

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

B.1 Gender Stereotypes

Sex and gender are two different terms. Sex is the physiological and biological characteristics that distinguish men and women. Meanwhile, gender refers to the meanings, values, responsibilities, and characteristics associated with different sexes, more specifically defined as “masculinity” and “femininity,” which are socially structured, culturally shaped, and psychologically influenced (Oakley, 1972, as cited in Bishara, 2022).

As the American Psychological Association has identified, gender stereotypes refer to widely held beliefs and expectations about the attitudes, behaviors, and roles considered appropriate for individuals based on gender. These beliefs are shaped by people’s observations of the differing behaviors of men and women in social roles (Priyashantha et al., 2023). Furthermore, gender identity is defined as the distinction between men and women, categorizing them as agentic and communal (Abele et al., 2016; Korlat et al., 2022). For instance, historically, men have often been perceived as more assertive, rational, dominant, independent, and in the role of the primary provider. In contrast, women are usually viewed as nurturing, showing concern for others, and exhibiting warmth, and are more likely to occupy domestic roles.

Despite ongoing economic progress and increased female participation in the workforce, gender stereotypes that divide the nature of men as agentic and women as communal remain strong. Eagly and Koenig (2021) define a vicious cycle in which gender stereotypes prevent men and women from taking on different social roles because they are perceived to be more suitable for their current roles. This creates a continuous cycle in which women must work harder to prove their leadership ability. Despite economic advances, these stereotypes still hinder real progress in how women are viewed and treated in the workplace, thus reinforcing gender inequality.

B.2 Gender Inequality

Gender inequality refers to the unfair treatment of individuals based on their gender, frequently rooted in gender stereotypes, traditional norms, and patriarchal social structures. Its impact is seen in various aspects of life, including education, employment, politics, and family life. Although gender inequality happens in various aspects of life, such as education, employment, politics, and family life, this section will focus on its impact on male-dominated workplaces.

According to Abbas (2024), gender inequality in the workplace can be reflected by unequal pay, leadership underrepresentation, gender-based discrimination, and work-life balance.

1. Unequal pay: Women typically earn less than men for the same work.

Working in male-dominated workplaces, they still earn less than their male colleagues despite having higher levels of education. If we look back at history, traditional gender norms and stereotypes have significant roles in this case; the discriminatory practices have taken root over time, contributing to the wage gap that continues today. However, unequal pay is not limited only to gender inequality but also extends to racial and ethnic dimensions, creating more complicated challenges that require comprehensive solutions.

2. Leadership underrepresentation, commonly referred to as the “glass ceiling” phenomenon, limits women’s career advancement and perpetuates gender inequality in decision-making; as a result, it hinders the full utilization of a diverse and talented workforce, reinforces existing inequalities, and restricts the potential for innovation and growth. Besides, this happens to racial and ethnic minorities who face systemic barriers and unconscious biases in achieving leadership roles.

3. Gender-based discrimination is still common in the workplace. This can take many forms, such as:
 - a. Sexual harassment, for instance, inappropriate comments, sexual jokes, or even physical harassment. These cases make many employees, particularly women, feel uncomfortable or afraid.
 - b. Unfair hiring practices: Companies may favor men over women for certain positions, even if they are equally qualified. This often occurs due to stereotypes that men are considered more suitable for specific jobs.
 - c. Unequal promotion opportunities: In many cases, women face more barriers to promotion than men. Despite good performance, they are often overlooked or judged on appearance rather than their abilities.
4. Achieving a work-life balance can be particularly challenging for women, especially those with childcare responsibilities. As a result, women are more exposed to stress, find it challenging to reach high positions, and are often perceived as less competent.

B.3 Masculine Contest Culture (MCC)

Masculine contest culture (MCC) refers to workplace cultures in which men compete for positions, power, or rewards, thereby reinforcing their dominance. In this competitive environment, women, non-binary individuals, and others who do not conform to traditional masculine norms are often disadvantaged or marginalized (Meluso et al., 2021). These characteristics align with long-held views of traditional masculine gender stereotypes (Eagly, 1987; Prentice & Carranza, 2002, as cited in Regina & Allen, 2023). For instance, being cutthroat, strong, work-oriented, and lacking emotionality. More specifically, MCC centers on masculine gender stereotypes considered toxic, such as the drive to constantly compete and impose one's will on others (Kupers, 2005, as cited in Regina & Allen, 2023).

