

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Intrinsic Elements

In order to analyze literary work, intrinsic elements are applied throughout the making of the story. The intrinsic elements build the story therefore it can be easily perceived and examined throughout the storyline.

2.1.1 Characters and Characterization

In literature, character is viewed as an essential element of literature aspect, or being at the heart of the story. Robert Stanton, a literary critic, in his book *An Introduction to Fiction* states, “character refers to the mixture of interests, desires, emotions, and moral principles that makes up each of these individuals” (Stanton, 1966:17). Character in literary works is used to show how people in the storyline have their own uniqueness with their own behaviours.

Characters can be divided into some types. Characters are classified into protagonist and antagonist. The protagonist is the person who leads the narrative and generally emphasizes their goals and aspirations. The antagonist in the story is the opposing force that hinders the protagonist from attaining their objectives (Lindsay & Porteous, 2019:1070).

Characterization enhances storytelling and influences how readers perceive and connect with characters through their actions, thoughts, and development. Kenney asserts implicitly that characterization is, “by what methods

the writer will present characters” (Kenney, 1966:34). Kenney differentiates characterizations into two types: discursive and dramatic method: “The author who chooses the discursive method simply tells us about his characters... The principal alternative to the discursive method is the dramatic method, the method of showing rather than telling” (Kenney, 1966:34-36). The dramatic method is used in a story, whereby one character tells or describes another character, with a view of conveying some details about them. The contextual method is defined as the hints at the character’s traits in the language and conversations concerning said character.

2.1.2. Conflict

Conflict in a narrative occurs when the protagonist faces opposition from an antagonist, events, fate, or their own nature, leading to rising actions, a climax, and a resolution. Kenney claims that conflict is, “struggle between opposing forces that determines the actions in drama and most narrative fiction” (Kenney, 1966:19). In this definition, the aspect of identifying the conflict arises when two or more people perceive their individual goals as mutually exclusive, meaning that achieving one goal prevents the achievement of another.

Conflict can be classified into internal and external conflict. Stanton states, “Every work of fiction contains obvious internal conflicts between two desires within a character, or external conflicts between characters or between a character and his environment” (Stanton, 1966:16). If a narrative lacks conflict, it might lose

its momentum and struggle to captivate the reader's attention, leaving them disengaged and uninterested in the unfolding events.

2.1.3. Settings

Kenney claims that setting “refers to the point in time and space at which the events of the plot occur” (Kenney, 1966:38). Setting can be categorized into the place, time, background when two or, more people meet and things occur. As stated by Kenney below:

“The term setting can be broken down into four distinct subcategories: the actual geographical location, including topography, scenery, even the details of a room's interior; (2) the occupations and modes of day-to-day existence of the characters; (3) the time in which the action takes place, e.g., historical period, season of the year; (4) the religious, moral, intellectual, social, and emotional environment of the characters” (Kenney, 1966:40).

Settings of *The Bell Jar* are analysed to support the analysis of gender inequalities represented in the novel.

2.2 Gender and Gender Inequality Theory

In analyzing literary work, extrinsic element is essential. This analysis is aiming to discuss the extrinsic elements by implementing the theory of gender and gender inequalities.

2.2.1. Gender

In society, people are usually differentiated man from woman. They are often considered different in many ways, such as, their attitudes, their occupations, their clothing, and so on. Gender and sex are not the same things, yet people still

misunderstand and mistaken it for the same things. Proposed by Gondal Aman Ullah, an educator in his book *Gender Studies*, argues on the difference between sex and gender,

“Sex is natural. It is biological. It denotes to visible differences in genitalia and related differences in procreative function. It is a universal term. Gender is a social construct. It is a sociocultural construct and it refers to masculine and feminine qualities, behaviour patterns, related roles, and responsibility, etc. It is variable it changes under the influence of time, geographical and socio-cultural settings” (Gondal, 1995:6).

