

Chapter I

Introduction

This chapter contains the introduction of the study, which consists of the following: the background of the research, identification of the problems, limitation of the problems, research question, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and object of the research.

1.1 Background of the Study

The Queen's Gambit is a Netflix drama series released on 23rd October 2020 and directed by Scott Frank. The series is based on a 1983 novel with the same title by Walter Telvis. With 62 million user accounts in just 28 days, this series has become the most watched. Directed by Scott Frank, The Queen's Gambit drama series premiered on Netflix on October 23rd, 2020. The show is based on Walter Telvis's novel of the same name from 1983. In just 28 days, this series has gained 62 million user accounts, which makes it the most watched.

The Queen's Gambit portrays the life of orphan Elizabeth Harmon. Her nickname is Beth. Beth is a brilliant chess player. She had to struggle with her emotional problems, alcohol and drug addiction. The series clearly demonstrates how women are underestimated in the area of intellectual games. Only male players determined the chess world at that time.

Beth has gone through difficult times since she was a little child in this 1960s. She had to deal with her life without a father figure and saw her mother commit suicide, intentionally crashes her vehicle with Beth inside it. As a result, Beth was ended up in the Methuen Home, a Christian orphanage.

The series portrays Beth Harmon's battle against sexism in the chess world and her efforts to play the game of chess.

Men underestimate and easily defeat women who play chess. Beth Harmon had to win several chess competitions to make men believe in her abilities. Not only in chess games, there are also many other sexist behaviours and remarks shown by men to women. The series raises the issue of discrimination committed by men who feel they are superior to women who are thought to be weak.

Gender-themed shows have a significant influence on the audience by shaping perceptions, empowering individuals, raising awareness, building empathy, and inspiring action towards creating a more equitable world. There are many films or series that carry gender themes which is expected to eliminate stereotypes about men and women in society. The audience will readily accept the message when it is conveyed through mass media with entertainment-themed content. Shows that depict a variety of gender experiences and perspectives have the potential to broaden audiences' understanding and empathy for different gender struggles.

Sex and gender discrimination is a serious issue that requires careful research. Anyone can practice discrimination, regardless of the circumstance, and it's frequently seen as normal in society. Sexism is a generic term used to describe the problem of gender disparity. In general, sexism is categorized as discrimination based on sex and gender and there is a belief that men are superior to women (Napikoski, 2019).

Sexism is a form of prejudice or discrimination towards other groups because of gender differences, generally towards women. Women are frequently seen as being weak and make women in a position where they do not merit equality with males. Social movements have also been sparked by these gender stereotypes of women. The film business saw the emergence of one of these movements. Although movies are frequently viewed as artistic creations and forms of entertainment, they also include strong social values that reflect the reality of social events.

The most important things in a movie are pictures and sounds, spoken words and also added by the presence of other sounds that accompany pictures and movie music (Sobur, 2020). The meaning of a film will undoubtedly provide a representation of the moral message it contained. The way a person, group, idea, opinion, reality, or specific object are portrayed in a writing is known as representation. Stuart Hall, the father of representation, claims that representation must be understood in terms of humans' active and creative role in interpreting the world, rather than just the meaning of text.

Representation includes not only the creation of meaning but also the exchange of meaning, which can be accomplished through language or images as symbols (Alamsyah, 2020). Representation is a significant variable in shaping societal perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours. It can impact how people perceive themselves and others, as well as their understanding of social issues and identities. As a result, accurate, authentic, and inclusive representation is critical for promoting diversity, equity, and social justice in both the media and society as a whole.

The semiotic theory of Charles Sander Peirce will be applied to the analysis of this study. Peirce's classified signs into three categories: icons, indices, and symbols. Peirce's semiotics theory is comprehensive because it provides a systematic framework for understanding signs and meaning, includes a dynamic view of semiosis, emphasises the pragmatic aspects of sign use, and has had an impact on a variety of disciplines. Peirce wanted to identify the basic particles of the sign and recombine all the components in a single structure. A sign is something that for someone represents something else in some way or capacity. (Wibowo in Sebayang. 2017).

The researcher intends to analyze the representation of sexism in the Netflix series *The Queen's Gambit* by comparing the objects in the scene, which include icons, indexes, and symbols, with the grand theory of this research. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting research entitled "Representation of Sexism in the Netflix Series "The Queen's Gambit." This analysis will explore how various signs within the series contribute to the construction and perpetuation of sexist ideologies, shedding light on the broader cultural implications of such representations in contemporary media discourse. Additionally, by employing Peirce's semiotic framework, the study aims to uncover the underlying meanings and messages encoded within the visual and narrative elements of the series, offering insights into the complex interplay between signs, ideology, and social commentary.

1.2 Limitation of the Study

This discussion focused more on the researcher's desire to be specific and not ambiguous. Based on the background given above, it can be inferred that the issue being researched is how women are represented in the chess world in the Netflix series *The Queen's Gambit*.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions in this research are mainly based on the background of the study above, in addition to the writer's own interests. The research questions are as follows:

1. What type of sexism are found in the drama series “*The Queen’s Gambit*”?
2. What is the representation of sexism towards women shown in drama series “*The Queen’s Gambit*”?

1.4 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to respond to the problem formulation mentioned above. This research study has an objective that is to investigate the representation of women in chess that appears in the Netflix series *The Queen's Gambit*. By examining how female characters are depicted within the context of a male-dominated activity like chess, this study seeks to uncover underlying patterns of gender bias, empowerment, and stereotyping in media portrayals. Furthermore, the research aims to contribute to ongoing discussions surrounding gender representation in popular culture and its impact on societal perceptions of women's roles and capabilities.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The researcher hopes that this research provides benefits for many parties. The significances of this research are:

1.5.1 Theoretical Significances

Specific explanations of the representation of sexism are expected to contribute not only to literature, but also to those who want to learn about human life.

1.5.2 Practical Significances

It is expected to contribute to literary study. It also can provide insight for future research especially in analyzing representation of sexism.