As Berdahl (2018) stated, there are four correlated dimensions of masculine contest culture (MCC): First, showing no weakness refers to the view that hesitation, humility, or feminine emotions should be hidden in the workplace as part of the effort to appear competent. Second, strength and stamina refer to physical strength, such as body size, strength, and endurance, which are key to gaining respect and status. Third, putting work first reflects that family or non-work activities should not interfere with work matters. Fourth, "dogs eat dogs" describes the workplace as a highly competitive environment, where coworkers are perceived as competitors to be defeated rather than as a

team working together. Moreover, it creates a toxic environment and contributes to emotional exhaustion among employees. Men with lower competitiveness traits have been significantly affected by emotional exhaustion. Conversely, women with higher levels of competitiveness have been substantially affected by emotional exhaustion (Joseph & Tammie, 2023).

Masculine Contest Culture (MCC) is strongly associated with toxic masculinity and fragile masculinity, which reinforce and sustain gender inequality in male-dominated workplaces. Toxic masculinity defines the standards that men must follow to be considered “real men” in the workplace. Meanwhile, fragile masculinity explains why men react negatively when these standards are challenged, primarily by the success of women.

B.4 Toxic Masculinity

According to Rosida et al. (2022), the term toxic masculinity is a result of not fulfilling masculinity norms, which are deeply rooted in society. This led men to be violent towards subordinates, such as women and children, and even towards themselves. For instance, men have to be forced to follow specific rules, such as being unemotional, aggressive, and dominant in the masculinity norms to address themselves as real man, and the forcing action can lead them to violence.

Makhanya (2023) claims that there are a variety of reasons that contribute to the development of toxic masculinity, including the temperament and character of the individual involved. In toxic masculinity case studies, there is a sociology and psychology term called Hypermasculinity; based on Makhanya's (2023) research, hypermasculinity happens in two forms: first, when men try so hard to show off their masculinity more extremely and rigidly. This condition often happens because they feel they are not fully privileged by a patriarchal system, and they are perceived as not fulfilling the idealized standard of masculinity called hegemonic masculinity.

Hegemonic masculinity is the form of masculinity that is considered the most dominant or ideal in a particular culture, for instance, always being tough, strong, and dominant. When men feel they do not meet the standard, they tend to try to compensate by over-demonstrating masculinity. Second, hypermasculinity happens when men spend much time with other men; in this context, they feel the need to show off their masculine traits significantly to compete or be accepted in the group.

B.5 Fragile Masculinity

People are expected to follow traditional gender norms, which are part of the identity commonly assigned to men and women (Stanaland et al., 2023). Besides identity, this expectation also affects how individuals might be perceived and treated by society or their surroundings. In this context, people may respond differently to gender norms and societal expectations. Some people conform to these norms due to external pressures from family, friends, or their environment, while others may follow them based on internal desires. However, some may reject these gender norms and opt not to conform to the expectations set by society (Cook et al., 2019; Egan & Perry, 2001; Good & Sanchez, 2010; Nielson, Martin, et al., 2020; Stanaland & Gaither, 2021, as cited in Stanaland & Gaither, 2023).

Masculinity is one particularly rigid and enduring set of gender norms; most of them, at such young ages, have been ordered to conform to masculinity norms such as being emotionless, strong, and dominant and become pressured once they reach adulthood and linked to various outcomes, such as anxiety, aggression, and sexual assault (Stanaland et al., 2023). In today's age, many women challenge gender norms by working in male-dominated workplaces even though they face numerous barriers in their careers; some of them can manage to maintain their position, and men who lag behind them feel their masculinity is threatened and feel so much pressure. Vandello et al. (2023) state that when men's masculinity is threatened, they engage in what is known as precarious

manhood. This concept suggests that men are motivated to reassert their masculinity by showcasing their masculine competence to others through risky behaviours that may put them in harm's way. Stanaland et al. (2023) state that the outcomes of the threats they may face differ depending on the source of masculinity motivations. First, if their motivation for masculinity is from extrinsic pressure, they may be aggressive and sexist. Second, if their motivation for masculinity comes from intrinsic factors, such as the desire for themselves, they may experience anxiety, shame, and self-harm.

B.6 Theoretical Framework

B.6.1 The Feminine Mystique

The concept of the feminine mystique encourages women to express their femininity by embracing traditional domestic roles, such as motherhood and homemaking. In the 1960s in the United States, many women were denied access to education, politics, and opportunities outside the home. During that time, the United States government idealized women as homemakers, a notion widely promoted through the media, including magazine articles and advertisements that advocated for a domestic lifestyle centered on staying home and fulfilling the traditional roles of mothers and wives. Meanwhile, life outside the home, such as education and meaningful employment, was associated with masculinity and male-dominated careers (DiStefano, 2024).

