

CHAPTER II

THEORY AND METHOD

2.1 Theoretical Framework

There are two aspects contained in a movie, the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects. The intrinsic aspects are the components which build the storyline of the movie itself, consisting of character and characterization, setting, conflict, plot, theme, and point of view (Douglas and Harnden, 1996:3). In analyzing a movie, the technical aspects related to movie production techniques or the cinematography aspects (Bordwell and Thompson, 1990: 126). The intrinsic aspect has a role in developing the story from the character and the inside force. The extrinsic aspect is the aspects that exist outside of the work that influence the movie.

1.1.1 Intrinsic Aspect

Intrinsic aspects are the important components to give an understanding of the story to the reader. Bordwell and Thompson explain that a movie may create its own intrinsic norms or patterns that are significant within the movie itself (Bordwell & Thompson, 2008:65). In this sense, *Birds of Prey* constructs an internally consistent world through fragmented narration, surreal visuals, and expressive sound design. These elements function not simply as stylistic excess but as intrinsic aspects that reflect the protagonist's fractured identity and emotional volatility. The primary purpose of the intrinsic aspect in a literary work is to analyze the basic textual structure.

In this research, the author will focus on character, characterization, setting, and conflict for analysis.

1.1.1.1 Characters and Characterization

Characters have a significant function in the story. Characters are used to perform the actions and speak dialogue, moving the story along a plot line. Abrams stated that characters in a dramatic or narrative work are individuals portrayed and interpreted by the audience as possessing distinct moral, intellectual, and emotional attributes. These qualities are inferred from their dialogue and unique manners of expression. (Abrams, 1999:32). In this study, the writer will analyze three of the female main characters and one male character. The first three of them are Harley Quinn, Renee Montoya, and Dinah Lance, and the male one is Roman Sionis. Harley Quinn, a central character in this film, has faced a tumultuous existence since childhood. Her life is marked by a series of misfortunes that contribute to her psychological transformation into a psychopath and antagonist. The narrative primarily explores her emotional turmoil following the dissolution of her romantic relationship with the Joker. Throughout the film, Harley embarks on a quest for autonomy and encounters various challenges that facilitate her personal development.

Accompanying Harley on her journey are her allies, Renee Montoya and Dinah Lance (also known as Black Canary), who are prominent female characters in the narrative. Together, they strive to reclaim their freedom by confronting Roman Sionis,

the principal male antagonist. Renee Montoya is characterized as an earnest police officer committed to the pursuit of truth and justice, while Dinah Lance is depicted as a benevolent figure dedicated to assisting others, despite her prior association with Roman Sionis. Sionis himself is portrayed as a manipulative and self-serving antagonist, consistently revealing his malevolent nature in interactions with those around him.

1.1.1.2 Setting

The setting is important in giving a realistic impression among the readers; a certain ambience exists and occurs. Holman states that setting is the physical, and sometimes spiritual, background against which the action of narratives takes place (1960: 453). The setting of place is the most pronounced in this movie, the writer will be analyzing the setting of place in this movie.

The setting of place shows the location where the story is set. Based on A Handbook to Literature, Holman states that the “setting of the place is the actual geographic location, including topography, scenery, and such a physical arrangement as the location of the windows and doors in a room” (1960: 453).

1.1.1.3 Conflict

According to Thrall, “Conflict is the struggle which grows out of the interplay of the two opposing forces in a plot” (1960:105). Conflict is an important aspect which makes the story more interesting. There are two types of conflict; internal conflict and external conflict. Internal conflict is the conflict that the character has with themselves, while External conflict is the problem between the character and the outside force. The writer would like to analyze both internal conflict and external conflict in the movie.

1.1.2 Extrinsic Aspects

Extrinsic aspects are elements that do not directly influence the structure of the literary works. In this section, the extrinsic aspects will be analyzed with the theory of Gender Discrimination. According to Barbara Rogers (1980), gender discrimination denotes the differential treatment of individuals based on their sex, manifesting across various domains, including the workplace, education, and media. This phenomenon operates not only as an individual issue but also as a systemic problem embedded within societal norms and structures.

