

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1. Feminist Approach**

The term of feminist begins when people thought women always in the lowest position from man in society caused the social factors and natural ones. Feminism occurred because of the patriarchy system. Actually men were dominated in everywhere with their occupation. Then women had appeared and follow the men's system and accompany. Feminism has a close relationship with specific man theories whose work challenges the prevailing tradition of western thought (Applin & Berry, 2017).

This condition encourages feminism to find the best way to fight for feminism, one of which is through literature. The struggle of feminism through literature is interpreted as an effort to spread feminism discourse through literary works. The aim is to limit the unfair dichotomy regarding the role of women in society and raise public awareness about the importance of feminism to be fought for. The feminism approach in literature plays a role in describing women and the problems faced by women related to gender equality in social fields. For many decades, the feminist approach has moved to change its goals progressively to achieve more effective results (Warhol, 2012).

There are three periodization that showed the development of awareness about the struggle and the feminist approach whose aim is to eliminate traditions

that demean the position of women. The feminist movement has occurred in several waves. The first waves deals with issues of suffrage and campaigns for the right to vote for women. The second wave began with the emergence of Simone de Beauvoir's literary work (1908-1986) entitled of *The Second Sex*. Beauvoir (1956) argued that the women to be oppressed because of the neglect of women's rights and women are not the main subject as men. This condition was give rise to an assumption in society that the main subject is a man while women are just another object (Other).

The three stages are essentialist, social constructionist, and poststructuralist. Essentialist is an early stage of feminist approach that focuses on changing the portrayal of women's roles that are not good by male writers in the past and introducing women writers to their works that are far from stereotypical. The next stage is the social constructionist. At this stage, awareness about gender is a product of social construction made haphazardly by men in power. Social constructionist aims to reveal the role of patriarchy which undermines the role of women that appears in literary works. The third phase is Universalist whose goal is to bring out the social factors related to women that were ignored by feminists in the second phase. Universalists argue that gender is created by a patriarchal social and cultural construction that devalues the role of women. Social constructionists ignore other social factors such as race, gender, and social class. Individuals with certain social conditions are judged differently from other individuals. For example, white women have higher rights and positions than women of other skin colours (Dobie, 2012).

Based on these three phases, there are three approaches to feminism, namely the study of differences, strengths, and experiences. Difference studies explore the differences in writing styles between male and female writers in terms of choosing diction, syntax, and themes. The study aim is to show the quality between male and female authors. The study of power in feminism uses sociological aspects to study the relationship between power that undermines women in literary works. Through the study of power, patterns of oppression, stereotypes and gender assumptions are formed. The aim is to raise awareness about the struggle of feminism even though the aesthetic elements of literature are neglected. In experiential studies, feminists include existential, archetypal and psychological aspects of literary works. Experiential studies depict feminism apart from patriarchal thinking. Experiential studies explore the symbols of feminism and the archetypes of feminism that can be used to counter patriarchal ideas about feminism (Dobie, 2012).

Feminism was correlated to the problems of women's rights in the social, economic, and political field who are equal to the men rights. Beauvoir (1956) stated that the process of feminism begins with the existence of biological facts, including of imbalanced hormones, reproductive roles, weak female organs, combined with the application of a patriarchal system where in the end women only play reproductive and domestic roles. Women often experience marginalization and subordination when it comes to gender construction. Beauvoir (1956) expressed the opinion that the form of subordination experienced by women is that men are prioritized in various ways. This research focuses on the study of feminism which is based on the concept of existentialism as the result of the thought of Beauvoir

(1956). Beauvoir (1956) through his book *The Second Sex* classifies the existence of women into three field such as women must have knowledge, being themselves, and self-actualization freedom.

This research uses a power study approach to reveal the forms of struggle for women's rights. This approach helps to describe the imbalance and domination between women's and men's rights in *Top Girls* Drama. Through the power studies, The analysis begins by looking at examples of behavior about the description of oppression and discrimination based on sex, through this study will get a picture of the pattern of discrimination and look for good solutions to fight and eliminate discrimination that grows in people's lives (Warhol, 2012).

### **2.1.1. Women Struggle**

Women's struggles are actions taken by women to fight against oppression by men who have power. Beauvoir (1956) in the previous section mentions in this case the position of women as "other". Beauvoir through the theory of existentialism feminist seeks to increase women's awareness of the right of life to freely choose their future without interference. In other word, women should being themselves. The women position as human beings have the same rights as men. Rohmawati & Pandin (2021) stated that women's efforts to fight the women marginalization can be done by rejecting the negative image that has been attached to women. In other words, the effort is rejected women as objects. Thus, women can be kept away from every form of discrimination and marginalization that causes women to act as "others".