Betty Friedan, a pivotal figure in the liberal feminist movement, addressed the phenomenon that she identified as a *mystique* crafted to restrict women's true potential. In her groundbreaking book, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), as a critical response to the social condition of American women post-World War II, Friedan conducted in-depth interviews with numerous female college graduates, uncovering a widespread sense of dissatisfaction that she articulated as the problem that has no name. This discontent stemmed from societal expectations that confined women to roles as homemakers and caretakers, rather than allowing them to explore their ambitions and aspirations. Friedan advocated for the fundamental right of women to pursue higher education and professional careers, encouraging them to strive for personal fulfillment and empowerment beyond traditional domestic limits (Bhusal, 2024).

In *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), Betty Friedan explores how many women experienced depression due to the lack of mental stimulation from repetitive household chores. These chores stem from gendered roles that society often views as natural and functional, despite being socially constructed and often perpetuated. As women become consumed by their identities as homemakers, they struggle to think critically or pursue personal interests. This focus on domesticity often leads to the perception that intellectual activities are unfeminine, resulting in a significant loss of individual identity. Furthermore, capitalism frequently exploits women's sexuality to market products while reinforcing their traditional domestic roles. This exploitation reduces women to

mere consumers who buy household goods and presents them as products marketed through sexual allure. The media plays a significant role in this by emphasizing beauty and passivity as primary attributes of women, further entrenching these limiting roles.

The Feminine Mystique highlights the struggles of white middle-class women but has faced criticism for overlooking the diverse experiences of all women, which may contribute to a type of neoliberal postfeminism (Kim, 2024). While Betty Friedan emphasized the importance of women's participation in the workforce, this perspective reduced gender equality to simply integrating women into jobs rather than addressing more profound structural changes. As a result, the responsibility for achieving equality often falls on individuals, allowing systemic issues like wage gaps, unequal division of household labor, and workplace sexism to persist. Consequently, discussions about women's empowerment can become commercialized, diverting attention from the underlying injustices that remain prevalent (Kim, 2024).

The concept of the feminine mystique, which Betty Friedan critiqued in the 1960s, remains relevant today, for instance, with the rise of momfluencers. Momfluencers are stay-at-home moms who use social media to promote products and lifestyles. While it is fine for them to have this career, the industry behind them is problematic because it suggests that a woman's success depends on being the perfect wife and mother, which is an unrealistic and heavy standard.

These influencers not only market products but also present themselves as representations of an ideal life. Even though some momfluencers earn more than their partners, their version of empowerment can be influenced by commercial interests, leading to a narrow view of femininity and beauty. Followers may feel benign envy—a desire for that perfect life—which can hide their dissatisfaction. This feeling often drives them to spend more, as they strive to emulate the idealized lifestyles portrayed by momfluencers (Clawson, 2023).

The persistence of old-fashioned ideas, such as traditional gender norms and patriarchal cultures, continues to create barriers for women in the workplace. This situation is further echoed in Betty Friedan's critique of the feminine mystique, which sheds light on how societal perceptions undermine women's achievements. In her analysis, Friedan highlights that women are often perceived primarily as objects of beauty or homemakers. This view can detract from their capabilities, particularly in male-dominated fields such as STEM. The *Fair Play* (2023) underscores that these stereotypes create significant obstacles to women's progress by perpetuating the notion that they are less competent than men. As a result, the idealization of women in domestic roles not only limits their economic opportunities but also reinforces a cycle of inequity in professional environments.

B.6.2 Cinematography

As Brown (2016) stated, cinematography originates from the Greek and means "*writing in motion.*" Furthermore, cinematography is a series of images encompassing the art of translating ideas, emotions, and nonverbal communication into visual storytelling (Brown, 2014). Hence, cinematography is one of the most influential aspects of the filmmaking process.

In cinematography, key principles must be followed to achieve a cinematic look and effectively convey emotions, meaning, and, most importantly, the narrative of a movie's storyline. These principles include camera angle, shot size, and composition. (Mascelli in Sartika, 2022). Here are the explanations about the key principles of cinematography:

1. Camera Angle

Camera angle refers to the camera's point of view when recording a subject or scene. It is essential because it can significantly impact how the audience perceives a story's emotional impact, power, and visual dynamics. There are three camera angles: eye level, high angle, and low angle.

- a. Eye level: The camera is positioned at the subject's eye level to convey a natural, neutral, and unbiased impression. This allows the audience to feel "on the same level" as the characters without influencing their perception of strengths or weaknesses.

- b. High angle: The camera is placed higher than the subject, pointing downward to give the impression that the subject appears small, weak, or vulnerable. It often conveys another character's dominance or power over the subject.
- c. Low angle: The camera is placed lower than the subject and points upward to make the subject appear large, consequential, or authoritative. This technique is usually used to emphasize a character's power and greatness.

2. Shot Size

Shot size refers to the subject's size in the frame and the amount of surrounding environment or context included in the image. There are three types: close-up, medium, and long shots.

a. Close-up Shot

1) Extreme close-up

Focus on tiny details, such as eyes, lips, rings, or other small objects, to show significant or symbolic information.

