

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter of introduction presents the background of the research, statement of the problem, research objective, research significance, and the result of the previous studies and the definition of key terms.

#### **A. Background of The Research**

Stereotype is closely tied and cannot be separated in daily life. According to Fakhri (2013:16), stereotype is the labeling toward a certain group. "A stereotype is a generalization about an entire class of phenomena based on some knowledge of some members of the class" (Wood, 2009:123). It means that there will be preconception regarding the features or characteristics that members of a specified social group should or should not possess, or the roles that members of a specified group should or should not fulfill. Stereotype can be positive or negative, but those rarely communicate accurate information about others. Stereotyping is a fixed uncompromising way of representing and judging other people (Pickering, 2015).

As a part of social group, the stereotype cannot be separated from women. As it is said by Rosenkrantz, Vogel, Bee & Broverman that based on one study, people in society believe that stereotypes toward men and women can be seen from the personality traits owned by men and women themselves. In a study, it is said that society forms male stereotypes with distinctive characteristics such as rational, confident, competitive and strong, while women stereotypes are always with characteristics of being soft, sensitive, and aware to other people's feelings (in Lippa, 2005:111-112).

From the explanation above, it can be seen that society has important role in making and constructing stereotypes of men and women. This also called as gender stereotypes. It is more than simply about personality, because people also hold men's and women's stereotypes in physical traits (muscular, soft, hairy), social roles (provides, does house work), occupations (engineer, librarian), and sexuality

(has a high sex drive, sexually attracted to men) (Lippa, 2005:112). Another example, women are gentle, sentimental, weak, helpless. Men are strong, rational, logical, powerful. United Nation (2014) said a stereotype will be harmful when it limits women's or men's capacity to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives and life plans. Most gender stereotypes consider women as a weak party, judged as less able, and limited by women stereotype that is constructed by society.

Women stereotype is assesment given to women. Stereotype or labeling (negative views) against certain gender, especially women, as a result of these stereotypes are the emergence of various discrimination and injustices (Rasyidin, 2016:12). For example, there is a belief in society that women should not work and have higher education. Women in society's perception always identified to manage household, so that many women have a domestic work. "As for personal traits, women are expected to be nurturing, gentle, submissive, and indecisive" (Tjitrosoediro). This requires women to be able to do housework even though they themselves also have work outside the home, because the stereotype of women assumes that women have to take care of their husbands and children as well as possible, especially for married women. In the field of work, women are considered not to be expected to work in engineering where the field is dominated by men. Furthermore, Tjitrosoediro added that women also have to look attractive, beautiful and taking good care of the body especially for their husbands, even when they hold the baby. This stereotype of women certainly hinders and limits them from doing what they like.

Women stereotype is more discharging women to express themselves as freely as they can, because of the stereotype that is created by society. Once women act does not match society's standard, society will judge her wrong so she is exiled. "Women who use assertive speech are frequently described as arrogant and rude" (Wood, 2009:123). Women's arguments are sometimes dismissed as emotional when in fact they involve evidence and reasoning. Women stereotype is caused

oppression, judgement, restriction and discrimination. Most women become victims of this stereotype.

Therefore, women's stereotype makes women want to prove that they also deserve the opportunity to do what they want to as same as men, without being limited by stereotypes. Women also carried out women movement in voicing their voice to reject the stereotypes they perceive as limiting them. This movement is also called as feminism.

Hooks (2000:1) explained that feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression. He also added that most people think that this movement is always about seeking equality and think that feminism is anti-male. Hooks said that this is misunderstanding because most people learn and know about feminism from the point of view of patriarchal mass media.

From the definition above, it can be concluded that feminism is not consider men as an enemy. Women movement wants to prove that women stereotype is limited them to express what they want to do and voicing their voice.

One of the feminist figure is Simone de Beauvoir that states in patriarchal system women considered as 'the Other' and men considered as subject. Men are always dominating in almost field in the society. In her book *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir (1956) explains that in history from the past until now it is clear that the achievements of women in various fields of life such as politics, art, philosophy and so on, in terms of quality and quantity, are lower than the achievements of men. She argues that this is because women's socially determined conditions limit them to an inferior position, as it happens that affects their ability to act. Beauvoir concluded that woman has rightful authority. The woman can be subject, can engage in a positive activity in society and not trapped in stereotypes.

Women movement in order to reject the stereotype, can be seen from literary work. Literary work itself is a form and result of creative art work whose objects are humans and their lives by using language as the medium. The reason why movie becomes literary work is because it based on the interpretation of narrative texts,

which is also known as literary adaptation and has been represented throughout different form of other literary work. Movie as one of the mass media attracts the audience's interest in consuming information in a different way from other media. When newspapers provide information visually through writing and pictures and radio provides information in audio through sound, then movie comes by combining the two. Literary work is a picture of someone's life, which is often colored by the background attitude and beliefs of the author, and movie is one example, as a work created in the form of audio and visual combination (Semi, 1993: 8).

