

## **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

This chapter contains an explanation of the importance of this research to be researched. TV shows as a medium of expression have a role for entertainment and a reflection of the conditions of reality in society, especially the object of this research, which finds a representation that exists in TV media depicted by characters in TV series. The chapter contains background, research problem, research objectives, research advantage, framework of thinking, the previous study, systematics of research writing, and definition of key terms.

### **1.1 Research Background**

The discussion about women has been fascinating across a range of literary and scientific publications. This is demonstrated by the publications that are dedicated to featuring women as the subject of conversation; examples of this include books, drama, novels, poems, short tales, films, and TV shows, where women are included as compelling characters or subjects. Many topics are discussed regarding women in all media, particularly in literature; these topics may relate to stories about women that are positive or negative. According to Kaur, women have historically been the ones that suffer the most from the severe patriarchal conditions that have existed (Kaur, 2023). Patriarchal societies often place women in a subordinate position to men, which means resulting in discrimination or other forms of injustice. This happens to women in all places.

Women in the West, as portrayed in their literature, are often portrayed as domestic, submissive, and trapped in archaic gender roles. Women who do social things outside the home are often not recognized and are considered a laughing stock in the individualistic western culture. It is proven by the fact that in the historical past of the 18th and 19th centuries, as cited by Hasan, they were positioned as roles that must behave and receive education based on male preferences and focus on directing women towards physical or bodily matters rather than thought or education (Md. Mahmudul Hasan, 2017). This patriarchal condition still persists today, even though

the idea of social justice has developed much better; however, this has not been able to create fair and equitable relations between men and women in all aspects of social life.

Nowadays, women in the west have experienced changes and developments in various aspects of social life where the concepts of emancipation and gender equality are familiar, as seen from the active movements concerned with women in their countries. Reporting from the economist quoted by the journal by Hasanah (Hasanah et al., 2020), she said that in 2017, a report on the progress of gender equality around the world shows that European countries are at the top of the results. This development includes women participating more in various fields in the world of work, are in higher education, and get maternal and child care facilities. In addition, in social life, western women are not far from the role of religion or beliefs that influence behavior, which is dominated by Christianity, although many of them are gradually not very religious. As stated by Hasan (Hasan, 2017), it is described in English literature that western society, including its women, adheres to Christianity, which shows that western women have religious beliefs since the past. But Baharudin also said (Baharudin, 2014) in his work that in this modern era, secularism that prioritizes rationality over faith and is not affiliated with religion tends to be taken up by western society.

In contrast to the views of fellow western women in the past, westerners view easterners or people in the Muslim world as a group that is attached to stereotypes; stereotypes here mean that they are people who are considered backward, and one of them is referring to Muslim women who are also considered to be oppressed by brutal Muslim men. As argued by Hasewinkle in his work (Hasewinkle, 2022), that phenomenon can be seen from the interaction between the Europeans and the Ottomans in history, where the British discovered Muslim women, and the Harem is the assumption of slavery by Muslims to their women. Actually, this is a not entirely correct interpretation of Muslim women and the harem that has been popular. Muslim women are individuals who follow the teachings of Islam, which includes a set of beliefs, practices, and roles based on the Quran and Hadith, as well as local cultural

traditions. One of them is the use of the veil worn by Muslim women as a cultural identity and adherence to beliefs.

Muslim women in Muslim-majority countries wear the veil for a variety of reasons, such as religious orders and cultural attributes. Many of them wear the hijab, but it is undeniable that others do not wear the hijab and have various interpretations of the meaning of the hijab even though they are all Muslims. As a journal by Wagner (Wagner et al., 2012) stated, they wear veil according to their interpretation, affiliated with their beliefs, identity marker, culture, or fashion preferences, without coercion. The veil worn by Muslims also symbolizes the Islamic revival movement among Muslim students, where the veil is an expression of support and solidarity with minority Muslim women around the world. The social life of Muslim women also runs not far from the influence of religion, namely Islam itself, and they are currently facilitated the right to education and employment. It is inevitable that there are still injustices that occur to Muslim women that make their rights restricted; this case is condemned by the Muslim world and does not become a generalization as a condition of all Muslim women.

