

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an introduction to the research and provides a general overview of the study. It explains the reasons for choosing the research topic and highlights the importance of the study in the field of literary studies, particularly gender studies. This chapter is divided into several sections, namely the background of the research, identification of the research, formulation of the research, purpose of the research, significance of the research, and definition of key terms. Each section is systematically arranged to help readers understand the focus, scope, and direction of the study. Through this chapter, the researcher presents the research problems, objectives, and expected contributions of the study, which serve as the foundation for the subsequent chapters.

1.1 Background of the Research

Drama *Under the Gaslight* by Augustin Daly's is a piece of literature that depicts psychological and social conflicts in the relationships between the characters, with a particular emphasis on the power dynamics between men and women. Drama has the capacity to reflect social reality directly as a literary genre that depicts conflict through the words and deeds of its characters. Drama reflects human experiences and provides insight into social and psychological processes, allowing audiences to understand character behavior and interpersonal dynamics more deeply Teasdale, (2021).The tensions and manipulations that the female characters in *Under the Gaslight* endure demonstrate how drama may be a potent tool for exposing gender inequality and social power dynamics. The psychological

pressure experienced by the female character in this drama reflects the imbalance of power in social relationships. Women are depicted in unequal positions, where their voices, opinions, and desires are often ignored. This situation reflects a patriarchal social system that still places women in subordinate positions within society and the family.

One of the most important ideas for comprehending the battles faced by the female characters in this play is oppression. Iris Marion Young, (1990) defines oppression as the unfair circumstances that people or groups face as a result of the systematic and ongoing dominance and misuse of power. Although oppression can manifest through social and psychological manipulation, it is not always in the form of physical violence. In the context of women , oppression frequently manifests as limitations on roles, curtailment of autonomy, and control over decision making. Oppression frequently functions in a subtle manner and becomes a regular part of daily social engagements. Instead of presenting themselves as blatant authority, these types of discrimination are frequently absorbed and seen as normal situations, even though they greatly affect a person's mental health. This trend can be identified in *Under the Gaslight*, where the female characters endure oppression that is not always clearly visible but instead reveals itself through routine control and sidelining, ultimately leading to their psychological suffering. The subordination of women in patriarchal societies can be better understood through feminist theories of oppression. Female oppression is not only caused by individual actions but is also deeply rooted in social, cultural, and institutional systems that favor men over women. Patriarchy is seen as a system that maintains male dominance and places women in weaker positions in both family and

society. In addition, women's oppression often appears in forms such as limited opportunities, discrimination, and lack of power, which continue to restrict women's freedom and roles in society (Dhileep & Baisel, 2024; Mufidah, 2024). Patriarchy is no longer understood as a single system but as a structure that operates through various aspects of social life, such as the economy, family, culture, and power relations. The study "Unveiling Patriarchy: A Systematic Review of Economic Violence Against Women" (2026), explains that patriarchy operates systemically through control of resources, employment opportunities, and social norms that place women in a weaker position. This system is not only visible in personal relationships but is also embedded in social institutions and policies that limit women's independence. Psychologically speaking, female oppression is frequently expressed via the denial of agency, emotional manipulation, and control rather than through obvious physical violence. In literary works, this kind of oppression is often shown via female characters who, as a consequence of male power, feel fear, insecurity, and helplessness. Laura Courtland exemplifies this theoretical idea in *Under the Gaslight*, where she is put in a defenseless situation where her freedom is limited and men's control over her choices is exerted. Her experience of oppression is subtle but persistent, showing how patriarchal power works by using psychological pressure rather than open force. By denying women self-determination and promoting male dominance as the social norm, this notion reinforces female oppression. This state is reflected in Laura Courtland's portrayal, where her identity and decisions are influenced by external authority rather than her own free will. Consequently, this study finds that the theory of female oppression is quite relevant because it offers a full

perspective on the portrayal of gender disparity and patriarchal power dynamics in *Under the Gaslight*. Using this theoretical framework, the play may be viewed as a literary piece as well as a critique of the societal structures that support the oppression of women.

