

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

People nowadays understand well about the issue of gender equality. It is something that people are already familiar with and they have their own opinion about it. Larasati and Ayu (2020), states that gender is a term that differentiate roles, functions and responsibilities between women and men resulting from socio-cultural construction and can change according to the times.

Gender equality is when people of all genders have equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities in every day's life. An article from UN Women (2021), states that gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world.

Everyone, whether they are women, men, transgender, children or families, were affected by gender inequality. It impacts people of all ages and backgrounds. We need to materialize gender equality urgently. In gender equality, there is less violence against women and girls. Gender equality is a human right. Societies that value women and men as equal are safer and healthier.

After knowing that people already understand well about the gender equality in the society, then, issues about lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) are coming up and become a hot topic to be discussed. Nowadays, there are so many people doing LGBT and it's become a common thing in the society.

Lesbian is a woman whose enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction is to other women. Gay is the adjective used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attractions are to people of the same sex (Cambridge University Press). Sometimes lesbian is the preferred term for women and gay for men.

Bisexual is a person who has the capacity to form enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attractions to those of the same gender or to those of another gender. People may experience this attraction in differing ways and degrees over their lifetime. Bisexual people need not have had specific sexual experiences to be bisexual; in fact, they need not have had any sexual experience at all to identify as bisexual.

Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. People under the transgender umbrella may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms including transgender. Many transgender people are prescribed hormones by their doctors to bring their bodies into alignment with their gender identity. Some undergo surgery as well. But not all transgender people can or will take those steps, and a transgender identity is not dependent upon physical appearance or medical procedures.

One more thing that is still related to LGBT is QUEER. It is an adjective used by some people, particularly younger people, whose sexual orientation is not exclusively heterosexual. Typically, for those who identify as queer, the terms lesbian, gay, and bisexual are perceived to be too limiting and/or fraught with cultural connotations they feel do not apply to them. Once considered a pejorative

term, queer has been reclaimed by some LGBT people to describe themselves. However, it is not a universally accepted term even within the LGBT community (Gay Center, 2020).

When it comes to social acceptance of gay men, gay men themselves are just as likely as lesbians and bisexuals to say there is a lot of social acceptance for their group. They are somewhat more likely than lesbians or bisexuals to say there is some social acceptance (and less likely to say there is only a little or no acceptance). Lesbians' views about how much their group is accepted by society are almost identical to the views of gay men and bisexuals. Roughly one-in-four from each group say there is a lot of social acceptance for lesbians, and about six-in-ten say there is some social acceptance for this group. Among bisexuals, men and women agree that there is a lot more social acceptance for female bisexuals than there is for male bisexuals (Pew Research Center).

LGBT-inclusive discourses often reinforce the heterosexuality of sex and gender: that is, the social understanding that there are two distinct genders, women and men, that are synonymous with two distinct sexes, female and male, and that the expectation of being a woman (female) is to desire men (males), both emotionally and sexually, and vice versa. In the heterosexuality terms, women supposed to be attracted to men while man is supposed to be attracted to woman. In fact, that is not applied in the LGBT discourses. It is common for the LGBT people to attracted to the same gender, which is lesbians (woman and woman) and gays (man and man).

In relation to the background, the author will elaborate more about one of the issues in LGBT which is the homosexuality in the novel *Call Me by Your Name* by Andre Aciman.

Call Me by Your Name is a romance novel, published in 2007 and written by American writer, Andre Aciman. This novel was adapted into a movie in October 2017. According to Waldman (2019) a sequel to the novel, *Find Me*, was released in October 2019. This novel was considered as one of the defining works of contemporary gay literature. It is a coming-of-age-story and romantic novel that meditates on time, desire, and the intensity of the experiences that punctuate our lives and leave a permanent imprint on our memory. Aciman's debut novel received critical acclaim for its treatment of themes such as sexuality and obsessive love (Amazon, 2020).

As a romance novel, *Call Me by Your Name* sets itself apart with its nuanced depiction of both the anticipation leading up to a romantic affair, and the emotional complexity that results after attaining a life-defining relationship. Its influences include Aciman's own familiarity with Italy and Italian culture, as well as the nuanced differences of American culture, since the author grew up both in Rome and New York City. "His expertise in comparative literature comes through in the myriad of texts referenced throughout the novel, from the pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus to the Jewish German-language poet, Paul Celan." (Amazon, 2020).

Call Me by Your Name details the love story of Elio and Oliver, two young men who spend a summer together on the Italian Riviera and develop a bond that shapes their view of love for the rest of their lives.