2.1.2.1 Gender Discrimination

Judith Butler asserts that gender performativity posits that gender is not an inherent characteristic but rather a performance that is continuously reinforced by societal norms and repeated actions (Butler, 1990:9). In *Birds of Prey* this concept is exemplified in the ways female characters navigate a patriarchal landscape. Harley Quinn, as portrayed by Margot Robbie, embodies a complex interplay of subordination

and agency, initially tethered to the Joker, symbolizing the subjugation of women within patriarchal structures. According to Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity, what is often understood as gender identity does not originate from a stable, internal essence. Instead, it is constructed through repeated social expressions and behaviors. In this view, gender is not something one is, but something one does—a continuous performance shaped by cultural norms and expectations (Butler, 1990:25).

Rogers (1980:29-30) stated that gender discrimination, a model that distinguishes between the treatment of women and men, undoubtedly represents a form of discrimination. It undermines the essential principle of equality between the sexes, which is often upheld by cultural values and traditions. The impact of gender discrimination on women's opportunities and experiences can be understood through various lenses, including subordination, stereotyping, and violence. This paper will explore these dimensions of gender discrimination in detail. Furthermore, the concept of gender performativity will be employed to analyze the behaviors of characters and the societal expectations imposed upon them within *Birds of Prey*. Such an analysis reveals how subordination operates as a form of gender discrimination.

2.1.2.2 Subordination

Cook (2012:34-35) referred to subordination as the systemic process by which certain groups, frequently delineated by gender, are assigned a lower status relative to others, resulting in significant social, economic, and political inequalities. This subordination is upheld by discriminatory structures in institutions, laws, and cultural practices that reinforce the belief that women are less capable or deserving. Consequently, women face restricted access to education, healthcare, and employment, limiting their pursuit of equality. Additionally, gender stereotypes portray women as caregivers or dependents, undermining their self-esteem and reinforcing their subordinate status in society.

2.1.2.3 Violence

Violence against women might occur because of the perception of the victim as vulnerable or through the prevailing societal narratives that objectify women's bodies as sexual entities. Violence against women manifests in various forms, each with distinct characteristics and impacts, including but not limited to physical violence, sexual violence, and psychological violence.

Physical violence is the most obvious type of violence, including acts like beating and kicking. It is widely recognized as serious by those studying the issue. Sexual violence involves forcing someone into sexual activities against their will, violating women's rights and falling under violence against women. Psychological violence includes harmful behaviors such as verbal aggression and emotional

manipulation. Though often less visible than physical violence, it can be equally damaging (Rollero, 2021:1-6).

2.1.2.4 Stereotyping

Gender stereotypes refer to widely held beliefs or assumptions about the characteristics of men and women, as well as the roles society expects each gender to fulfil. These stereotypes can lead to the idea that all individuals within a gender group possess certain traits, behaviors, and predefined roles. As a result, this process limits personal expression and individual agency (Rollero, 2021:37). Stereotyping is closely associated with sexism, which encompasses prejudiced attitudes or discriminatory actions based on gender. This can result in discrimination across various areas, including employment, education, and social status, as it restricts women's roles and opportunities in society.

2.1.2.5 Discrimination

Discrimination against women occurs when distinctions, exclusions, or restrictions based on sex undermine women's rights and freedoms compared to men. This issue is often worsened by factors such as race, ethnicity, and economic status. Understanding intersectionality is essential to grasp how these overlapping factors affect women's experiences of discrimination (Celorio, 2022:9).

2.2 Research Method

The Research Method consists of Data and Data Source, Method of Collecting Data, and Method of Analyzing Data.

2.2.1 Data and Data Source

To analyze the movie *Birds of Prey* by Cathy Yan, the data is primarily collected by watching the movie as the main source of data. For the secondary data, the writer uses journals and articles from the internet that are related to the topic.

2.2.2 Method of Collecting Data

In collecting the data, the writer uses the library research method. George argues that research begins with asking good questions, not just collecting data. She frames research as a process of curiosity and critical thinking, not just task completion. Research is not a mechanical process, but a form of problem-solving, an active, often recursive pursuit of meaning (George, 2008:6) The writer uses the library research method with the following steps: The writer is looking for the data source, by watching the *Birds of Prey* movie. After watching the movie, the writer summarizes several scenes that show their relation to the topic to be discussed in this study. The next step is for the writer to look for a suitable theory to analyze the topic in this study through journals, books, or articles.

2.2.3 Method of Analyzing Data

In this study, the writer uses contextual research methods for analyzing the data. This method helps the writer find out the storyline and what the character is doing. The writer will analyze Cathy Yan's *Birds of Prey* movie data to find answers to the research problem in this study.