Muslim women in western society face the challenge of reconciling Islam's strict teachings with the prevailing culture. Muslim women face poor social support, interpersonal prejudice, and discrimination in the workplace. The issues about discrimination muslim women in the workplace is supported by Weichselbaumer's article (Doris Weichselbaumer, 2020), which confirms the main hypothesis of the article: Discrimination occurs against immigrant women, and the level of discrimination increases if they are Muslim women who wear the hijab. Muslim women who commit to wearing the hijab tend to be judged as having no personality, hobbies, or ability to have fun. This is an example of a view that is not entirely true, as Muslim women are as diverse as any other group of women. As Zeinab Nour (Nour, 2021) states in her article, she argues that the need to integrate herself or her eastern family in the new society, i.e., maintaining a balance between conservative heritage

and the principles of the new and free host society in the West, as these are the problems of immigrant Muslim women.

One of the TV series that is oriented towards a group regarding the Muslim women community in the context of western life is “We Are Lady Parts”. This TV series tells the story of a group of Muslim women in London who have activities to become musicians in a punk-rock band while wearing a veil at the same time. The TV series is produced by British writer and director Nida Manzoor and is broadcast on British and American television. This TV series shows how groups of Muslim women can have their right to express themselves, such as being musicians, being housewives and workers, being artists, being educated students, having hobbies, and participating and interacting in activities in society.

In addition, this TV series depicts Muslim women dealing with several issues, such as Muslim women characters who have difficulty dealing with negative stereotypes where Muslim women who have jobs related to music and art are considered bad women. Muslim women who have a job along with the role of being a mother and wife in the household are considered to put aside household duties and prefer a career; on the other hand, they are also considered too restrained because they have to carry out the role of housewife in the house. Muslim women in this series are also portrayed as having part of the queer community, which is not part of Islamic traditions and values, all of whom face pressures from both conservative and moderate perspectives at the same time.

The Muslim women face the tension between adhering to the traditional and strict teachings of Islam and the culture of the western world in this series. The issues of Muslim women that are clearly depicted in the content regarding Muslim women with various beliefs regarding the use of hijab, household affairs, hobbies, work environment, and the lives of Muslim women in the context of western life should not create a narrow interpretation of Muslim women who follow conservative teachings tend to be oppressed or constrained, and those who adhere to moderate perspectives

can be freely defined without respecting the limits of the religious rules they believe in. Therefore, analyzing the image of Muslim women in this TV series using the representation perspective and Islamic feminism theory is necessary.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

This paper identifies some of the issues concerning Muslim women in the West. Based on the context described earlier in the background, the problem related to this research is how Muslim women are often misrepresented by Western literary work, movies, or other media.

So from this problem, the researcher generates research questions to limit the focus of the research. The research questions in this study are:

1. How are the characters of Muslim women characterized in the series “We Are Lady Parts” (2021)?
2. How are Muslim women represented in this series “We Are Lady Parts” (2021)?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

The general objective of this study is to identify the image of Muslim women portrayed in the TV series “We are the Lady Parts” (2021).

Specific objectives include:

1. To analyze how the characters of Muslim women are characterized in the series “We Are The Lady Parts” (2021).
2. To analyze how Moslem women are represented in the series “We Are Lady Parts” (2021).

## **1.4 Research Significance**

The way women are portrayed in TV series and movies can influence how society perceives women in general. Theoretically, this research is expected to contribute to our understanding of how these representations impact women's identities and societal perceptions created through media (TV series). Practically, this research can be a reference for further research in similar issues or fields.

### **1.5 Framework of Thinking**

A framework of thinking is a tool used to direct the research. The tool is a set of ideas used to structure the research. The framework of thinking shows the scheme of research in outlining the goals and objectives of the research. According to (Sugiyono, 2014), the framework is a research flow that is used as a pattern or foundation for the researcher's thinking in conducting research on the intended object to be able to complete the direction of the problem formulation and research objectives. So departing from the research problems that have been discussed, the researcher concludes two research questions to be answered, namely how the character of Muslim women are characterized in the TV series and how Muslim women are represented in the TV Series.