The women's movement to get equal human rights can be seen from the different roles in the division of work, where men get higher power than women. Therefore, feminism originated from a social movement that was initiated by the idea that women had experienced oppression and exploitation. Through the feminist movement, women seek to eliminate oppression, discrimination and exploitation experienced by women. The feminist movement focuses on women's struggles in the public sphere. On the other hand, there is a feminist movement that sees women's position and experiences in most situations differently from men. The feminist movement was initiated by Simone de Beauvoir in her thoughts on existential feminism. Forms of discrimination and exploitation that are opposed by feminist extensions, one example is the marginalization of the role of women as second-class citizens built by men and the idea that men act as subjects and women only as objects. Existentialism feminism is women's resistance to discrimination by means of individual movements in the domestic field and is different from other feminist movements that fight in the public sphere. (Prameswari et al., 2019).

### **2.1.2 Existentialism**

The humans are accompanied by the independency to determine the way of life. Humans are free to determine their respective roles in the live being. Existentialism means a thought that holds that every change in the world is initiated because of human existence. Thus could be stated that existentialism seeks to position humans in a high position and role determined by humans themselves. Only man can have existence and realize their position and know how to get their position.

Existentialist feminisms in Simone de Beauvoir's view comes from the word of *existence* whose basic word starts from *exist*, if described *ex* means out and *sister* means standing. This means that existence has the meaning of standing out of himself. Simone de Beauvoir is a central figure in existentialist feminism. Beauvoir in her book writes ideas related to sexual body differences into philosophical areas. Beauvoir wears a phenomenological scheme that is a relationship between men and women. Beauvoir asks essential questions in feminist theory "Why women are the second sex?" Or "Why women are *other*?" Because according to De Beauvoir, women are not born as women but are born into women (Rohmah et al., 2021).

In her book Beauvoir wrote the characteristics of existentialist feminism which of course is what distinguishes Beauvoir thoughts from other philosophers.

1. The Others, that women have the awareness of themselves as *other*, in this theory Beauvoir explained that in the relationship between men and women there are subject conflicts or objects. Men consider themselves subject and women as objects.
2. Freedom, Women someone who has freedom (autonomous) like other humans, when women begin to exist then they can create freedom and with these freedom women can design and determine their way of life, including in making decisions
3. Transcendence, this term is used by Simone de Beauvoir to harmonize its understanding with Sartre who pioneered the flow of existentialism. Transcendence comes from the Latin term which means "beyond" is a strategy

used by women to be free or out from patriarchal culture which has condemned and confined the freedom of women, through transcendence women can express their freedom (Heraty, 2018).

Beauvoir (1956) stated that the factors that cause oppression of women include most men viewing women as objects not as subjects as men. In society's thinking, men have roles as subjects and women are objects (other). Beauvoir (1956) also stated that the process of forming a lower woman's position than a man is the fact of the biological role of women including reproduction, hormonal imbalance, and weak of women's organs. In addition, patriarchal practices increasingly lowering the women position that women are only considered to have a reproductive role and household without considering other women's roles. Beauvoir (1956) through *The Second Sex* institutionalized the theory of existentialism. To achieve its extension, women must strive to have three things, namely: intellectual, being yourself, and self-actualization.

### **1. Woman intellectuality**

Beauvoir (1956) mention that to achieve existence in society, women are required to have good knowledge. Women must be aware of the right to freedom, and are free to determine the life role they will choose, so that women are no longer dependent on men. Free women who have knowledge and intellect no longer need to worry about their role in domestic life, because through their intellect women choose other roles outside the household. To support this freedom to acquire intellectuality and knowledge, women must become subjects and no longer as objects of men.

Women who have intellectual abilities are women who understand that they are creatures who have self-awareness as subjects and not as objects of other creatures (men). Intellectual women struggle because they don't want to fail. Intellectual women are not happy with their inferiority, women want to do revenge through masculine weapons. Intellectual women strive to educate and speak, not just as listeners, to express their thoughts and ideas, and last but not least to fight against male domination. Educated women fought hard to achieve their victory and freedom over male domination (Beauvoir, 1956).

## **2. Being themselves (To be herself)**

Being themselves is a woman who has the ability to choose according to their own wishes without any influence from others. Women must believe in themselves and have faith that they are capable of achieving their choices without being someone else. Women who realize the freedom of their lives have the freedom to make life choices without others coercion (Beauvoir, 1956).

