

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The introduction chapter consists of the background of the study, statement of the problems, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

The women's movement is a significant struggle to show that women have the same abilities and potential as men. It aims to dispel the idea that women are weak or excluded from society. The ongoing issue of gender inequality has driven the feminist movement, which fights for equality and justice for all genders. Social pressures from male dominance often leave women feeling disadvantaged by various forms of gender injustice, creating inequalities that hold them back. Feminism emerged to counter patriarchal domination, which places women in a subordinate position and disadvantages them in many areas of life (Manao, 2024, p. 40). In this context, feminist literary criticism becomes an essential tool for analyzing and revealing gender injustice within literary works. Through this critique, the writer can understand how literature reflects or even challenges patriarchal power structures, while also giving voice to the experiences and perspectives of women that are frequently overlooked.

According to Showalter (1985, p. 244) in *Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness*, feminist literary criticism not only reveals gender bias in literature but also explores the experiences of women who have been marginalized in the literary canon. Through this approach, the writer can understand how the representation of women in literature is often influenced by dominant patriarchal norms, which create stereotypes that limit women's roles. The novel *Flipped* serves as an interesting example in this study because it explores the struggle against gender stereotypes through its characters. It also highlights the experiences and perspectives of women, giving a voice to those who have often been overlooked in cultural narratives.

Flipped by Wendelin Van Draanen is a realistic and romantic story that follows the journey of two children, Julianna Baker and Bryce Loski, from childhood to adolescence. With alternating narratives, readers gain deep insights into the feelings

and thoughts of both main characters. Julianna is depicted as a smart, independent, and enthusiastic girl with a unique perspective on the world around her. The novel explores important themes such as teenage love, friendship, and changes in family dynamics. According to the official website Penguin Random House, *Flipped* by Wendelin Van Draanen was first published in 2001 as the original edition. A second edition followed in 2003, the novel has received various awards, including the South Carolina Children's Book Award, California Young Reader Medal, Nevada Young Readers Award, Virginia Young Readers Program Award, and Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award in Illinois. The writer chose this novel for its strengths, including numerous nominations, a unique narrative perspective, and a touching story. This study focuses on the character of Julianna Baker from the perspective of liberal feminism, as she represents the struggle for gender stereotypes that often limit the roles and expectations of women. Through her brave actions and critical thinking, Julianna demonstrates that women have the right to possess strength, freedom, and independence equal to men.

Juliana Baker in Wendelin Van Draanen's novel *Flipped* is a strong representation of liberal feminism that challenges gender stereotypes. In the story, Juliana often faces societal expectations based on traditional gender roles. However, she does not follow the usual expectations for girls. She is brave, independent, and stands up for what she believes in. For instance, she climbs and protects a sycamore tree even when others laugh at her, showing her strong will and confidence. In her relationship with Bryce Loski, her neighbor and co-lead in the novel, shows her emotional growth and her willingness to speak up against his traditional views about gender. When she discovers that Bryce lied about the eggs she gave him, she confronts him directly, making it clear that she deserves honesty and respect. This shows the key ideas of liberal feminism, which focus on equality and individual rights. Through her strong and fearless character, Juliana represents liberal feminism and stands against gender stereotypes in *Flipped*. Overall, she emphasizes the importance of personal freedom and equality.

Liberal feminism is a branch of feminism that emphasizes the importance of individual freedom for women to shape their own futures and ensure equal rights in

social, political, and economic areas. According to Tong, this type of feminism focuses on women's freedom to control their lives and gain equal rights within society (Tong, 2014, p.13). This is crucial because it pushes for changes in social structures to create a fairer environment where women have the same rights to participate in decision-making and access education and jobs equally. Additionally, the character Juliana Baker from the novel *Flipped* serves as an interesting example because she reflects the struggle for freedom and equality. Liberal feminism gives women complete and individual freedom, arguing that freedom and equality are based on reason (Nafiah and Sulistyaningsing, 2023, p. 57).

The following are previous studies which use the same source of data *Flipped* but with a different focus on subject and there are the same theories but different focus on object. First, Septian Kurniawan's thesis titled *Parenting Style Reflected in Wendelin Van Draanen's Flipped*, published in the digital library of Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel Surabaya (2024), reveals that the Baker family's parenting style significantly shapes Juli Baker's personality in the novel. Next, Kartika Chandra Karina's article, *Bryce's Character Development in Wendelin van Draanen's Flipped: A Structural Approach*, published in the LILICS Journal of Literature, Linguistics, and Cultural Studies (2023), discusses how Bryce Loski's character development is influenced by the conflicts he faces throughout the story. Next, Puspita Sari, titled *Julianna Self-Actualization in Flipped by Wendelin Van Draanen*, published by English Study Program, Faculty of Social and Cultural Sciences, Universitas Trunojoyo Madura (2018), discusses how Juliana's self-actualization change her personality to be more affiance perception of reality, accepts herself, other and nature, need for privacy, more creative, and her interpersonal relations.

