

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

B.1. Theoretical Framework

Here, theoretical frameworks are used to examine the research topic that has been proposed:

B.1.1 Gender Stereotypes

Stereotypes are commonly applied by certain groups as a fixed reference to judge other groups. They involve the development and persistence of rigid assumptions about a group of people, often ignoring individual differences. These generalized perceptions are then used to categorize or define all members of the group in the same way (Ismiati, 2018). Brannon (2016) highlights that gender stereotypes are beliefs regarding the psychological traits, characteristics, and activities deemed appropriate for males and females. Such beliefs shape how men and women are perceived within a culture, reinforcing societal expectations about their roles and behaviors. For instance, women are often expected to prioritize domestic responsibilities, such as housework, over professional careers, particularly in the context of being a wife within a family. This reflects a societal stereotype about women that contributes to the broader construction of gender roles in the community.

The construction of gender in society differentiates men and women based on traits associated with femininity and masculinity. Sandra L. Bem's concept of the BSRI (Bem Sex Role Inventory) suggests that femininity and masculinity are independent dimensions, allowing individuals to be classified as masculine,

feminine, androgynous, or undifferentiated. Even today, society tends to categorize individuals primarily within the binary framework of masculine or feminine. According to Constantinople's definition, within traditional notions of femininity and masculinity, attributes such as traits, appearance, interests, and behaviors are considered conventionally characteristic of women and men. Consequently, these traditional views, deeply ingrained in societal norms, continue to perpetuate gender stereotypes and influence the construction of gender roles.

Simone de Beauvoir's traditional perspective on gender construction emphasizes that "to be feminine is to present oneself as weak, futile, passive, and submissive". Femininity, as applied to women, involves societal expectations of passivity, docility, and weakness. In contrast, men are portrayed as embodying independence and freedom, which not only grant them social value but also enhance their "manly prestige". Men enjoy greater personal freedom compared to women, who face numerous restrictions. Societal stereotypes dictate that men must conform to masculine traits, and any display of femininity is often ridiculed, labeling them as "sissy" (Arifatin, 2019). Similarly, women are pressured to adhere to stereotypical feminine roles, which frequently result in systemic inequalities and social injustices.

Society imposes specific expectations on women to align with ideals of femininity. These expectations include being gentle, warm, empathetic, emotional, and dependent. Additionally, beauty standards, which emphasize a woman's physical appearance, such as being well-dressed and delicate, often serve as a means to restrict women's rights and autonomy (Tang, 2021). Women are constrained by these societal norms, as they are encouraged to exhibit feminine traits rather than

masculine ones. This disparity extends to societal privileges, where women often lack equal standing compared to men due to stereotypes portraying them as emotional and weak. Furthermore, traditional gender roles dictate that women, perceived as physically incapable of performing strenuous tasks or "male jobs," are relegated to domestic responsibilities and roles as housewives, especially in patriarchal societies.

In patriarchal societies, women often face significant disadvantages and lack equal access to opportunities compared to men. Such societies uphold the belief that women should embody qualities of submission, dependence, and modesty, while men are expected to exhibit wisdom and power. Faithful wives are typically tasked with managing household duties, including maintaining the home and raising children. As Sultana (2016) explains, "The term patriarchy refers to male dominance in both the public and private spheres". This dynamic underscores the persistent inequalities women face, as they are seldom treated equally within either societal or domestic contexts. Traditionally, women have occupied subordinate roles, while men have assumed dominant positions in both spheres.

Historically, women have been viewed as inferior to men. They have often been perceived as naturally weaker, overly emotional, and incapable of engaging in tasks that require physical strength or intellectual prowess (Peng, 2019). These assumptions have perpetuated stereotypes that confine women to domestic roles. Myths surrounding women's supposed inferiority have significantly influenced their status in both social and legal contexts. Peng (2019) highlights that women have frequently been discouraged from owning property, and even when they do, ownership often transfers to their husbands upon marriage, as was customary under

English law. This reflects a societal expectation that married women surrender control of their property to their husbands, further reinforcing gender inequality.

In the 19th century, particularly during the Victorian era, gender stereotypes began to take root in society, especially those directed toward women (Lewin, 1984c). Following the Industrial Revolution, the daily lives of people in Europe and North America experienced major changes. Men started working outside the home to earn a living, while women were expected to remain at home to manage household responsibilities and care for their children (Brannon, 2017). In Canada which the settings of the *Anne with an E* series, being born a girl meant facing life experiences that were constantly tied to one's gender identity. Only girls from middle and upper-class families had access to education, while others were forced to work on farms or were abandoned in shelters for the poor (Strong-Boag, 1994).