Frequently used to highlight intense emotions, tension, or essential elements of the story.

2) Medium close-up

Showing the subject from the chest up combines the focus on the character's emotions with some environmental context.

3) Close-up

Showing a face or object very closely, usually from the neck, to emphasize emotions, facial expressions, or essential details.

b. Medium Shot

1) Medium shot

Showing the subject from the viewpoint balances the focus on the character and the surrounding context. This technique is frequently used for dialogue or character interaction.

2) Knee shot

Showing the subject from the knees up shows actions involving the lower body, such as walking or standing.

c. Long Shot

1) Extreme long shot

The subject appears very small in the frame, primarily focusing on the environment or landscape to give context to the scene's location. This technique is often used to establish the setting at the beginning of a scene.

2) Full shot

Showing the subject in its entirety, from head to toe, reveals the subject's entire body, including posture, clothing, and gestures. The focus remains on the subject; however, the environment is also visible.

3) Medium long shot

The medium-long shot has the same framing as the knee shot but differs in its visual context and focus. The knee shot focuses on the action the character performs without any social interaction, whereas the medium-long shot has social interaction.

3. Composition

Composition in cinematography refers to the arrangement of visual elements within the frame to create balance and support the narrative of the movie. In composition, there are two types: symmetry and asymmetry, as well as depth.

a. Symmetry and Asymmetry

Symmetrical composition occurs when elements in the frame are arranged equally on both sides, often using a center point or imaginary line as a guide. It can give a sense of harmony, order, stability, or structured beauty. Conversely, in asymmetrical composition, the visual elements are unbalanced, creating a contrast between the right and left sides of the frame to evoke tension, discomfort, or more interesting dynamics. This composition often creates drama or focuses on a particular element.

b. Depth

Depth refers to the illusion of depth in the frame, making the image look more three-dimensional. There are three types of depth: plane of depth, shallow depth of field, and deep depth of field.

1) Plane of depth

The placement of the subject in various planes within the frame space—foreground, middle ground, and background—provides a rich visual dimension. It leads the audience's eye through the different elements in the image.

2) Shallow depth of field

Only certain parts are in focus (usually the main subject), while the background is blurred, which highlights the subject and reduces distractions.

3) Deep depth of field

All elements, from the foreground to the background, appear sharp and show all the details, making them perfect for complex scenes that focus on numerous objects.

B.7 Review of Related Research

This research relies on several relevant articles or academic papers to support and enhance its value. Strong arguments can impact such supporting research. Therefore, acquiring these resources is essential to strengthening this research study.

First, “The Feminine Mystique for Educated Young Women in Sylvia Plath’s *The Bell Jar*,” the research by Gómez et al. (2021). The research examines how Esther Greenwood’s character as a young, educated woman represents American women in the 1950s-1960s who struggled with social expectations and the idealized image of being a woman, as her ideas clash with these expectations and the idealized image of women at the time, causing her anxiety and frustration.

Second, “Woman’s Fight For Emancipation as Reflected in Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*,” the research by Lahinda et al. (2021). The research analyses women’s fight for emancipation in *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë (1847). The result of this analysis depicts Jane Eyre’s struggle for women’s liberation. Her fight for women’s emancipation encompasses several aspects: achieving independence, securing educational rights, gaining ownership rights, combating workplace inequality, male domination, and social traditions.

Third, “The Haunted Minds of Women: A Feminist Analysis of Shirley Jackson’s *The Haunting of Hill House*” is a research study by Alessia Spedito (2023). The research examined the portrayal of women’s mental illness and its causes in Shirley Jackson’s novel, *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959), using Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) as a framework. The result of this study is that the main character is pressured and trapped in housewife idealizations and patriarchy; hence, she has not fully explored her identity, and the pressure that she had driven her to mental instability and led her to suicide in the end.

Fourth, “Escaping from Women’s Marginalization in Hollywood Film Industry in T.J. Reid’s *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*,” the research by Jurianto et al. (2023). The study examined the issue of women’s marginalization in Taylor Jenkins Reid’s *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, focusing on the main character, Evelyn Hugo. She received marginalization from three aspects. Evelyn Hugo faced oppression in three main areas: First, in the domestic sphere, she dealt with pressure from her father and an unsupportive environment limiting her freedom. Second, in the Hollywood movie industry, she encountered gender discrimination, stereotypes, and unequal career opportunities. Third, in the media and the public, she was often objectified based on her looks and personal life, overshadowing her talents and accomplishments.

The studies mentioned above support the researcher. Although each study examines different aspects of the topic, they collectively contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the theories that support this research. These studies make the findings more evident by addressing various dimensions and strengthening the research's conclusions.

