

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

This study discusses the gender inequality felt by a girl in her family. Feminism is a philosophy or a women's movement that argues for male and female liberation, equality, and justice. The word "feminism" comes from the Latin word "femina" which meaning "woman." The phrase was first used in the 1890s to describe to the philosophy of gender equality and the women's rights movement (Wirasandi, 2019).

Gender inequality refers to disparities between men and women in family life, community, nation, and state. Many indicators show that women lag behind men in obtaining opportunities in a variety of fields. Women are frequently subjected to derogatory stereotypes like "women are weak creatures," "whining" and etc (*Katalog Media BPMPK*, n.d.).

The society has separated the two genders because men and women come from different backgrounds and customs. Men are regarded as superior by the majority of the world's population, whereas women are regarded as inferior. As a result, feminist theory is used by women in the domains of politics, social justice, economics, and literature to fight for their rights to freedom. Feminism arose from women's frustration with being treated as

second-class citizens in many aspects of life; feminism empowers women to express themselves. In men's thoughts, women are no longer regarded dangerous animals or beasts. Women, on the other hand, can work alongside males and be productive (Arizah, 2004).

In order to liberate women from oppressive gender conventions and attain sexual equality, liberal feminism is a political idea that was initially articulated in the late eighteenth century (also called gender justice). Liberal feminists' influence has led to a change in the social status of women from generation to generation, but their message has not changed: women have a right to equal social and political status as rational beings, and the best way to achieve gender equality is to alter current social statuses, political systems and institutions. Early liberal feminists sought the right to vote and equal access to education, while modern liberal feminists sought equal social, political, and economic opportunities, as well as equal civil rights. These goals are all part of the liberal feminism political agenda. The idea that women are socially oppressed is perhaps the most contentious component of feminism, especially since Western women in the twenty-first century do not appear to be oppressed. Modern liberal feminists, on the other hand, claim that society is structured in a way that advantages men (Oxley & Espinosa, 2011)

Feminist theory focuses on gender inequality in the family or society. The existence of feminism is to achieve gender equality between men and women. Women want to be appreciated for their existence, don't want to be oppressed and marginalized by men. Women also want to have the right to choose what to do.

Gender inequality occurs in Alice Munro's short story "Boys and Girls". This story is about the life of a girl who experiences gender inequality in her family. When she was eleven years old, she feels injustice just because she is a woman. As a daughter, she was always demanded in everything. She is not even given the right to choose what she likes and what she doesn't like. The girl also sees her mother's role as a 'woman' who must obey her husband and always do housework. Sometimes the girl argues and does something contrary to the attitude of a woman in general, then at that time she will be reminded how women should behave. Her family is patriarchal, where men are always number one. Patriarchy is a hereditary culture in the family.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background above, the writer describes the statement of the problems as follow:

1. What are causes gender inequality experienced by 'the girl' character?
2. What are the impacts of gender inequality on 'the girl' character?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The purpose of the objective of the study is to find out the result based on the statement of the problems. The objectives of the study are as follow:

1. To find out the causes of gender inequality experienced by the girl character.
2. To explain the impact of gender inequality on the girl characters.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the gender inequality created by families. The girl character is a child who lives in the patriarchal family. Where the girl told her childhood that she was treated differently from her brother. It discusses on the reason and the impact of gender inequality.

The scope of this research is to discuss the rights that women should have, such as the freedom to do any work they want and the right to equality.

The other focus is entirely on the girl's persistence as a girl to gain equality. This feminist theory will discuss the equal rights of women and men.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study has benefits as an introduction to feminism which is analyzed by the researcher based on a short story by Alice Munro entitled “Boys and Girls”, where this story still often happens today. This story tells about the life of a girl who always gets injustice in her family or environment. Feminism in this study is expected to be a lesson for readers, especially women to be brave in fighting patriarchy and voicing their opinions. The characters in this short story can be an inspiration to never give up on inequality treatment from family or society towards women.

1.6 Approach to the Study

In this thesis, the researcher uses a feminist approach to analyze Boys and Girls by Alice Munro. The feminist approach is a method of dealing with issues of gender inequality and oppression that frequently affect women. The researcher uses the Liberal feminism theory by Mary Wollstonecraft. This theory explains that men and women should be treated equally as human beings. The researcher has used this short story as the main source of info. To finalize the data, the researcher took several processes. The first step is to read and understand the contents of the short story that will be analyzed. The second step is to identify based on the theory that will be studied. And then start analyzing and reading journals about feminism or patriarchal culture, the researcher also researches with valid and reliable sources.

1.7 Organization of the Paper

The thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I is an introduction that consists of the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, scope of the study, approach of the study, and organization of the paper. Chapter II is a biography of Alice Munro and a synopsis of boys and girls short story. Chapter III contains the foundation. Chapter IV is analysis. Chapter V is the conclusion.