order to clarify the key terms used in this study, some definitions are put forward:

Gender Equality: Gender equality requires equal enjoyment by women and men of socially-valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards. Where gender inequality exists, it is generally women who are excluded or disadvantaged in relation to decision-making and access to economic and social resources.

Feminism: Feminism is an interdisciplinary approach to issues of equality and equity based on gender, gender expression, gender identity, sex, and sexuality as understood through social theories and political activism. Historically, feminism has evolved from the critical examination of inequality between the sexes to a more nuanced focus on the social and performative constructions of gender and sexuality.

Patriarchal Society: Patriarchy is a system of a relationships, beliefs, and values embedded in political, social, and economic system that structure gender inequality between men and women. Attributes seen as “feminine” or pertaining to women are undervalued, while attributes regarded as “masculine” or pertaining to men are privileged.