In literature, character is a vital intrinsic element for conveying themes and messages. Abrams, (1999) contends that a character serves as a human depiction of values, ideas, and conflicts that reflect a particular social reality. The reader can comprehend how a social issue is presented and examined in literary works through the characters. *Under the Gaslight's* protagonist, Laura Courtland, is portrayed as a woman who is oppressed and restricted. He struggled to articulate his own will and was in a vulnerable position in his relationships with others

Although the subject of women's oppression has been extensively debated, the majority of previous research on the topic in literature has concentrated on the genres of poetry and novels. In contrast, in this field, theatrical works—especially those from the nineteenth century—have gotten far less scholarly study. Specifically, there are few studies that look at Augustine Dely's play *Under the Gaslight*, and there are even fewer that look at how the character of Laura Courtland embodies the subjugation of women. This dearth of targeted research points to a clear research gap that needs to be addressed more academically, notably in the context of drama as a medium that effectively depicts social conflict through character interaction and dialogue.

Considering this gap, it is crucial to examine how the character of Laura Courtland in *Under the Gaslight* portrays the oppression of women. Since problems of gender disparity and women's oppression continue to exist in modern

society, this research is important both academically and socially. Using feminist theory and oppression theory, this study seeks to advance feminist literary critique and increase knowledge of how patriarchal power dynamics and gender inequity are portrayed in theatrical literature. Additionally, it is anticipated that the study's conclusions will contribute to discussions on women's representation in literature and emphasize the significance of classical drama in tackling persistent social problems.

1.2 Identification of the Research

Augustin Daly's play, *Under the Gaslight*, depicts an unequal relationship between men and women. However, the oppression of female characters, particularly Laura Courtland, has not been widely discussed in depth in literary studies, especially in the drama genre. The oppression Laura experiences does not always take the form of physical violence but rather psychological pressure, manipulation, and restrictions on freedom of decision-making. Furthermore, most previous research has focused on the oppression of women in novels and poetry, leaving studies of classic plays like *Under the Gaslight* limited. Therefore, research is needed that specifically examines how Laura Courtland's character represents the oppression of women in a patriarchal system using feminist and oppression theories.

1.3 Limitation of the Research

One of the limitations of the research is found in the character Laura Courtland, because in this drama the reader or audience does not clearly find the definition or concept of female oppression that is explained clearly. The oppression

experienced by Laura is more shown through her limitations in making decisions, her dependence on other characters, and the emotional and social pressures that shape her position as a subordinate woman in the structure of society. The ambiguity of this concept often leads readers to only see Laura as a passive character without understanding that this condition is a form of systematic female oppression. Therefore, this limitation is what actually drives the researcher's interest in examining the representation of female oppression through the character of Laura Courtland more deeply.

1.4 Formulation of the Research

1. What forms of female oppression are experienced by Laura Courtland in the play *Under the Gaslight* by Augustin Daly?
2. What is the representation of female oppression reflected in the character of Laura Courtland in under the gaslighting by Augustin Daly ?

1.5 Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is to find out the representations of female oppression reflected in the character of Laura Courtland and to find out the forms of female oppression experienced by Laura Courtland in the play *Under the Gaslight* by Augustin Daly. Through this research, the writer expects to gain a deeper understanding of how female oppression is portrayed in the drama and how it reflects the condition of women within a patriarchal society.

1.6 Significance of the Research

1. For students

This research helps students deepen their understanding of feminist literary criticism, particularly in analyzing female oppression in literary works. By examining the character of Laura Courtland in *Under the Gaslight*, students can develop critical thinking skills in identifying gender inequality, patriarchal ideology, and power relations within literary texts. This study also serves as a useful reference for students conducting similar research in literature and gender studies.

2. For Lecturers

For lecturers, this research provides additional academic material for teaching feminist literary criticism, drama analysis, and gender studies in literature. The findings can be used as a case study to illustrate how feminist theories are applied in analyzing classic literary works, especially 19th-century American drama. It may also support lecturers in guiding students to critically examine issues of gender and social injustice in literary texts.

3. For Future Researcher

This research offers a foundation for future researchers who wish to explore feminist perspectives in literary studies. It opens opportunities for further studies on female oppression, resistance, and gender ideology in other literary works, authors, or historical periods. Future researchers may expand this study by applying different theoretical approaches, comparing multiple female characters, or analyzing performance interpretations and audience reception.

1.7 Definition of Key Term

1. Oppression

According to Iris Marion Young, (1999) oppression refers to structural conditions that limit the freedom and opportunities of a social group. In the context of women, female oppression operates through a patriarchal system that places women in subordinate positions (Walby, 1990). In this study, female oppression is represented through Laura Courtland's experiences in *Under the Gaslight*.