To answer the first question about how the character of Muslim women are characterized in the TV series, the researcher use the theory of Islamic feminism according to Fatima Mernissi to help find out and see the comparison of the character of Muslim women created and shown in the TV series with the rights of Muslim women according to the principles of Islamic feminism. The researcher first observes how Muslim women are characterised in the TV series “We are Lady Parts” by analysing aspects such as dialogue, body language, facial expressions, costumes, makeup, relationships with other characters, and their roles in the story followed by an explanation of how Islamic feminism theory defines the ideal Muslim woman to see if the characterisation is appropriate or not.

Through theoretical understanding, the following principles and rights of Muslim women in the perspective of Islamic feminism theory by Fatima Mernissi:

Muslim women have the right to education and full participation in public life. Islam was never intended to shackle women to a narrow domestic role (Mernissi, 1975). Education according to Mernissi is the most important effort for the first path of liberation for women, they can develop their abilities, equip them intellectually that will prevent them from the problem of early marriage, critical of injustices that harm them and the like. It will free them from the compulsion to accept various oppressions

so that they can be free and empowered so that they can also participate in public affairs that will benefit and prosper the community together.

Muslim women have an important role to play in building a just and sustainable society. Their voices and contributions also need to be considered in all aspects of life (Mernissi, 1975). Restricting women in almost every way so that they are not given the opportunity to participate in public affairs not only makes Arab countries waste human resources, Mernissi believes that it can make their countries difficult to develop and cannot compete with the productivity of countries like the West because it limits the developmental ideas that could have been born from women's skills if they were given the opportunity.

Patriarchy and discrimination against women are not teachings of Islam, but are socio-cultural constructions and interests of some male elites that must be resisted and eliminated (Mernissi, 1975). Mernissi believes that any form of discrimination or oppression such as patriarchy in Arab or Islamic societies is not something that is taught by Islam as a religion, but certain elites manipulate and twist it for their own interests. So she urges women's liberation efforts to break out of the entrenched patriarchal circle.

Women and men have different obligations and responsibilities in Islam, but this does not mean that they are not equal. Instead, this difference demonstrates complementarity and gender equality (Mernissi, 1999). Of course, there are biological and psychological differences between men and women, but that does not mean that there are rights between them that need to be differentiated or even reduced. Differentiating between women will lead to oppression because it seems to make women limited in their lives, which violates the human nature that has the right to life.

From these Muslim women's rights and principles in the perspective of Islamic feminism, the researcher compare and describe how Islamic feminism theory defines the ideal of Muslim women, then whether the portrayal of Muslim women characters

in the film is in accordance or different from the ideal definition, and explain how the portrayal can be called in accordance or different from the ideal definition.

The second research question use Stuart Hall's theory of representation to answer how Muslim women are represented in the TV series. This question intends to analyse how Muslim women characters are shown and portrayed in the TV series as media. In this study, representation is examined as a way to underlie the meaning of data in the form of texts and images taken from TV series objects. The analysis in this research uses Stuart Hall's Representation Theory with a constructivist representation approach, where the concepts of decoding and encoding are two important processes in representation, as Stuart Hall states in 'Work of Representation' that representation is an exchange of codes (Hall, 1997).

Encoding is the process by which the sender or creator of the message produces and conveys the message through representation. Senders select and organize signs, symbols, and language to create the meaning they want to convey. Decoding is the process by which the audience interprets and understands the meaning of the represented message (Hall, 2020). So the interpretation by the audience is based on the use of its own knowledge, experience and culture to interpret the meaning of the message. Therefore, encoding refers to the way the message or representation is created, while decoding refers to the way the message is interpreted by the audience. is interpreted by the audience. The analysis start by detailing how the TV series “We Are Lady Parts” shows the topics related to veil, education, work, freedom of expression, household in its scenes. Such as in the selection of actors, dialog, the use of character clothing, and other in-scene signs. According to Hall, he outlined three ways of decoding media messages such as dominant reading, which is when the audience receives the message as intended by the creator (Hall, 2020). For example, the depiction of a Muslim woman wearing full-body veil may be intended to be accepted as the reality that all Muslim women wear veil. Negotiated reading is when the audience accepts the message selectively or by adopting a more moderate view of the way of religion. Oppositional reading is when the audience rejects the message given by the



creator, by responding critically to the message or rejecting the interpretation given by the TV series.