Gender is thus fostered by society through division of labour and through economical segmentation. For instance, most societies have in the past associated women as the primary caregivers and homemakers wherever men were considered as bread winners who should go out there and look for jobs. Division insists on gender roles established prior to the settlement of the modern world resulting in unequal representation of gender in organizational leadership and promotions. Society defines gender in regards to which roles, behaviours and expectations are expected to embraced or enforced by individuals in any society. Thus, these gender norms can be dynamic and differ depending on the time and culture in which a certain community lives.

Therefore, despite the fact that gender can be defined in terms of the sexual characteristics of males and females in the society, it is much more than that; it is a social construction which changes over time and from one culture to another. According to educators, Kang, et.al, in their book *Introduction to Women Gender Sexuality Studies*, gender is: “the set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity” (Kang, et al., 2017:26). The term “gender” is also defined by Gondal, “Gender is a classifying principle in

society and culture. It is a remarkable discriminating tool in the distribution of labour, care, possession, income, education, organizational qualities, or diseases” (Gondal, 1995:7). Thus, gender can be simplified as how the society perceives and recognizes to the masculinity and femininity behaviours. People assume that how each gender should be behaving and how each gender have their own roles in the society. Both Gondal and Kang, et.al. agree that gender and sex are different condition and term. Where sex is determined when one was born, meanwhile gender is something that one can choose and it can change throughout time and era. Someone’s life circumstances and personality can be impacted by the relation among their gender and sex, but it is necessary to comprehend that both are challenging and diverse.

2.2.2. Gender Inequality

Behaviours and norms in society are put differently amongst each gender. Examining the societal differentiation of women and men, women are most likely to be judged and to be critiqued by the society. Women are treated differently from men. The rights, the freedom are potentially to be minimized. People still see women based on the traditional norms put in the society.

Many women suffer from the inequality they receive from their surroundings. There are some indicators that can be qualified as gender inequality amongst women. During the era of 1950s, women were limited to some rights. Statements regarding the gender inequality added by Gondal, “women fought for and won the right to execute wills, the right to choose their professions and own property in their

name, the legalization of divorce, the right to be granted custody of their children in a divorce, educational access, and the right to vote in an education setting” (Gondal, 1995:60). A patriarchal society is one in which men hold primary power and dominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege, and control over property. From the passage given, the gender inequality can be classified into gendered division of labour, property owning, wage rights, and limited education access. It is a system where men are considered superior, and women are often subordinated. Thus, it can be interpreted that they are seen as different and subordinate to men, rather than autonomous individuals. The gender inequality is caused when only one of them enjoy their full rights and the others suffer with the burden in their life, thus the others refer to women.

By applying the gender inequality theory, it assists to explore and elucidate how Esther Greenwood's sense of self as a woman is shaped by the prejudice of gender norms and the gender inequality faced by Esther throughout the whole story.

2.3. Research Method

The research method, source of data, and method of analysis applied to the current thesis facilitate systematic research and study of literary works. It provides a structured and accurate study of the subject through the use of methods of study.

2.3.1. Research Approach

This study employs feminist literary criticism. Rongqiong Guo in his Brief Analysis of Feminist Literary Criticism asserts, “feminist literary criticism is a kind of literary criticism on the basis of feminist theory or the politics of feminism more

precisely” (Guo, 2019:453). This study focuses on the form of gender inequalities, the struggles of the protagonist against the gender inequalities, and how it has effect in the life of protagonist by applying the gender inequalities theory from Kang, et.al. and Gondal.

2.3.2. Method of Data Collection

An in-depth analysis of extant scholastic writings, pertinent to a particular subject matter is conducted through library research. As defined by Thomas Mann, library research as a methodical technique to obtaining, assessing, and successfully using data (Mann, 1993:248). This method helps focus searches on particular topic categories and enables to locate materials that are specifically relevant to the subjects. This study also uses the primary and secondary sources. It can be defined that primary sources are the initial published reports of specific study findings. Research findings presented in textbooks, popular publications, daily newspapers, and broadcast media are usually viewed as secondary sources (L. Galvan, 2017:3). The primary source is from the book *The Bell Jar*, while the secondary sources are the previous thesis and journals.