Elio is a precocious 17-year-old who spends summers with his family in their villa on the Italian Riviera. Oliver is a brilliant and handsome 24-year-old post-doctoral scholar from America who spends a summer in the mid-1980s at Elio's villa. Elio's parents select Oliver to live with them for six weeks as part of an annual fellowship that they offer to young scholars, with the purpose of helping them revise a manuscript for publication and aiding Elio's father, who is himself an academic, with his paperwork. *Call Me by Your Name* is a story about obsessive love, the passage of time, and life-defining memories. The novel is told through Elio's first-person narration, recounting his memories of Oliver and their subsequent relationship. The novel begins with his first memories of Oliver: Oliver's typical farewell, "**Later!**", which Elio finds strange, cold, and indifferent. In his first few weeks at the villa, Oliver charms and befriends the residents and neighbors of the villa. Elio, who is introverted and shy, reflects on the beginning of his infatuation with Oliver, analyzing all of Oliver's words and mannerisms as he secretly pines for a more intimate relationship with Oliver.

The desire that Elio feels for Oliver is at once overwhelming and sublime, a feeling stronger than any he has felt before, but he finds himself unable to express his feelings or talk about them with anyone, for fear of shame and rejection. Oliver's apparent coldness and indifference pain Elio, who labors to conceal his feelings from Oliver with affected silence and indifference on his part. After reading the novel, the author feels that this novel is quiet challenging to be analyzed since that the novel is about gay's love story. These are some things that interesting and makes the author curious about the movie. First, how do Elio and Oliver connect initially? Second, how can somebody use the word "**Later!**" to say goodbye? Is it the

Oliver's language style or it is used by the author to show the used of figurative language on the script? Last but not least, the way of how the issue of homosexuality is being represented in the story that can be analyzed by using lesbian, gay and queer criticism.

1.2 Statements of the Problems

This study starts with three questions, namely:

- 1.2.1 How is the issue of homosexuality represented in the novel?
- 1.2.2 What is the author's attitude towards the issue of homosexuality after reading the novel?
- 1.2.3 Is there any correlation between the issue of homosexuality in the novel and the author's perspective about the issue of homosexuality itself?

With these three questions, the author hopes to be able to describe about first, to explain to the readers, the way of how the issue of homosexuality is represented in the story. Second, to explain to the readers, the kind of attitude that is expected from the researcher who have read this novel toward the issue of homosexuality. Third, to explain about the correlation between the issue of homosexuality in the novel and the researcher's perspective, whether it can successfully change the reader's mind and attitude or not.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study will focus on how the issue of homosexuality is being represented in the story. Besides that, this study will also be elaborating the attitude that is expected from the author who have read this novel toward the issue of

homosexuality. Last but not least, this study aims to explain about the correlation between the issue of homosexuality in the novel and author's perspective. By analyzing this novel, the author hopes that this study will be useful for the readers to broaden their knowledge about homosexuality, the readers could have a better perspective and attitude to face the issue of homosexuality, and also this study can help those who are learning or analyzing the issue of homosexuality.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

The author realizes that this study still has weaknesses due to the time constraints. Therefore, this study can only be focuses in some scopes such as the discussion of the issue of homosexuality that is being represented in the novel, the researcher's attitude towards the issue of homosexuality after reading the novel, and the correlation between the issue of homosexuality in the novel and the researcher's perspective, whether it can successfully change the researcher's mind and attitude or not. These problems statements will be the limitation of this study. Which means that, the author will only discussing about these three main topics.

1.5 Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid problems like misunderstanding and misinterpretation of some keywords, the author would like to explain and define the key terms that are used in this study. These are the key terms;

Lesbian, Gay, and Queer Criticism. All of these labels emerge from dynamic mid and late twentieth-century struggles to emancipate anti-normative sexual desires and gender identities from legal, medical and moral oppression (Bristow. J., 2001).

“This criticism emerged from a combination of post-structuralist deconstruction of essentialist understandings of gendered and sexual identities and gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersex political activism in the 1980s.” (DiGangi, 2007).

Reader-response Criticism. It is a study of literary theory that focuses on the reader (or “audience”) and their experience of a literary work, in contrast to other schools and theories that focus attention primarily on the author or the content and form of the work (Tompkins, 2015)

Homosexuality. It is about sexual interest in and attraction to members of one’s own sex. The term gay is frequently used as a synonym for homosexual; female homosexuality is often referred to as lesbianism (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2021).

Gender equality. Gender equality is when people of all genders have equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities in every day’s life. (“Gender equality and women's empowerment”, 2021).

Representation. The way that someone or something is shown or described (Cambridge Dictionary, 1995).