2. Character

Abrams (1999) defines a character as a fictional individual presented through actions and dialogue to convey themes and conflict in literary work. In this study, Laura Courtland functions as a representation of women's experiences within a patriarchal society.

3. Under the Gaslight

Under the gaslight is a 19th century melodramatic play written by Augustin Daly (1867). The drama depicts social life in a patriarchal society where women are often placed in subordinate and dependent positions. Through its characters and conflicts, the play highlights issues of power, gender inequality, and social injustice. One of the central female characters, Laura Courtland's, reflects the limited agency and vulnerability of women within this social structure, making the drama significant for examining the representation of female oppression.

4. Representation

In the context of literature, representation refers to how various groups, identities, and experiences are depicted. This includes race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, disability, religion, and other aspects of identity. Authentic representation ensures that these groups are portrayed with nuance, complexity, and respect, rather than through stereotypes or one-dimensional characters. (Lestari, 2025; Kakembo & Annet, 2025).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents the review of related literature that supports this research. It explains the main theories and previous studies related to female oppression, feminist literary criticism, and character analysis in literary works, especially in drama. This chapter is divided into several sections, namely theoretical review, review of related findings, and conceptual framework. The theoretical review discusses the key concepts used in this study, such as oppression, female oppression, and character and characterization. The review of related findings presents previous studies that are relevant to this research, while the conceptual framework explains the relationship between the theories and the focus of the study. Through this chapter, the researcher provides the theoretical foundation and supporting studies that help analyze the representation of female oppression in the character of Laura Courtland in *Under the gaslight*.

2.1 Theoretical Review

1. Oppression

Oppression is a concept that describes a condition where individuals or groups experience unfair treatment due to power imbalances in society. According to Iris Marion Young (1990), oppression is not simply a discriminatory act perpetrated by one person against another but rather a structural condition. According to Khader (2024), oppression cannot be explained simply as a reduction in individual freedom. Rather, oppression is a structural injustice that places certain groups in unequal positions through institutions, social norms, and power relations. Khader emphasizes that what makes oppression wrong is not simply the loss of freedom, but rather the fact

that it maintains unequal social relations (structural inequality).

Young's explanation is reinforced by research by Yulianci and Thohiriyah (2026), who stated that oppression against women is a complex social problem that persists in various aspects of life. Women still experience restrictions on expressing opinions, lack of control over their own bodies, unequal access to education, and limited economic opportunities. Furthermore, oppression against women is not always manifested through direct acts of discrimination, but also through social and cultural norms that normalize patriarchal dominance. As a result, women often experience social discrimination, rights restrictions, gender-based violence, and the loss of freedom to determine their own identity and life choices.

Furthermore, Yulianci and Thohiriyah (2026) explain that oppression operates through social structures, institutions, and cultural norms that limit women's ability to develop and participate equally in social life. This oppression not only affects women's physical condition but also impacts their psychological, emotional, identity, and social relationships. Thus, oppression is understood as a form of injustice that impacts various dimensions of women's lives, not just direct acts of violence.

The concept of oppression serves as an important foundation for this research in understanding the various forms of oppression experienced by Laura Courtland in the play "Under the Gaslight." Based on this concept, this study identifies that Laura's oppression is represented in several forms: social oppression, psychological oppression, emotional oppression, identity oppression, economic oppression, patriarchal authority, and gender expectations. These seven forms demonstrate that Laura's experience is not merely a personal matter but a representation of a patriarchal system that limits women's rights, identity, freedom, and social position in society.

2. Female Oppression

Female oppression is a condition where women experience various forms of injustice, discrimination, rights restrictions, and subordination caused by the patriarchal system and the unequal power relations between men and women. According to Salvianny and Nurcahyani (2020), female oppression occurs when the patriarchal system controls women's lives, limits their freedom, and places women in a lower position than men. In line with this opinion, Güneş (2017) explains that oppression against women is the result of a patriarchal social structure that maintains male dominance in various aspects of life, such as family, education, economics, politics, and culture. From Young's perspective (1990), oppression is not simply an individual's actions against other individuals, but rather a structural condition born from social institutions, norms, and societal practices that systematically limit the opportunities, power, and freedom of certain groups, including women. Therefore, female oppression can be understood as a condition where women experience restrictions on their rights, freedoms, identities, and life opportunities due to a patriarchal system that continues to reproduce gender inequality. In literary works, this oppression can be represented through various experiences experienced by female characters, such as psychological oppression, social oppression, emotional oppression, identity oppression, economic oppression, patriarchal authority domination, and gender role demands (gender expectations). These forms show how the patriarchal system influences women's lives and become the basis for analyzing the representation of oppression against Laura Courtland in the play *Under the Gaslight* by Augustin Daly.