### **1.6 Previous Study**

In thesis research, it is necessary to review previous study to prevent duplication, besides that the review of previous studies helps researchers to identify research gaps that have not been studied because however this research was inspired by previous studies on the same field. The review of previous study includes an explanation of the content of the research, the theory of the research, the differences between the previous study and this study and its contribution. The following includes an undergraduate thesis and journal :

The first previous study is entitled "The Image of Muslim Women in The Web Series "Sisterlillah" on the Youtube Teladan Cinema Channel" by Makiyah ( Makiyah, 2021), this previous research examines the image of Muslim women in the web series, the research is uses the Roland Barthes semiotic theory and also supported by using Quranic verses to describe and analyze how the female characters here are in accordance or not with the principles of pious Muslim women which results in a discussion of seven images or female characters that are in accordance with the expectations or criteria of women in the real Islamic rules such as the image of honest Muslim women, guarded from associations of origin and away from hostile conflicts that is tend to explain about social relations between fellow Muslim women.

The main differences between this previous study with this researcher's study is while the previous study used directly only the verses of the Koran to see the suitability of the image of women in the media with Muslim women according to the verses of the Koran, the researcher's study uses the theory of Islamic feminism to see the principles and rights of Muslim women in Islam to be compared with Muslim women depicted in the TV Series. The previous study focus on how the interaction of fellow muslim women in muslim society while this researcher's study is researching muslim women image with complex problem in it related to general society that mostly with non-

muslim and West culture. This previous study contributes to providing an understanding of how internal relationships between Muslim women interact in accordance with Islamic rules.

Second, the previous study is the thesis by Haristin (Astuti, 2021) entitled "*Citra Perempuan Berhijab dalam Film Bulan Terbelah di Langit Amerika*", research about the image of muslim women with the use and interpretation about veil for Muslim women whose context is in the western world, this previous research use semiotic theory and also supported by Koranic verses to describe the principles of women in accordance with Islamic teachings. The research is resulting to produced three images of Muslim women including, Muslim women who take care of the domestic, Muslim women who cover the aurat, Muslim women as the foundation of religion, Muslim women with the use of modern hijab.

The difference between previous research and this researcher's study is the problem of previous research shows that the image of Muslim women in this film focuses on how the wearing of hijab in accordance with traditional Islamic values and emphasises that the image of Muslim women can contribute to domestic and public affairs while this writer's research examines the complexity of the lives of Muslim women who have diverse ways of religion even within fellow Muslim communities (not only about hijab) living in the west as well as their efforts to play a role in maintaining the image of Muslim women in the eyes of the western world.

Third, the previous study is thesis by Mauliedia entitled "*Representasi perempuan dalam film religi: Analisis wacana Sara Mills dalam film Merindu Cahaya De Amstel*". The research examines the representation of muslim women characters in the movie, and this study using Stuart Hall's Representation theory and Sarah Mills' theoretical concept of object-subject and the readers position to see how are the gender stereotype in this movie about muslim women. The research is resulting several representations of women from the movie of Merindu Cahaya De Amstel, those are the women as an image who have the right to be better, women are shown as an image who

have good morals, women who always obey the teachings of their religion, women who are always able to work hard, women who have patience, and last, women who have strength and courage in every decision in their life (Mauliedia, 2022).

The difference in research shows that this previous study produce uniform representation findings where Muslim women are in accordance with strict Islamic teachings, while the researcher's study has diverse representation findings regarding Muslim women because the character of Muslim women studied is more than one. The previous study tried to explore the problem of lasting misrepresentation while the researcher's study explored not only the misrepresentation but the diversity of images of Muslim women who represent moderate and conservative. So, the previous study contributes to an understanding and development of misrepresentastion about muslim women to the better representation of muslim women.

