

CHAPTER II

THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This chapter focuses on the theoretical framework, which is divided into two parts. The first category is intrinsic elements, which include character, characterization, conflict, and setting. The second category is extrinsic elements that discuss the theory of gender discrimination.

2.1.1 Intrinsic Elements

The intrinsic elements include the definition of character and conflict by M. H. Abrams (2014), characterization by William Harmon and C. Hugh Holman (2009), and setting by Rene Wellek and Austin Warren.

2.1.1.1 Character

Character plays a crucial role in a literary work, it differentiates and identifies the people that occur in a story. According to Abrams, character is the people who appear in a story either in a dramatic or in a narrative piece (2013:48). Character can be observed through behavior, manner, and various personality traits, it depicts the people in a narrative work who the reader infers to have specific moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities based on what they say and how they say it in the dialogue and what they do in the action. Generally, a story features one or more of these characters among its many other characters. There are two types of characters, namely the main character and additional characters. According to Haven, the main character is the one who appears in the most scenes, has the most lines, or appears in a lot of scenes (2003:82). There are also additional characters

who figure in a story that play a minor role in the storyline, but is crucial to the plot or main character and that helps the main character to bring the plot more interested (Goldberg, 1993:70). In other words, character is one of the crucial elements that can be used to express the plot, the author's idea, and the importance of the story.

2.1.1.2 Characterization

Characterization is another key aspect of a literary work, helping readers to comprehend the personality traits that the author aims to illustrate. According to Harmon and Holman, characterization is the process of creating an imaginary person to make them seem realistic filled with the person's characteristics, features, and intentions, which deals with the development and personality of the main character. (2009:95). There are two types of characterization; direct and indirect characterization. Direct characterization focuses on the narrator, another character, or the main character to present the personality of the character to the reader. On the other hand, indirect characterization describes the characters explicitly. The reader must pay attention to a character's thoughts, manner of speech while interacting with other characters, appearance, and behavior in order to understand what kind of personality someone has (Harmon and Holman, 2009:154). Therefore, understanding the types of characterization is crucial for clearly describing the characters in a literary work.

2.1.1.3 Conflict

Conflict is important in a story because it is an essential component of the plot. Without conflict, a story would be uninteresting and unappealing. According to Abrams, the clash of conflicting desires or values within two

opposing forces personality is referred to as conflict. The forces are two distinct individuals or characters who engage with each other in different ways inside a given plot, hence causing conflict (2014:294). The concept of conflict encompasses more than just the protagonist's struggle against someone or something; it also entails the presence of a motivation or goal driving the conflict. There are two types of conflict according to Pugh; internal and external conflicts (2013:131). Internal conflict involves the character navigating their own desires and principles. Meanwhile, external conflict occurs when the protagonist of the narrative is involved with another character, an event, or any other issue (Pugh, 2013:131). As a result, understanding various types of conflict is critical for clearly describing the plot in a literary work.

2.1.1.4 Setting

The role of the setting is to depict the authentic atmosphere of the story, making it easier for readers to imagine the details described in the literary work or narrative. According to Wellek, setting refers to the locations where stories are set. The setting describes the story's physical location, chronological period, daily schedule of the characters, and climate. (1949). According to Pickering and Hoeper, setting includes the physical setting that frames the action as well as the period, time of year, climactic circumstances, and historical era that it occurs in a story (1981:37). The setting is the story's universe, where it refers to the author's imagined world or an actual location that helps set up the atmosphere of the story. There are three types of settings; place, time, and social. The setting of the place explains where the action occurs during the events of the story. The setting of time

is used to describe the periods that have been passed. The setting of social represents the character's social environment in the story (DiYanni, 2001:61). Thus, it is crucial to understand the several types of settings to fully comprehend the context and environment depicted in a literary work.

2.1.2 Extrinsic Elements

The extrinsic elements discuss the theory of gender discrimination by Simone de Beauvoir (1949), which serves as the main theory of this research thesis.

2.1.2.1 Gender and Gender Discrimination

Gender comes from the Latin word "genus", which means type or kind. The term gender was introduced by sociologists to differentiate between women and men based on their roles, functions, and responsibilities. According to Beauvoir, gender is a social and cultural construct rather than an innate biological trait. Individuals are shaped from birth by societal expectations, norms, and roles that define what it is to be male or female (1949). Women have historically been defined in contrast to men. Men are considered the norm, while women are viewed as different or secondary. This view of women as "the Other" is used to justify their lower status and exclusion from positions of power and privilege which can lead to gender discrimination. Gender discrimination is the social, cultural, and historical forces that contribute to the oppression of women. Women have historically been assigned a secondary role in society, facing discrimination and being regarded as the "Other" compared to men (Beauvoir, 1949:100). It encompasses a spectrum of experiences and structural inequalities that includes the increased likelihood of women holding lower-power positions in work environments and having lower

status in societies where they lack protection against violence or are discouraged from pursuing education and independent living. Discrimination occurs when societal norms and attitudes dictate that women should occupy a subordinate role. Gender discrimination is influenced by a variety of factors, including religion, culture, ethnicity, and, most importantly, hereditary patriarchal culture. Societies that follow a patriarchal system typically believe that men are always superior to women and that women will always be under men's power, resulting in many women receiving unfair treatment, such as not being able to obtain a good education, being unable to obtain a job with an appropriate salary, and even everything about women being controlled and determined by men. Women's movements have clear boundaries in a patriarchal society (Bhasin, 1996:9). Women lack independence, even within themselves. This may be evident in their sexuality, which is still dominated by men.