Additionally, Nafiah and Sulistyaningsing explore the theme of liberal feminism in their study titled *Daisy Buchanan's Liberal Feminism in the Novel The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald*, published in JournEEL (2023), highlighting how Daisy's experiences in a patriarchal society reflect liberal feminist values. Similarly, Efanda and Zamruddin in their article *The Depiction of Liberal Feminism Through the Main Character in the Novel Yellow Wife by Sabdeqa Johnson*,

published in Passage (2023), examine how Pheby's struggles for education, freedom, and equality showcase liberal feminist ideals. Lastly, Iman Kristian Manao in his thesis *The Portrayal of Women Subjugation Through Patriarchal Society in Paulo Coelho's The Spy: Liberal Feminism Perspective*, published by English Study Program, Faculty of Social and Cultural Sciences, Universitas Trunojoyo Madura (2024), discusses how *The Spy* portrays women's oppression within a patriarchal context and how the character Mata Hari fights for freedom and equality,

The study gap lies in the lack of analysis on the novel *Flipped* by Wendelin Van Draanen from a liberal feminist perspective. Liberal feminism is employed in this study as equal treatment for women and men is emphasized, connecting with the story's events to reveal how Julianna Baker fights against gender stereotypes. Set in the 19-20th century, the story aligns with the third wave of the liberal feminism movement, which focuses on equal education, equal liberty, the suffrage and the 20th century is equal right (Tong, 2014, p. 13-27). This gap creates a lack of clarity in understanding how Julianna not only embodies feminist principles but also actively challenges societal norms that reinforce gender roles. The uniqueness of this study lies in its detailed analysis of Julianna Baker as a representation of liberal feminism, exploring how her actions and relationships in *Flipped* critique traditional gender stereotypes. Using liberal feminism, the thesis titled *Julianna Baker's Struggle Gender Stereotypes in Flipped by Wendelin Van Draanen* aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of her character's impact on the narrative and its feminist implications.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of the study, the writer formulated the following research questions:

1. How does Julianna Baker struggle for equality in *Flipped*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the statement of the study question, the writer wants to accomplish the problems that are described as follows:

1. To identify how Julianna Baker struggle for equality in *Flipped* that reflect the characteristic of liberal feminism.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study aims to make a significant contribution to existence of feminism, particularly liberal feminism, by using the character Julianna Baker from the novel *Flipped* as the object of analysis. The results of this study are expected to have a positive impact both theoretically and practically.

First, this study is theoretically to be able to contribute to understanding of how fictional characters can reflect and criticize social realities related to gender inequality. The second, practically this study is expected to provide a new perspective on the novel *Flipped*, often regarded as children's or young adult literature. By examining the theme of feminism within the story, this study show that the novel not only has entertainment value but also carries thoughtful messages about gender equality that are relevant to current social issues. This study seeks to broaden our understanding of how fictional characters can reflect and critique social realities related to gender inequality.

This study also aims to support the development of literary education. By demonstrating how literature can serve as a tool for understanding and discussing social issues, this study hopes to be a reference for educators and students in exploring the relationship between literature and feminism. Moreover, the findings of this study can serve as a basis for future studies that want to explore similar topics in the context of other works or in broader feminist studies.

Finally, the social significance of this study lies in its hopes to raise awareness about the importance of gender equality and to challenge existing stereotypes. By presenting Julianna's character as a representation of liberal feminism's struggle, this study aims to encourage readers to be more critical of existing social norms and inspire them to express themselves and fight for their rights.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the study

This study focuses on the character Julianna Baker from Wendelin Van Draanen's novel *Flipped*, analyzed from a liberal feminism perspective. The aim is

to explore how Julianna is portrayed as a character who fight for equality reflect liberal feminist principles.

To support the analysis, the writer used one theory is liberal feminism by Rosemary Tong, detailed in her book *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction* (2014), which emphasizes the importance of individual freedom for women to shape their futures and ensure equal rights in social, political, and economic fields.

However, there are some limitations to consider. Firstly, this study focuses on one character, Julianna Baker, meaning that other characters in the novel will not be deeply analyzed. Although other characters, like Bryce Loski, play important roles in the story, the emphasis on Julianna as a representation of liberal feminism may lead to a less comprehensive analysis of character dynamics. Another limitation is the focus on the novel *Flipped*, published in 2001. Despite this, the limitations of this study are the characters' utterances and the narration of the novel, which is related to the study remains relevant in the current feminist context, especially in identifying and fighting stereotypes to achieve gender equality.