3. Social Oppression

According to Homan, Everett, and Brown (2024), social oppression is a form of structural oppression that operates through social institutions, cultural norms, and unequal power relations. This systematically limits marginalized groups' access to opportunities, recognition, and full participation in society. Oppression arises not only from individual discriminatory actions but is also maintained by social systems that continuously reproduce inequality and social exclusion. This view aligns with the theory of Iris Marion Young (1990), which states that social oppression occurs when individuals or groups are systematically prevented from full participation in society due to discrimination, social norms, and unequal power relations. As a result, individuals experiencing oppression face rejection, discrimination, stigma, humiliation, and limitations in exercising their rights and freedoms as members of society.

In the play "Under the Gaslight," social oppression is represented through Laura Courtland's experience of being rejected by society because of her background and reputation. Laura is repeatedly excluded from respectable social circles, the target of gossip, and treated as someone unworthy of social acceptance. This situation suggests that Laura's opportunities and social relationships are determined more by societal assessments than by her personal abilities or character. Therefore, the dialogues analyzed in this study reveal that Laura experiences social oppression through exclusion, discrimination, stigmatization, and denial of equal social acceptance. These experiences reflect the concept of structural oppression as explained by Homan et al. (2024) and Young's theory (1990), namely that oppression is maintained by social structures and unequal power relations, not solely by individual actions.

3. Psychological Oppression

Psychological oppression is a form of oppression that impacts a person's mental and emotional state as a result of persistent discriminatory treatment, domination, or injustice. Unlike physical oppression, psychological oppression works through emotional pressure that can lead to fear, anxiety, shame, low self-esteem, and even loss of self-confidence. According to Williams et al. (2023), systematic oppression can lead to psychological trauma because individuals continually experience demeaning or discriminatory treatment against their identity. This condition causes individuals to internalize negative views from their environment, which influences their thinking, feelings, and behavior in daily life.

In the drama "Under the Gaslight," psychological oppression is depicted through the character of Laura Courtland, who experiences emotional distress due to negative treatment and judgment from those around her. Laura frequently displays fear, anxiety, shame, and an inability to express herself freely due to fear of rejection and societal judgment. The constant pressure she experiences causes Laura to lose her sense of security and self-confidence. Therefore, the dialogues analyzed in this study indicate that Laura experiences psychological oppression because prolonged social pressure not only affects her psychological state but also limits her freedom to make decisions and live her life. The oppression Laura experiences demonstrates that psychological violence can occur subtly without involving physical violence, yet still have a profound impact on an individual's mental health and well-being.

4. Identity Oppression

Recent research conducted by Racine (2023) explains that identity oppression is related to conditions in which individuals experience a lack of recognition, namely situations where a person's identity does not receive equal respect, legitimacy, or

recognition in the social environment. This can make it difficult for individuals to build and maintain their identity, due to the influence of dominant social norms and power structures. In this context, identity oppression occurs when an individual's identity is controlled, questioned, hidden, or rejected by groups or social systems that hold power.

In line with this view, Young (1990) explains that oppression does not only originate from the actions of certain individuals, but is the result of social structures that produce inequality through institutions, culture, and social practices. Identity oppression can manifest in various forms, such as concealing one's origins, denying one's identity, assigning negative labels, and restricting an individual's right to determine who they are. As a result, individuals can experience an identity crisis, lose self-confidence, and struggle to achieve social acceptance. Racine (2023) adds that a lack of social recognition of one's identity can hinder the development of personal identity, as individuals continually face judgments and social constructions from those in positions of power.

In Augustin Daly's play "Under the Gaslight," identity oppression is depicted through Laura Courtland's experience, where her identity is hidden, questioned, and controlled by other characters. Laura lacks the freedom to reveal her origins and determine her own identity, leading to conflict and uncertainty about her position in society. Laura's identity is determined more by patriarchal social norms and societal judgments than by her personal will. Thus, Laura's identity oppression not only affects her psychological well-being but also limits her right to recognition as an individual with a legitimate identity.