2.1.2.1.1 Cause of Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination can occur to anyone and in any situation, but women are more likely to experience this discrimination than men. The primary cause of gender discrimination is due to differences in perspective between genders, where one gender benefits more than the other. According to Beauvoir, gender discrimination occurs because of a social system dominated by men that oppress women, known as patriarchy (1949). Beauvoir examines how societal norms shape female identity concerning male control, often depicting women as the "Other". Women in society are oppressed by this patriarchal structure that has existed for centuries, resulting in women being consistently left behind and their contributions

to both the domestic and public spheres being ignored. The patriarchal society that occurs in this sphere is a social construction regarding gender, leading to the alienation of women and gender inequality within society. According to Walby, there are two separate types of patriarchy in the social world: private patriarchy and public patriarchy. Private patriarchy is present within the household, where the dominant male exercises control over the subordinate female. Walby posits that this serves as a method of exclusion, preventing women from participating in public conversations. Conversely, public patriarchy applies in the public sphere, especially within the workplace where it involves ongoing oppressive dynamics (1990:19). A patriarchal society indicates that there is a hierarchy between men and women in which men hold the majority of positions of authority and power.

Women have been systematically oppressed and relegated to a secondary status in society, men have always held all the concrete powers to keep women in a state of dependence established as the Other. Men generally hold more status and power in societies where women are perceived as having fewer resources than men, having less value placed on their lives, and having more control over their marriage and sexual behavior (Beauvoir, 1949:193). For centuries, women have traditionally been excluded from the public sphere since they do not hold positions of public influence. This leads to inequality that occurs due to gender roles and expectations rooted in social and cultural norms. Based on gender, these expectations could influence specific behaviors, duties, and opportunities, reinforcing stereotypes and limiting individual options.

2.1.2.1.2 Types of Gender Discrimination

In this section, the writer analyses the types of gender discrimination including the stereotypes against women and the violence against women, as outlined in Beauvoir's theory concepts.

2.1.2.1.2.1 Stereotypes Against Women

Gender stereotype is a broad assumption about the traits, characteristics, or roles that women and men should have or perform. It is harmful when it restricts the ability of women and men to develop their personal skills and make choices about their own lives. According to Beauvoir, stereotypes are simplified and often exaggerated beliefs or judgments about the traits, roles, and behaviors associated with individuals based on their gender. Stereotypes limit women's potential and reinforce their subordinate position in society by dictating how women should behave and what roles women should occupy (1949). These stereotypes play a role in reinforcing societal norms and expectations regarding gender, influencing how individuals are perceived and treated within society. It categorizes individuals into predefined roles and expectations based on their gender, thereby perpetuating existing power imbalances and inequalities between men and women. The behaviors that are denounced are not determined by a woman's hormones or created inside the compartments of their brain; rather, women are suggested negatively by their surroundings (1949:724). Beauvoir critiques stereotypes for perpetuating inequality and restricting individual freedom, advocating for their transcendence in the pursuit of gender equality.

2.1.2.1.2.2 Violence Against Women

Gender-based violence refers to acts of violence primarily against women and girls as its victims. Violence originates from the Latin term “violentia” denoting ferocity, brutality, persecution, and sexual assault (Hinton, 2002:6). According to Beauvoir, violence is the true measure of a person’s commitment to themselves, their passions, and their will; to completely reject it is to deny any objective truth, isolating oneself in a purely abstract subjectivity. When violence against women or girls is committed expressively for their gender, it is frequently regarded as a type of racial crime. Women are often subjected to physical and sexual violence, such as rape and domestic abuse. Men use these forms of violence to exert control and dominance, thereby reinforcing women’s subordinate status (1949:398). Women’s freedom of movement is restricted due to their fear of violence. It limits their options about what they can do, where they can go, and who they can go with. Violence against women involves not only physical abuse, but also psychological, emotional, and societal violence that subordinates women to men. This positioning establishes a power dynamic in which men hold authority and control over women, frequently using violence to maintain dominance and sustain gender hierarchies. Furthermore, Beauvoir identifies the forms of violence as physical and sexual violence, like rape and domestic violence, which are common. These actions are used by men to dominate and control women, which further solidifies women’s inferior position (1949). Violence against women can occur in the domestic and private spheres. The domestic sphere is the private home environment where family and intimate relationships occur. In this setting, violence against women can

involve physical, sexual, emotional, or psychological abuse by partners, family members, or housemates. The public sphere covers spaces outside the household where women are involved in social, economic, and political interactions. Violence against women in this arena includes harassment, assault, and other types of abuse occurring in workplaces, schools, streets, and public transportation.