Forth, a Journal entitled “The Portrayal of Moderate Islam Representations in Ms. Marvel (2022) TV Series” by Hanifah, Awaludin, Assiddiqi (Hanifah et al., 2024), The research discusses the representation of the Muslim community, especially a female superhero character named Kamala Khan who represents moderate Islam in this Marvel film series. This research uses Cultural Studies theory and Stuart Hall's representation theory. This research uses the negative Muslim stereotype to be positive stereotype in the media as a hypothesis that proves the image formation of a certain group identity (Muslim) in the media that the Muslim community is not always the same as the Muslim stereotype associated with 9/11 or terrorism. So this previous research reveals the influence on the positive image of the Muslim community portrayed in popular media, that is match with the hypothesis.

The main difference between this previous study and the researcher's study is the terms of the object and focus of research, previous study tends to seek how the representation of moderate Muslims has a positive or negative impact on the image of Muslims in western countries, while the researcher's study explores the diversity of images devoted to Muslim women portrayed by western media, the contribution of previous research

helps to understand that the development of the image of Muslims in the western world today is not always negative.

All of the four previous studies, there is no research that analyzes the same object so that plagiarism or similarity of research can clearly be avoided. Previous studies mostly use the same main theory as the researcher's research although there were differences in supporting theories and the focus of research questions. So that a number of previous studies become a reference in seeing how the researcher's research can be developed into a newer one by developing gaps from previous studies also the previous studies becomes an insight into how research analysis works.

### **1.7 Systematics of Research Writing**

Systematic of Research writing is needed in this paper so that research can be understood with a clear structure and sequence. Therefore, the systematics of this research is divided into five chapters. The first chapter contains an introduction which includes a discussion of the background of the problem, problem formulation, research objectives, research advantage, framework of thinking, previous research, definition of keyterms and systematics writing of this research. The Second chapter contains a literature review with a discussion of an overview of theories such a theory of islamic feminism, theory of representation and theory of mimetic. The third chapter contains research methods that contain explanation about methodology that used, approach, sources of research data, data collection techniques and analysis techniques, and sample of data. The forth Chapter discusses the results of the thoughts obtained from the analysis between existing data and theories. The analysis of the Image of Muslim Women in TV Series uses a qualitative descriptive method that refers to the theory of Representation by Stuart Hall and Islamic Feminism theory. The fifth chapter contains a description of the conclusions obtained from the results of the researcher's analysis, suggestions from the result of the research, and also contains a bibliography at the end.

## 1.8 Definition of Key Terms

The key words applied in this study need to be explained to avoid misinterpretation of these key words so that the reader understands the same definition as the researcher intended, therefore the following is an explanation of some key words :

### 1. Image

Image is an impression that arises because of the understanding of something real that arises because of information. Image is a person's role where the task they perform in every circumstance and the way they act when trying to solve a particular issue affect how other see them (Sugihastuti, 1991). So image is an impression that arises because of the understanding of something real that arises because of information. Image of an identity is related with some aspects such as physically, style, behaviour, and how this identity or figure is viewed, interpreted by society.

### 2. Muslim Women

Muslim women are individuals who follow the teachings of Islam, which includes a set of beliefs, practices, and roles based on the Quran and Hadith, as well as local cultural traditions.

### 3. TV Series

TV series is creative television content in the form of videos that are broadcast serially or sequentially over a relatively long period of time. According to Pandji, A TV series is a creative product that is a series of television programmes consisting of a series of episodes that are interrelated and form a larger story. TV series are often focussed on complex narratives, strong characters, and compelling storylines built over multiple episodes (Pangaji, 2021).

### 4. Representation

According to the Dictionary, representation has several meanings, namely the act of representing, meaning the act or attempt to act on behalf of or represent another person, group, or idea. Representation generally means a depiction or

presentation that represents something. The meaning of representation in a social context relates to the way a particular person or group is portrayed in the media, literature, or public discussion. It includes issues such as stereotypes, identity, and how certain groups are represented in society.

#### 5. Islamic Feminism

Islamic feminism is a movement that supports justice for Muslim women in all aspects by combining the principles of gender equality with the teachings of Islam. Islamic feminism is a movement that fights against the oppression and patriarchal traditions experienced by women in Muslim societies, adapting Islamic religious values and cultural contexts. According to Riffat Hasan quoted by (Suryorini, 2012), Islamic feminism seeks to address the liberation of human beings, both women and men, from the slavery of traditionalism in politics, economics or anything else that prevents human beings from actualising the vision of the Qur'an.