Legally, women were often deemed incapable and irresponsible. Married women, in particular, faced significant legal barriers, as they were unable to seek legal assistance, file for divorce, or claim custody of their children in cases of separation. Gender roles were also sharply divided during this era. The concept of separating men's and women's domains became prevalent, with men viewed as assertive, competitive, and materialistic, while women were expected to embody religiosity, purity, kindness, and selflessness (Nsaidzedze, 2017). This division between male and female roles has shaped societal thinking and influenced psychological approaches to defining and measuring masculinity and femininity (Brannon, 2017).

Brannon explains that the perception of gender as two opposing categories originated in the Victorian era and the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century.

During this period, men were required to work outside the home to provide for their families, while women were expected to stay home and take care of household responsibilities and children. This division reinforced the belief that men and women had distinct roles and areas of influence. Brannon also emphasizes that this idea of gender opposition not only shaped societal views but also influenced psychological approaches to measuring masculinity and femininity.

Additionally, Brannon identifies key elements of gender stereotyping by referencing two different frameworks: Barbara Welter's concept of "The Cult of True Womanhood" for female stereotypes and Robert Brannon's "Male Sex Identity" for male stereotypes. Despite originating from different scholars, both of these frameworks are rooted in the values and gender norms established during the Victorian era.

Table 1 : Brannon's (2016) elements of stereotyping of women and men

"The Cult of True Womanhood"	"Male Sex Role Identity"
Piety: True Women are naturally religious	No Sissy Stuff: A stigma is attached to feminine characteristics
Purity: True Women were sexually uninterested.	The Big Wheel: Men need success and status.
Submissiveness: True Women were weak, dependent, and timid.	The Sturdy Oak: Men Should have toughness, confidence, and self-reliance
Domesticity: True Women's domain was in the home.	Give 'Em Hell: Men should have an aura of aggressions, daring, and violence.

Brannon (2016) summarizes the elements of gender stereotyping from various sources. Historically, stereotypes about women have been defined by the "Cult of True Womanhood," which includes four main traits: piety (being naturally religious), purity (being uninterested in sex), submissiveness (being weak,

dependent, and timid), and domesticity (belonging in the home). According to Brannon, women who embody these traits are seen as happy and powerful, while without them, their lives are considered lacking in meaning.

In contrast, stereotypes about men have been defined as "Male Sex Role Identity," which outlines what it means to be a real man. This includes four key elements: No Sissy Stuff (rejecting feminine qualities like nurturing, submissiveness, and patience), The Big Wheel (success), The Sturdy Oak (strength, confidence, and independence), and Give 'Em Hell (aggression, daring, and violence). Brannon (2016) also highlights the binary nature of these gender stereotypes, where women are expected to be weak, while men are expected to be strong.

B.2 Impact of Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are prevalent in many aspects of life, including education, employment, and careers. Like other stereotypes, they can carry both positive and negative implications. However, the effects of gender stereotypes are significant and far-reaching, often restricting individual potential and perpetuating inequality in various areas such as the workplace, education, and personal relationships. Eagly and Karau argue that these stereotypes contribute to the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles, as female gender roles are often perceived to conflict with the qualities associated with leadership.

For example, women may face challenges in advancing their careers due to the stereotype that they are less suited for leadership, while men may feel compelled to adhere to traditional ideals of masculinity, which can negatively impact their emotional well-being. Gender stereotypes not only influence societal perceptions

of who is deemed "fit" for leadership but also create obstacles for women leaders in their professional lives. Brannon (2017) further explains that even when overt discrimination becomes less socially acceptable, gender stereotypes continue to operate in more subtle ways, such as implicit bias and benevolent sexism. These forms may not always be visible, but they still limit opportunities and reinforce inequality.

These stereotypes vary across societies and cultures, yet their presence remains a common factor that shapes perceptions of men and women. While they can have both positive and negative effects on individuals, gender stereotypes are a key factor contributing to the persistent issues surrounding gender inequality.

B.3 Film Synopsis

Season three of *Anne with an E* continues the story of Anne Shirley-Cuthbert (played by Amybeth McNulty) as she embarks on a journey of self-exploration, delving into her past and confronting new experiences in Avonlea. This season marks a significant point in Anne's growth toward adulthood, while also expanding on key themes such as friendship, love, equality, and social justice.

At the age of 16, Anne becomes increasingly eager to learn about her biological parents. Her search for identity leads her to travel beyond Avonlea in hopes of uncovering the truth. Although Marilla initially hesitates to support Anne's decision, Anne remains determined. With encouragement from her friends, she believes that learning about her past is an essential part of understanding herself.