5. Economic Oppression

Recent research conducted by Amir-ud-Din et al. (2024) shows that access to asset ownership and economic resources plays a crucial role in increasing women's empowerment. This limited access can hinder women's decision-making and economic independence. In the context of feminism, this situation reflects economic oppression, a form of structural injustice experienced by individuals or groups through a lack of access to employment, income, economic resources, and opportunities to achieve financial independence. According to Young (1990), economic oppression arises from unfair social structures through mechanisms such as exploitation and marginalization. Exploitation occurs when a person's labor and abilities are exploited for the benefit of others without equal recognition or compensation, while marginalization occurs when certain individuals or groups are excluded from access to economic opportunities and resources. In line with this view, Zuazu (2024) explains that a feminist economic perspective highlights how economic systems and policies can reinforce gender inequality by limiting women's access to economic resources and opportunities. Furthermore, Kern et al. (2025) revealed that structural barriers in the labor market still place women at a disadvantage in the economic sector.

In the context of feminism, economic oppression of women is evident in unequal access to employment, asset ownership, and authority in economic decision-making. Limited economic opportunities can increase women's dependence on others and reduce their ability to achieve autonomy and improve their well-being. Therefore, economic oppression can be understood as a form of gender-based injustice reinforced by patriarchal structures, through restrictions on women's access to financial resources, economic opportunities, and the power to determine their own lives.

6. Patriarchy Authority

According to Fikri et al. (2025), patriarchal authority is a form of power in a patriarchal system that places men as those who have greater authority than women. In this system, men's interests are prioritized so that women often lose the right to make decisions, express opinions, and make choices about their lives. As a result, women are in a subordinate position and experience various forms of restrictions in social and personal life. In literary works, patriarchal authority is reflected through the actions of male characters who control, dominate, and limit the freedom of female characters.

7. Gender Expectations

Gender expectations are social expectations that regulate how men and women are expected to behave in accordance with the gender roles that apply in society. Löffler and Greitemeyer (2021) explain that these expectations are formed through gender norms and stereotypes that influence the way individuals display their behavior. In this context, women are often associated with caring and empathetic traits, while men are expected to be more rational and express less emotion.

Furthermore, the research shows that gender expectations influence an individual's perception of themselves more than their actual empathic abilities. Individuals who have a feminine gender role orientation tend to rate themselves as more empathetic, although objective ability to recognize emotions does not always show a difference. Therefore, differences in empathy between men and women are not only influenced by biological factors but also by social norms and gender stereotypes that develop in society.

8. Feminisme

Based on the journal Remtulla et al. (2026), feminism is a theory that views gender as a social construction that shapes power relations in society, not just biological differences between men and women. Feminism aims to oppose the patriarchal system, which causes gender inequality and encourages the realization of justice and equality for all individuals. As it developed, feminism not only discussed women's rights but also examined various interrelated forms of oppression, such as race, social class, sexuality, and culture.

9. Patriarchy

Patriarchy refers to a societal framework in which men are the main wielders of power, resulting in unequal treatment of genders across different life areas. In a classic study, Sylvia Walby (1990) defined patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women through various institutions such as the family, work, and the state. Meanwhile, Gerda Lerner (1986) viewed patriarchy as a historical construct that developed through men's control over women's bodies and their reproductive roles. In a recent development, a study by Ortner (2022) emphasized that patriarchy is a gender-based system of power that continues to adapt in modern contexts and intersects with other social factors such as class and race. Meanwhile, Gerda Lerner (1986) viewed patriarchy as a historical construct that developed through men's control over women's bodies and their reproductive roles. In a recent development, a study by Ortner (2022) emphasized that patriarchy is a gender-based system of power that continues to adapt in modern contexts and intersects with other social factors such as class and race.

10. Characterization

Characterization is the author's way of describing the nature, personality, and development of a character so that readers can understand the character as a whole. In the journal Padmawati et al. (2021), characterization is analyzed based on Wellek and Warren's theory (1954) which includes three dimensions, namely psychological (personality and emotions), sociological (social background and relationship with society), and physiological (physical characteristics of the character). Characterization is conveyed through dialogue, narration, character actions, and interactions with other characters so that the characters become more alive and support the delivery of the message in the story.