## **3. Freedom to self-actualization**

Women who are aware of their independence will have a capable ability to carry out full actualization. Women's self-actualization is an effort to get self-freedom that is carried out independently by women based on the experiences they have gained in life. Women who do self-actualization are women who refuse to act as objects for men. Men refer to themselves as "self" while women are referred to as "other". The practice of patriarchy has positioned women as inferior (inferior) than men who are superior (superior) is a form of oppression of women's rights. So that it can be stated that in order for women to be able to



achieve their existence, women must have the courage to actualize themselves in order to achieve the independence of their own rights and fight against the oppression of men (Beauvoir, 1956).

## **2.2 Previous Study**

Researchers must conduct a review of research articles that have been carried out previously related to the discussion of the thesis. This is done to ensure there is novelty in the research and to prevent plagiarism. The researcher ensures that the discussion in this case has not been carried out by other studies. Researchers conduct a review of articles that discuss feminism.

The first journal is written by Zhang (2017) that used the *Top Girls* drama as the study object. She used descriptive method to explain the deconstructed feminism in the *Top Girls* drama. She concluded that Churchill had a serious interest in changing the capitalist social system. Churchill expected women position in job and women as housewives gives a lot of tolerance and appreciation than usual. She described through the figures in the story and reminds the audience to find solutions to these problems. Churchill deconstructed feminism through a drama, deconstructed the identity and personal of feminist figures in a patriarchal capitalist society and blamed the power system in society.

The second journal is written by Ravari & Naidu (2018). The study purpose was described the inequality and injustice experienced by women, discrimination in social class and capitalist oppression of marginalized communities. Ravari & Naidu (2018) concluded that *Top Girls* is a drama that presents stories about class

differences of women in society and how oppression is felt by working class women by middle class women. The drama tells of a group of women from the working class who face economic difficulties where the upper class oppres in patriarchal system. The drama also showed that the oppression of women's groups begins with the fact that life exists in certain class hierarchies. The similarity to this research is both examining women movement in the *Top Girls* drama. The different from the study are this journal was not used any theory to examining the women struggle, whereas researcher was used existentialism theory of Beauvoir.

The third journal is written by Kurniawati et al. (2018). This journal seeks to describe gender discrimination, violence, and Dewi Ayu's struggle to defend women who received unfair treatment after the colonial period in the novel *Cantik Itu Luka* by Eka Kurniawan. The patriarchal system that developed during the colonial period had damaged the character of the main character by assuming that women were only inferiors that could be overcome. This journal conducts an analysis based on feminism theory, while the research that will be carried out is based on Beauvoir's existentialism.

The fourth journal is Bastan (2018) that described the memory and life of the female character in the drama of *Top Girls*. She concluded that Churchill is a contemporary playwright who is considered one of the playwrights who wrote about feminism. This drama also showed the complex reality of the marginalized of women rights and the success achievement that must be accompanied by sacrificing family relationships. Based on this, the gap between men and women

becomes the framework for the story of *Top Girls* which is presented through the female characters in Churchill's drama.

The fifth journal of Mandey (2019). This article bases its analysis on Betty Friedan's (1963) theory. The author of this article uses an extrinsic and intrinsic approach and conducts a qualitative analysis through several steps including description, analysis, and interpretation. The intrinsic element describes the type of feminism that exists. This approach is taken to get an analysis of the image of feminism that is appropriate and able to answer the problem. The difference with the research that will be carried out is that this article is based on Friedan's feminism, while the research that will be carried out is based on Beauvoir's existentialist feminism.

The sixth journal is Febrianti et al. (2019), which describes the struggle of the main characters to get the rights as a woman, namely the desire of women to have a happy life without any restrictions on gender and race. This study used a feminist approach, but the theory used to carry out the analysis of the novel is different.

The seventh journal is journal by Yang (2019). This journal article is a descriptive-qualitative research that aims to describe feminism into four areas, including characters who don't respect other characters, feminist figures no longer play the role of mothers, and the success of characters in different time periods. This drama does not include male characters, but males dominate the female roles in the real world. Churchill reconstructs the thought of feminism into drama,

reconstructs the identity of the role of the character of the feminists in a society that still adheres to a patriarchal system and opposes the power system that grows and develops in the contemporary society system

The eight journal is (Prameswari et al., 2019). Beauvoir's thinking through existential feminism in a sociological framework includes the paradigm of figures in the definition of social life. Other feminist movements focus more on their struggles in human life outside the household, but existential feminism fights for the role of women in the household realm. The form of women's struggle in the domestic realm is seen when women fight directly against threats given by men. Women have the right to break away from the norms and social constructions of society that have bound them. On the other hand, women also have the freedom to put themselves in any role, because the center of extensionism is freedom.