A work is a medium that is widely regarded as a social reality construction that occurs in society, one of which is through movie. Social construction packaging in a work, for example works of art (literature, art, movies), is one way of conveying and re-illustrating social realities that occur in society (Bruner, 1991). The artist/writer/director can shed all the emotions, feelings, and thoughts that are especially contrary or representing the detail of the truth in the reality of society. This happens because there are several differences between movie and reality which are divided into several main ideas (Nascimento, 2019). According to Abbatescianni (2015) to simplify the differences between movie and reality, it can be focused on four main point 1) Through the quick presentation of still images, film produces the illusion of motion; 2) film gives the appearance of continuity across a cut; 3) film represents scenes and events across edited sequences of shots captured at many locations and times; 4) Filmmakers have complete control over the visuals and sounds that are shown, which means that colors, forms, noises, voices, and other elements can be adjusted and modified with a great deal of freedom and creativity.

Therefore, movie becomes an intermediary to convey ideas or protests against a social reality, whether it is happening in the present or in the past. Movie has the potential to strengthen, challenge and crystallize certain perspectives on religion, ideological assumptions, and norms and values. Movie can also challenge the norms and grand narratives we believe in (Martin, Ostwalt in Rahayu, 2015). Movie is

made as a form of expression. It can be reactions to ideologies, stereotypes, or specific thoughts can be easily conveyed through film. It gradually implant certain specific aims. It also reflects and expresses aspects that are sometimes not clearly visible in society.

Consequently, the researcher paid attention to a movie titled *Little Women* directed and script written by Greta Gerwig. It is released in 2019 and represented of how the women character are limited by stereotypes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Gerwig provides a straightforward and honest perspective on women's lives in this movie. Through *Little Women*, Gerwig wants to convey various views of women who live through characters. *Little Women* movie was adapted from the novel of the same titled by Louisa May Alcott in 1868 and 1869. This movie potrayed March family who have four daughters, Meg March, Jo March, Beth March and Amy Mach with their own dreams and values. They are very talented girls of March family. Meg, as an older sister who is good at acting and chooses to marry at young age. Jo as the second daughter who is very good at writing and selling her works to earn money, energetic, independent, tomboyish and also the most stubborn among her sisters. Then there is Amy, who is good at painting and aspires to become a famous painter. Lastly, Beth the youngest who is good at playing the piano.

The reason why the researcher chose *Little Women* movie is because how Gerwig conveys the feminist message in this film through the March sisters that living their lives as women in 19<sup>th</sup> century. The women character are presented in this movie show their own struggles face the society that always put them on the second class. Although in fact, it is difficult for them to face the existing stereotypes, but in the end, they are able to reject the stereotypes and be happy with their respective choices without being forced. In this movie, there is a main character Jo March who's strongly representing the rejection towards women stereotypes. Jo is the most tomboyish among her sisters. She strives to be a figure who replaces his father's role in the family while his father has to be on the battlefield. Jo considers that the stereotypes created by society have always shackled women to reach their dreams. Therefore, Jo choses to migrate to New

York in order to make her dream comes true of becoming a writer. Jo left Massachusetts, United States, to try his luck in New York. Her independent, stubborn, persistent, and intelligent nature makes her survive even though she is rejected by publishers back and forth. Despite experiencing many difficulties but she is able to prove that female writer is also capable of creating great works. She also concerns on how women should get the same education as men and be in working field in order to have career are become something normal for women. Although Jo is made by Gerwig as the strong character in conveying feminist message but other women character in this movie also provide strength in telling of how women's struggles to voice their voices as women.

This movie tries to show how women have the same right as men to make their choices and dare to fight for their rights without afraid limited by the stereotypes. However, through this movie, the researcher also sees how women in the patriarchal cultural structure position is in the second gender class, where women in this movie are depicted as helpless and have no independence which makes them continue to depend on men. So the researcher thinks that this movie is the right object of research regarding women stereotypes and the rejection of women stereotypes presented through the women character.

### **B. Statement of Problem**

Based on the background of the problem can be formulated into research questions as follows:

1. How the women stereotypes are represented in the *Little Women (2019)* movie?
2. How do women reject the stereotypes in the *Little Women (2019)* movie?

### **C. Research Objective**

This research was conducted with the following objectives:

1. To find out the women stereotypes are represented in the *Little Women (2019)* movie



2. To find out how women reject the stereotypes in order to get their right in the *Little Women* (2019) movie.

#### **D. Research Significance**

The significance of this research for the researcher is to develop an understanding of learning literary works, especially in the scope of feminism. *Little Women* movie is one of the examples how feminism portrayed in the literary work. Therefore, this research will have two research significance, as follow:

##### **1. Theoretical Significance**

Theoretically, the results of this study are might contribute in the field of literature, especially literary theory for the study of feminism in the *Little Women* movie.

##### **2. Practical Significance**

Practically, this research for readers is expected to broaden knowledge about feminism in literature and how movie as one of literary work portrayed feminism in different dimension. For the further researcher is expected to be used as a reference for anyone who wants to analyze literature and understanding about feminism in similar research.