2.2 Review of the Related Finding

Research on oppression of women has been carried out by various researchers, both in literary studies and social studies. These various studies discuss how women experience injustice due to a patriarchal system that places men as the more dominant group in social life. The results of previous research provide an important basis for this research because they explain the concept of women's oppression, forms of oppression, and their application in the analysis of literary works. However, research that specifically examines the representation of women's oppression in classical drama, especially Augustin Daly's *Under the Gaslight*, is still very limited. Therefore, this research was conducted to complement these deficiencies.

Research conducted by Salvianny and Nurcahyani (2020) examined the oppression of women in literary works using a feminist approach. This research aims to explain how women experience various forms of injustice that arise due to patriarchal culture. The research results show that women often experience

discrimination, restrictions on rights, and loss of freedom and are placed in a lower position than men in family and community life. In addition, the research confirms that oppression of women does not only originate from individual actions but is also influenced by social and cultural systems that continue to maintain gender inequality. This research has similarities with this research because they both discuss the issue of women's oppression from a feminist perspective. The difference is that Salvianny and Nurcahyani's research discusses the concept of oppression in general in various literary works, while this research focuses on the representation of women's oppression experienced by the character Laura Courtland in the drama *Under the Gaslight*.

Another research was conducted by Güneş (2017) which discussed the relationship between patriarchy and women's oppression. This research explains that patriarchy is a social system that creates unequal power relations between men and women. As a result, women often experience restrictions on their rights, discrimination, and lose the opportunity to make their own life choices. The research results also show that male dominance is maintained through social norms, culture, and various institutions that continuously reproduce gender inequality. The similarity between this research and this research lies in the use of the concept of patriarchy as the main cause of oppression of women. However, Güneş's research focuses more on the social conditions of women in general, while this research focuses on the representation of women's oppression in a drama work through the character Laura Courtland.

The next research was conducted by Yulianci and Thohiriyah (2026) who studied the oppression of women in modern society. This research found that women still face various forms of injustice, such as limited access to education, employment, economic opportunities, and low involvement in the decision-making process. Apart

from having an impact on social aspects, oppression also affects women's psychological, emotional conditions, identity and social relationships. This research strengthens Iris Marion Young's view that oppression is the result of an unbalanced social structure and not just caused by individual actions. The similarity between this research and this research lies in the discussion of forms of women's oppression. However, Yulianci and Thohiriyah's research is more oriented towards real societal conditions, whereas this research analyzes the representation of women's oppression in literary works through dialogue and the characters of the main characters.

Furthermore, Padmawati et al. (2021) examines characterization in literary works by referring to Wellek and Warren's theory. This research explains that characterization is a technique used by authors to develop the character, personality and development of characters through dialogue, action, narration and interaction between characters. The research results show that character can be understood through three main dimensions, namely psychological, sociological and physiological dimensions. This research is related to research conducted by the author because they both use characters as objects of analysis. However, this research does not discuss the issue of feminism or women's oppression. Therefore, this research develops characterization studies by connecting it to feminist theory and oppression theory to explain Laura Courtland's experience as a woman living in a patriarchal system.

Research by Dhileep and Baisel (2024) also makes an important contribution to understanding women's oppression. This research explains that patriarchy works through controlling women's social roles, limiting economic access, and dominating men in various decision making. This condition causes women to depend on men so that their space for movement becomes limited. This finding is in line with research

conducted by the author because Laura Courtland is also described as a woman who lost her freedom in making life choices due to male domination. The difference is that Dhileep and Baisel's research starts from social phenomena, while this research examines how these conditions are represented in literary works.

Based on the various previous studies above, it can be concluded that most studies discuss women's oppression, patriarchy, feminism, or characterization separately. Apart from that, the research objects used are more novels, short stories or social phenomena than drama works. Research that specifically examines the drama *Under the Gaslight* by Augustin Daly, especially focusing on the character Laura Courtland as a representation of female oppression, is still very limited.