This season also brings attention to significant social issues, particularly through the introduction of Ka'kwet, a girl from the Mi'kmaq Indigenous

community, who forms a bond of friendship with Anne. However, Ka'kwet's story takes a heartbreaking turn when she is taken by the government and placed in a residential assimilation school, where Indigenous children are stripped of their cultural identity and separated from their families. Although Anne and her friends attempt to help, the oppressive colonial system presents overwhelming barriers that make the situation increasingly challenging.

In addition, the emotional tension between Anne and Gilbert Blythe (played by Lucas Jade Zumann) intensifies throughout the season. Although Gilbert initially courts Winifred "Winnie" Rose (Ashleigh Stewart), he gradually realizes that his true feelings are for Anne. At the same time, Anne also comes to terms with her own feelings for Gilbert, though she struggles to express them. After a series of emotional conflicts and uncertainties, they finally acknowledge their love for each other in a deeply heartfelt moment.

By the end of the season, Anne learns that she has been accepted to Queen's College, marking the beginning of a new chapter in her life. Before her departure, she and Gilbert finally express their love for one another through heartfelt letters. Meanwhile, Diana Barry (portrayed by Dalila Bela) is faced with a personal dilemma, and supporting characters such as Ruby Gillis, Josie Pye, and Cole MacKenzie also experience meaningful developments in their own storylines.

B.4 Review of Related Research

To prove the authenticity of this paper, the researcher lists some previous studies that have been carried out by previous researchers. The researcher finds some research that used the same corpus of *Anne with an E Series* with various research concepts and theories used.

The first study is conducted by Haifa Rahma (2023) entitled “*The Implications of Patriarchal Culture toward Gender Discrimination Behavior in Anne with an E Movie Series*” investigates how patriarchal norms shape gender-based discrimination within the *Anne with an E* series. The research applies a qualitative descriptive approach, examining specific scenes and character dialogues that reflect unequal treatment toward women. Data were obtained through observation and documentation methods, supported by various references from books, journals, and online sources. This study is framed through the lens of liberal feminist theory, particularly drawing on Naomi Wolf’s ideas about power feminism and gender equality. The findings suggest that patriarchal values in Avonlea society give rise to discrimination against women, especially in areas such as education, work, marriage, and autonomy. In response, the female characters display various forms of resistance, including seeking education, challenging traditional gender roles, speaking out publicly, and participating in political life. Ultimately, the study concludes that the series delivers a strong feminist narrative, highlighting how women confront and challenge oppressive social norms in a historical context.

A second relevant study was carried out by R. Ay Sulthania Bilqis (2022) with the title “*Struggle Against Gender Inequality in Anne with an E (2019)*”. This research focuses on how gender inequality is depicted in the third season of the Netflix series *Anne with an E*, particularly in relation to the experiences of the main character, Anne Shirley Cuthbert. The study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach, with data gathered through scene and dialogue analysis, interpreted using a Marxist feminist perspective. Screenshots and dialogue excerpts are used

to illustrate key forms of gender injustice, including exploitation, educational limitations, workplace discrimination, sexual harassment, and restricted freedom of speech. The results indicate that both capitalist and patriarchal structures contribute to the marginalization of women in the series. Furthermore, the study highlights how Anne gradually responds to these injustices by asserting her voice and taking action, symbolizing the broader themes of female resistance and empowerment. This research reinforces the idea that education and awareness are central to breaking cycles of oppression, while also showing how media and literature can serve as powerful platforms for addressing and challenging gender inequality.

The latest relevant studies are form A study by Celina Natalia Sitorus et al. (2023), titled “Analisis Wacana Kritis Girl Feminism Serial *Anne with an E* Season 3 Episode 6, 7, dan 8”, explores how Girl Feminism is portrayed in selected episodes of the series. Using a qualitative approach with Sara Mills’s critical discourse analysis and supported by Nancy Hartsock’s feminist standpoint theory, the research identifies how female characters resist patriarchal norms. The analysis of ten scenes shows that characters like Anne, Diana, and Miss Stacy challenge gender roles through actions such as defending victims of harassment and advocating for education and equality. The study concludes that the series reflects feminist resistance through the perspectives of marginalized young women.

From the previous studies above, share a common focus on themes of feminism and gender, particularly in relation to the portrayal of main female characters. However, this current research differs in terms of its theoretical framework and analytical findings. The novelty of this study lies in its emphasis

on how female characters confront and resist gender stereotypes, highlighting the strategies they use in doing so. Unlike the earlier works, this study applies Linda Brannon's theory of gender stereotypes as its main analytical lens. Through this approach, the research aims to provide fresh perspectives on how women challenge social expectations placed upon them. The findings are expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of gender stereotypes in media and how they are resisted by female figures in film narratives. Additionally, the previous studies reviewed have provided valuable references and helped the researcher establish a strong theoretical foundation while clearly identifying the distinctions between existing research and the current study.