#### **E. Previous Studies**

There are several relevant studies that are related to the analysis of this research. Some references and reviews of the research are the previous studies.

1. A research that has been done by Adawiyah in her thesis published in 2017 from Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung entitled, “*The Struggle to Reject Women Stereotype of Popular Culture in Pitch Perfect 2*”. This study focused on how women reject the stereotype in the field of music. In her analysis, the stereotype was found on the way of women’s physical appearance as female singer. It was not only about the physical appearance but also the stereotype related to the female singer’s

performance because the group was all-female singers. They finally able to prove that all stereotypes can be refuted by how they managed to become the representation of American and winning the World A Capella Championship. They showed women's power and the identity through the unity of female. She used Beauvoir theory to solve and answer the question of her problem in her study.

2. Putri from Universitas Indonesia in her journal entitled, "*Analysis Woman's Role and Stereotype in the Animation Brave*". It was published in 2013 by Universitas Indonesia Library. This study showed how women's role and stereotype play on some parts in *Brave* and how those affected the main character's life, Merida. The object of this study was interesting to be analyzed, because it was represented how family constructed women's role and stereotype in the kingdom. Merida as a young girl tries to break the women's role and stereotype. She did not do what she had to do as a princess. Merida had broken the stereotypes which are submissive, soft, vulnerable, weak, etc. She showed the opposite and wanted to be free. The researcher used some theories from several people who have done some researches that have connection with her research topic.
3. The next research entitled, "*Women's Power and Stereotype Denial in Pocahontas Movie*" by Aryangga and Ely Nurmaily. This journal was published in TEKNOSASTIK, Universitas Teknokrat Indonesia, 2017. The aim of this research was to explicate the women power around men and oppose the stereotype issues of woman. In their analysis, there was gender issue can be found through Pocahontas as a woman. Inside of the movie told how Pocahontas as a woman should follow her gender role but she did not follow it. Pocahontas told her father if she could choose her own path. She had a dream and did not let anybody to control her. The result of this research showed that Pocahontas reveals an action of masculinity that denies the men's stereotype. She did it to prove that she had a dream and desire. She wanted to be the one who decided for herself. The researcher used qualitative approach and it has eleven dialogues to be analyzed.



4. The fourth research come from an article entitled, "*Feminism Values in Louisa May Alcott's Little Women*" that have been done by Santi and Awliya Rahmi (2019) from STKIP YPM Bangko and Universitas Islam Negeri Imam Bonjol. In their analysis, the feminism values focused conveyed by Jo. The final result of this study showed that in this Little Women novel, there were feminist values that focused on experiences, equality, choices, caring, and also differences. The researcher concluded that in this novel the dominant feminist value was about equality. Jo's character struggles to maintain and also get equal and fair opportunities for women. Jo also fought for the importance of women getting a decent and high education like men. Jo had an effort to defend her rights as a woman to challenge the normative patriarchal society. Researchers used a feminist approach and qualitative methods to analyze the data.
5. The next research is an article entitled, "*Feminism in the 'Little Women' Movie Reviewed from The Aspects of Career, Love and Independence*" by Hapsari and Dr. Ch Evy Tri W, S.S., M.Hum., was published in 2020. In their analysis, the researchers focused on things that are rebellious against stereotypes, such as about women with careers, women with love, and also women's independence in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The film Little Women was able to present a female voice according to this study. Qualitative descriptive method using documentation technique was chosen by the researchers in conducting this research. The results of this study there were four points, namely; 1) in the view of men women with upper class strata are better than lower class women; 2) ideal women are those who are considered ideal from a man's point of view; 3) The character of Jo march managed to become a woman who was able to break the stereotypes of the 19th century; 4) education about gender is an important thing that must be taught to students at any level of education.

By looking at these previous studies, the researcher can see that each study has provided an overview of *Little Women (2019)* or even the feminist theory through another object. From the previous studies before, there are similarities and

differences from what will be discussed by the researcher about the topics. Thus, the researcher wants to analyze the representation of women stereotypes and women rejection in the chosen object, *Little Women (2019)* movie.

## **F. Definition of Key Terms**

To avoid misunderstanding upon several words, the researcher would like to describe the definition of key terms that repeatedly used in this research.

### **1. Feminism**

The term of feminism refers to a social movement aimed at achieving gender equality in the social, economic, and political fields. Feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression (hooks, 2000:1).

### **2. Women Stereotype**

In this research, the term of omen stereotype refers to assesment and labelling given to women. Woman stereotype that has been rising in society is always considered woman as soft, sensitive, diplomatic, religious, neat, tidy, calm, interested in art and literature, can show something emotionally, introvert, does a domestic job, merciful, unstable, and has many things on her mind (Rollins, 1996:74).

### **3. Little Women (2019) movie**

The term of *Little Women (2019)* movie refers to a movie adaptation from a novel entitled “Little Women” written by an American novelist, Louisa May Alcott. This movie version was directed and script written by Greta Gerwig, released in 2019. This movie focuses on March sisters’ life and how they representing the women in 19<sup>th</sup> century.