2.1.2.1.3 Effect of Gender Discrimination

In this section, the writer analyses the effects of gender discrimination that emerge through sociological and psychological impacts, as outlined in Beauvoir's theory concepts.

2.1.2.1.3.1 Sociological Impacts

Life as a human being is tightly linked to social life, with socialization referring to the process of learning to be human through interactions with other humans. In this process, individuals learn the basic values and norms of the society in which they live and will socialize with their surroundings in order to gain support in society in a proper manner. However, through this socialization, individuals are frequently exposed to influences that are detrimental to them, especially women. It is our nature to influence others as social influence shapes nearly every aspect of daily life. According to Beauvoir, society constructs and perpetuates gender roles, leading to the marginalization and oppression of women (1949). Men are integrated into the community through their roles as producers and citizens, forming bonds based on the division of labor and organic solidarity. A wife can choose to socialize only with people in her own social class because she is not obligated to work, while a husband's professional contacts frequently reveal his social standing. Women are

subjected to the effects of gender discrimination; for example, they are expected by society to display themselves as seductive objects. Instead of showcasing women as independent individuals, the fashion industry aims to deprive them of their transcendence and position them as objects of desire for men. In a society where men dominate, women are often seen as “the Other” (Beauvoir, 1949:650). Women are viewed as the object, while men as the norm or the subject. Women are perceived as secondary or inferior as a result of this objectification, which affects their social status and self-perception.

2.1.2.1.3.2 Psychological Impacts

Gender discrimination can occur at an extremely young age, it has a significant impact on a person’s emotional wellbeing. Discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, or disability can have severe psychological consequences, including emotions of anger, frustration, low self-esteem, anxiety, and despair. Psychological impacts are the consequences that experience, events, or circumstances have on someone’s mental and emotional well-being, which affects both men and women equally. However, women are at greater risk to face an encountering various psychosocial stressors such as sexual violence, which significantly contribute to negative physical and mental health consequences (Hosang, 2018:682). According to Beauvoir, women are frequently labeled as “the Other” in a male-dominated society, which has an impact on their self-esteem and psychological well-being. This sensation of alienation or inferiority can lead to low self-esteem and identity issues, in particular, psychoanalysts define man as a human being and woman as a female; they claim that a woman imitates a man if she

behaves in a human manner (1949:84). These consequences can emerge in a variety of ways, including changes in mood, behavior, cognition, and overall psychological functioning. In certain illnesses like major depression and anxiety disorders, there is a higher occurrence among females. Moreover, females deal with a greater burden of mental disorders compared to males in terms of disability-adjusted life years. The impacts of gender discrimination on physical and mental health may worsen when combined with societal pressure which can cause women to feel inferior, have low self-esteem, and have limited aspirations.

2.2 Research Method

In this section, the writer gives an outline of the methodology used for this research thesis. It describes the approach used by the writer and the methods of data collection to conclude.

2.2.1 Research Approach

Based on the background of the research thesis that discusses the phenomena of gender discrimination in Corie Adjmi's *Life and Other Shortcomings*, the writer uses the feminist approach in literature. Numerous literary works explore life's topics, reflecting both the natural world and the subjective realm of human experience, demonstrating feministic involvement in literature. The definition of feminism is constantly subject to change concerning social culture realities and historical context. According to Guerin, et al., feminism is the notion that literature supports or opposes the political, social, economic, and psychological oppression of women; it is the movement of women who demand that men and women have equal rights (1992:223). The feminist movement is grounded in the understanding

that women are fundamentally oppressed and exploited. Feminist criticism originated within the global women's liberation movement. Consequently, the fight against discrimination in literature and education led to the development of feminist literary critique. Furthermore, Guerin, et al., believe that feminism reflects concern with the silencing and marginalization of women in a patriarchal culture, a culture organized in favor of men. The goal of feminist theory is to investigate and comprehend the nature of gender inequality. Feminism, a major conflict theory in sociology, claims that the disparities between men and women are the primary cause of conflict in society. This research thesis will utilize theories of patriarchal society and violence against women that highlight the causes, types, and effects of gender discrimination as reflected in Corie Adjmi's *Life and Other Shortcomings*.

2.2.2 Method of Data Collection

In writing this research thesis, the writer uses library research in supporting data for analysis. According to George (2008:191), library research involves gathering information by examining and comprehending data from theories, books, documents, and notes. This method is especially pertinent to issues or topics that have been extensively documented in literary sources. The library research includes primary data and secondary data. Primary data refers to the original information gathered specifically for a research analysis, rather than relying on previously collected or existing data (Gratton & Jones, 2010:8). In collecting the data for this research thesis, the writer uses primary data from the collection of linked short stories entitled *Life and Other Shortcomings* written by Corie Adjmi. This 176-page collection of linked short stories contains 12 stories and is published by She Writes

Press Company. On the other hand, secondary data is characterized by the utilization of available data sources, like census records or archived information rather than collecting new data (Gratton & Jones, 2010:8). The secondary data of this research thesis are taken from journal articles, previous studies, and books that are relevant to the focus of the research thesis.