Although some of the articles mentioned above use the same theory and approach as the research to be carried out, this research differs in several ways. The problems discussed in this study focus on: first, the representations of strong women among male domination in Churchill's *Top Girls* drama (1982). Second, the obstacles were gotten by the main character to be a strong woman in drama *Top Girls* by Caryl Churchill (1982). Researcher use existentialism feminist theory by Simone De Beauvoir to answer the problem.

### 2.3 Theoretical Framework

The main source of this research is the drama *Top Girls* written by Churchill. The research step begins with reading and understanding the contents of the drama, so that facts related to feminism are obtained. Furthermore, the existentialism theory of Beauvoir (1956) is used to analyse the behaviours and attitudes of the main actors to get their extension which is grouped into three areas, namely intellectual, being oneself, and self-actualization.

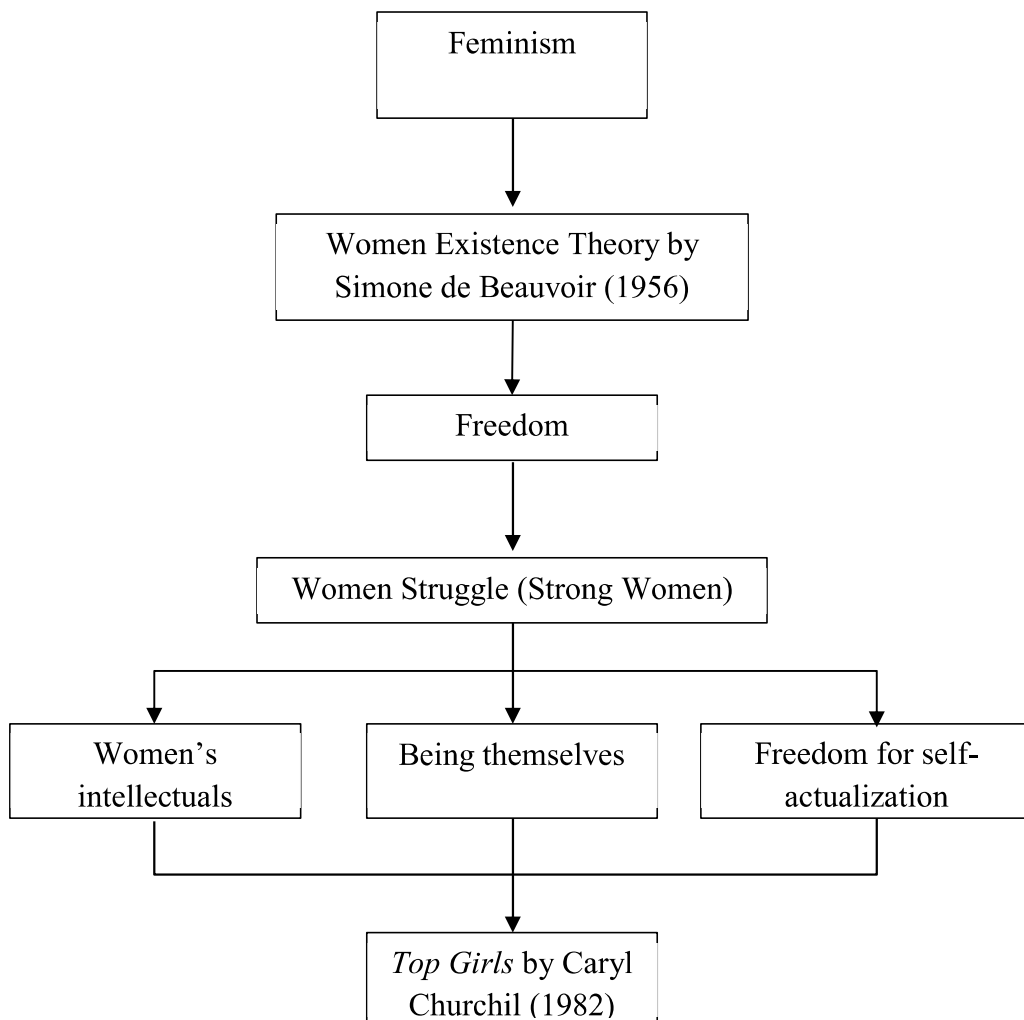


Figure 2.1 Theoretical Framework