

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Gender stereotypes have been a challenge that has existed in society for a long time. This problem appears not only in one place, but also in many places, including America. Latin American women in America especially live in a socially constructed society with race and gender stereotypes. It is one of the complex problems that has been rooted in historical and cultural norms. The Latin American women in America face persistent struggles against gender stereotypes, and these challenges manifest in various aspects of their lives. For example, in workplace, women often encounter problems, such as lower social status and lower-paid work. In addition, people often find problems associated with traditional gender roles that women have a primary responsibility for taking care of children and household work. In society, women also face the pressure of the existing beauty standards and behaviors.

According to Beasley (2005:63), gender stereotypes are defined as simplistic and widely held views about the features, attributes, and actions that are considered appropriate for both men and women. The preconceptions frequently shape how people are supposed to behave based on their gender. Stereotypical gender patterns of Latin American family is the superiority of a patriarchal model that women are presented as a mother or a housewife relying on men financially and limited for their authority. On the other hand, men are emphasized on their

dominance, masculinity, and associated with public domain like work, and women are private domain, such as housework and family.

This phenomena of gender stereotypes are also reflected in movies. One of the movies with a relatable issue is *Real Women Have Curves*, which was released in 2002 and directed by Patricia Cardoso. The movie tells the story of a Latin American girl named Ana Garcia who struggles to achieve her dream of continuing her education by going to college. Despite her academic achievement of a full scholarship to Columbia University. Her mother Carmen, forbids her to continue her education, but she asks her to work at the family's dress manufacturing company to make money. Besides that, she wants Ana to find a husband and contribute financially to the family. Carmen, who maintain traditional family values also emphasizes that a woman must live with her family to take care of her family that force Ana to stay. This movie shows challenges faced by Latin American women related to cultural expectations, economic hardship, and gender stereotypes.

This topic of gender stereotype is interesting to choose because the movie portrays the experiences of Latin American in United States, so that it shows the intersection between class, ethnicity, and gender that interact to shape the experiences and identities of Latin American women. In addition, the movie also portrays how traditional beauty standards shape the body image and how it allows women to embrace their bodies. In relation to this research thesis, the writer will analyze the representation, the struggle, and the attempt to overcome gender stereotypes in *Real Women Have Curves*.

1.2 Research Question

1. What are the representation of latin American women in *Real Women Have Curves (2002)*?
2. What are the struggle against gender stereotypes experienced by the characters in *Real Women Have Curves (2002)*?
3. What are the attempts to overcome the experience of the gender stereotyping in *Real Women Have Curves (2002)*?

1.3 Research Aims

1. To identify the representation of latin American women in *Real Women Have Curves (2002)*
2. To analyze the struggle against gender stereotypes experienced by the characters in *Real Women Have Curves (2002)*
3. To analyze the attempts to overcome the experience of the gender stereotyping in *Real Women Have Curves (2002)*

1.4 Scope of the studies

Based on the background study, this research thesis will examine the traditional cultural identity and social expectations in Latin American society. The scope discussion of this research will cover intrinsic and extrinsic discussion. The intrinsic discussion will cover character, characterization, conflict, and setting. Meanwhile the extrinsic discussion will cover the representation, the struggles and the attempts to overcome the struggle of gender stereotyping in *Real Women Have Curves (2002)*.

1.5 Previous Studies

The writer has found previous studies with the same object that are related to this thesis that have been completed by some researchers. These studies will be concluded in this previous study in order to support the research thesis.

The first previous study is an international journal article entitled *Real Women Have Curves: A Look at the Challenges Faced by Young Latina Immigrants to the United States* written by Jeanne T. Guerrero (2012). This article shows that every Hispanics experience different challenges, such as negotiating the traditional roles of the Hispanic family in a culture that embraces different values. This study shows that the movie serves as a consciousness raising effort for young Latina women looking to find a new identity experiences that come living in America.