Thus, this research is novelty because it combines Iris Marion Young's theory of oppression (1990), feminist theory, and characterization theory to analyze the forms and representations of female oppression experienced by Laura Courtland. It is hoped that this research can enrich feminist literary studies, especially regarding the representation of gender injustice and patriarchal practices in classical drama which still has relevance to society today

2.3 Conceptual Framework

This study looks at how female oppression is shown through the character of Laura Courtland in Augustin Daly's play *Under the Gaslight*. Female oppression means that women are limited and pushed aside in areas like society, culture, economy, and politics. (Iris MarionYoung ,1990) says oppression doesn't always come as obvious violence; it can be more hidden, built into the way society and culture work. In stories, female oppression is often shown through the challenges, pain, or limits placed on women's characters, which reflect the male-dominated values of the society in the story.

Benestead (2020) points out that in patriarchal systems, men have control over women, leading to less freedom, less say in decisions, and fewer social opportunities for women. Looking at characters in literature helps researchers see how authors show real-life social issues through the lives of individuals. In this study, Laura Courtland's character is examined to find out what kinds of oppression she faces, such as being dependent, having little control, and being limited by society. Her behavior, the way she talks, her conflicts, and her interactions with male characters are studied to understand how her struggles show the bigger, system-wide problem of female oppression in the 19th century. By connecting the rules of a male-dominated society to Laura's experiences, this study explains how Daly shows female oppression in his writing, showing not just the difficulties women faced but also how these struggles are shown through Laura's growth as a character.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



The illustration above depicts a research process aimed at examining the subjugation of women in Augustin Daly's play "Under the Gaslight. " The investigation starts with the play being the central focus, followed by an examination of the lead character, Laura Courtland, to analyze how she is represented within the narrative. Subsequently, the analysis hones in on Laura's actions and dialogue, especially during her confrontations and exchanges with male figures. The researcher then notes the social and economic reliance, illustrating the disadvantaged status of women. To enhance the examination, this research draws on Iris Marion Young's (1990) theory regarding the oppression of women and the notion of patriarchy. This

framework aids in understanding how oppression is ingrained within society systematically.

All these analytical findings are then connected to the authentic circumstances of the 19th century, wherein the oppression of women was entrenched. Consequently, this approach reveals the connections among literary works, characters, theories, and social environments to provide a thorough insight into the various manifestations of female oppression.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology of the research and provides a clear explanation of how the study is conducted. It explains the research design, data sources, and the procedures used to collect and analyze the data. This chapter is divided into several sections, namely research design, setting of the research, object of the research, source of data, data and unit of analysis, instrument of the research, technique of data collection, technique of data analysis, and research procedure. Each section is systematically arranged to help readers understand the steps taken in conducting the research. Through this chapter, the researcher describes the methods and techniques used to analyze the representation of female oppression in the character of Laura Courtland in *Under the Gaslight*, ensuring that the research is conducted in a clear and structured way.

3.1 Research Design

This research employs a qualitative research design using a descriptive analytical approach. The qualitative method is considered appropriate because the study aims to analyze meanings, representations, and interpretations related to female oppression as portrayed in literary text. Rather than focusing on numerical data, this research emphasizes textual interpretation and critical analysis. Specifically, this study applies feminist literary criticism to examine how female oppression is represented through the character of Laura Courtland in Augustin Daly's *Under the Gaslight*. The descriptive-analytical approach enables the

researcher to describe the forms of oppression experienced by the female character and analyze them using feminist theories such as patriarchy, marginalization, subordination, and symbolic oppression.

3.2 Settings of the Research

The setting of this research is library-based research. The study is conducted through intensive reading and analysis of written sources rather than fieldwork. The primary source of data is the drama script *Under the Gaslight* by Augustin Daly (1867), while secondary sources include books, academic journals, articles, and previous studies related to feminist literary criticism, female oppression, representation theory, and character analysis.

3.3 Object of the Research

The object of this research is the character of Laura Courtland in Augustin Daly's play *Under the Gaslight* (1867). This research focuses on examining Laura Courtland as a representation of female oppression in a 19th-century patriarchal society. The study observes her actions, dialogues, experiences, and interactions with other characters in the play in order to identify the forms of oppression she faces, such as psychological, social, and patriarchal oppression. By analyzing Laura Courtland's character, the research aims to reveal how the play portrays women's limitations, lack of autonomy, and struggles under male-dominated social structures, thereby reflecting broader issues of gender inequality and patriarchal power in society.