The second previous study is an international journal article entitled *Adolescence and the Risk of Stereotypes: Real Women Have Curves (2002)* that has been conducted by Laura Maria Moratal Ibanez, Luisa Virginia Pinotti, Alicia Magdalena Witriw (2008). This study explores the stereotypes of beauty and behaviour and focuses on the portrayal of how women's body shape determines how they will be treated in society. This research also emphasizes on how a woman should look physically perfect because it will affect their mental and physical health.

The third previous study is an international journal article entitled *Real Women Have Curves: A feminist Narrative of Upward Mobility* written by Christie Launius. This article explores the movie as a complex portrayal of working class Latin American women and represent working class based on race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality which shape the person's identity and experience.

The fourth previous study is an international journal article by Anahi Viladrich, Ming-Chin Yeh, Nancy Bruining and Rachael Weiss entitled “*Do Real Women Have Curves?*” *Paradoxical Body Images among Latinas in New York City*. This article examines the way mainstream stereotype portray by a slim/thin white woman as an actual perfect body which is contradictory to Latin American women’s curvy body shape shown in the movie. This article analyzes the importance of media portraying different cultural values in order to support the diversity of women’s body shape, especially to the Latin American women in America.

The last previous study is an article entitled *From the New Heights: The City and Migrating Latinas in Real Women Have Curves and María Full of Grace* written by Juanita Heredia. This article examines the representation of Latin American culture through the movie *Real Women Have Curves* and *María Full of Grace*, this study discusses the journey of Latin Americans in the U.S and reveal how cultural values become one of the challenges to achieve freedom that can affect family relationship dynamics.

The previous studies above mainly discuss how the movie portrays body image through Latin American women, but this research thesis will be different from the previous studies mentioned above. The difference between this research thesis and previous studies is that this research thesis will focus on gender issue, which is the portrayal of the characters struggling against gender stereotypes and the effect on the character’s trait or personality.

1.6 Research Method

1.6.1 Research Approach

Referring to the background study, this research thesis will focus on analyzing the struggle of the characters against gender stereotypes, in analyzing data the writer uses gender approach by focusing on the experiences of characters in society and how the characters perceive their personality and characteristics. Gender approach specifically perceives and reacts to the distinctive and specific risks of women to reconstruct the unequal gender dynamics between men and women. This research thesis will use the theory of Gender and Sexuality by Chris Beasley (2005) to analyze this phenomena in the movie.

1.6.2 Method of Collecting Data

The writer will use library research method to collect information that can support the analysis of this research. According to George (2008:3), Library research is a technique to collect data that involves gathering and analyzing relevant data from books, documents, notes, and theories. This research thesis will have two sources of data, primary and secondary data. Primary data is information that the researcher very first collects (George 2008:56). The primary data in this research thesis is the transcripts collected from the movie. According to George (2008:56), secondary data is further statements made by another researcher related to the topic. The secondary data in this research thesis is collected from books, e-books, journals, theses, articles, and other internet sources that can provide data for this research.

1.7 Writing Organization

This research thesis will consist of five chapters. These are Introduction, Intrinsic theoretical frameworks, Extrinsic theoretical frameworks, Discussion, and Conclusion.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains six sub-chapters, which are background of the study, research question, aims of the study, scope of the study, previous studies, research method, and writing organization.

CHAPTER II: INTRINSIC THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will discuss intrinsic theories such as narrative elements which covers character & characterization, conflict, setting and cinematography elements including camera shot and sound.

CHAPTER III: EXTRINSIC THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will consist theories and elaboration of extrinsic aspects to be applied in analysis and discussion of this research.

CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter will present the result of data analysis and discussion from the research question by applying the extrinsic and intrinsic theories mentioned in the previous chapter. This chapter will cover the intrinsic aspects discussion, such as character & characterization, conflict, and setting. The extrinsic aspects are the discussion of research questions, such as the representation of Latin American women in *Real Women Have Curves*, the struggle against gender stereotype in *Real*

Women Have Curves, and the attempts to overcome the experience of gender stereotyping in *Real Women Have Curves*.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

The last chapter consists of summary of the main points of the analysis and discussion of this research.

REFERENCE