3.4 Source of Data

The primary source of data in this research is the text of the play *Under the Gaslight* by Augustin Daly (1867), particularly focusing on the character of Laura Courtland. The play serves as the main reference for analyzing how female oppression is represented through Laura's actions, dialogues, experiences, and interactions with other characters within a patriarchal society. In addition to the primary source, secondary sources are also used to support the research. These include books and journal articles on feminist literary criticism, the theory of female oppression, and character analysis, which provide theoretical frameworks for interpreting Laura Courtland's experiences. Previous studies on women's representation in literature and 19th-century melodrama are also used to contextualize the findings and identify research gaps. Furthermore, scholarly interpretations of *Under the Gaslight* are employed to understand the social, cultural, and historical significance of the play, particularly in relation to gender roles and patriarchal power. By combining primary and secondary sources, this study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of Laura Courtland's character and the depiction of female oppression in the play.

3.5 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in this study is the character of Laura Courtland. The analysis focuses on how her character represents female oppression in a patriarchal society. Specifically, the researcher examines forms of oppression experienced by Laura, such as marginalization, powerlessness, exploitation, cultural imperialism, and violence based on Iris Marion Young's theory (1990). In

addition, the analysis also covers psychological and social aspects, including limitations in decision-making, dependency, and emotional pressure. Through this unit of analysis, the researcher aims to identify and interpret how female oppression is represented through Laura Courtland's character in the drama.

3.6 Instrumentation of the Research

The researcher instrument consisted of the researcher as the primary instrument, supported by a validation table (data sheet). The validation table was used to systematically record and classify dialogues, monologues, and narrative descriptions related to female oppression experienced by Laura Courtland. The data were then categorized based on forms of female oppression and analyzed using Iris Marion Young oppression theory.

3.7 Technique of Collection of the Data

The data collection technique in this study was conducted through document analysis. The researcher, as the primary instrument, repeatedly read or watched Augustin Daly's play, "Under the Gaslight," to understand the story's content and characters. Then, she selected sections relevant to the research focus, namely, the oppression of female. Data were collected in the form of dialogues between characters, monologues, and narratives that demonstrate oppression. The selected data were then neatly recorded in a data sheet to facilitate grouping based on the

type of oppression, its causes, and its impact. Finally, the data were analyzed to determine how women's oppression is depicted in the play.

3.8 Technique of Analysis the Data

The data analysis approach used in this study is descriptive qualitative analysis, which is conducted in accordance with the study process and intended to address the research questions presented in Chapter I. To maintain analytical clarity, the researcher starts by performing data reduction, choosing dialogues, moments, and behaviors from *Under the Gaslight* that are pertinent to the female oppression Laura Courtland faces, while excluding data that are unrelated to the study's topic. The chosen data are then divided into several categories of female oppression, including psychological oppression, such as fear and emotional pressure; social oppression, such as subordination and marginalization; and structural oppression, such as patriarchal domination and male control. Data is organized logically using this classification. The researcher then uses feminist literary criticism and representation theory to analyze the sorted data, demonstrating how the play depicts female oppression through language, discourse, and narrative, and how these representations mirror 19th-century patriarchal ideology. In conclusion, the researcher draws conclusions based on the overall analysis, outlining how the character of Laura Courtland reflects the oppression of women and how the results answer the study's research questions.

3.9 Procedure of the research

This research procedure was carried out through several systematic stages. The first stage was to determine the object of research, namely the character of Laura Courtland in the play *Under the Gaslight* by Augustin Daly, which became the focus of the research regarding the representation of female oppression. Next, the researcher used the drama script *Under the Gaslight* as the main data source by reading the script repeatedly to gain a deep understanding of the storyline, characters, conflicts, and context contained in the drama. After understanding the content of the drama, the researcher identified dialogues, monologues, character actions, and narratives that showed the forms of female oppression experienced by Laura Courtland. The data that had been found were then recorded into a validation sheet (data sheet) and classified based on the categories of female oppression, namely social oppression, psychological oppression, identity oppression, economic oppression, emotional oppression, patriarchal authority, and gender expectation. Next, the classified data were analyzed using the oppression theory from Iris Marion Young (1990) and a feminist literary criticism approach to explain the forms of oppression against women and how this oppression is represented through the character of Laura Courtland in the play *Under the Gaslight*. The final stage is to draw conclusions based on the results of the analysis to answer the formulation of the research problem regarding the forms of female oppression experienced by Laura Courtland and the representation of female oppression shown in the drama *Under the Gaslight* so that research results are obtained that are in accordance with the research objectives.