

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of Study

LGBT standing for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender is a well-known phenomenon that becomes an interesting topic to discuss. Even though, this phenomenon has been around for a long time, but it still becomes an interesting topic until now. LGBT's existence always attracts people's attention, there are many activists social who are interested in LGBT people as research object, because they against the norms and even religious value. Therefore that their existence often makes protests and controversy.

“LGBT stands for “lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.” While these terms have increasing global resonance, in different cultures other terms may be used to describe people who form same-sex relationships and those who exhibit non-binary gender identities (such as *hijra*, *meti*, *lala*, *skesana*, *motsoalle*, *mithli*, *kuchu*, *kawein*, *travesty*, *muxé*, *fa'afafine*, *fakaleiti*, *hamjensgara* and Two-Spirit).” (United Nations Human Right; United Nations for LGBT Equality, 2012).

From the quotation above, it shows that LGBT is a relation of the same-sex relationship, same-sex marriage and the same-sex identities. Moreover, there are some countries who accept this ‘LGBT’ people. Besides, there are also countries that do not accept them, such as Indonesia. Mostly Indonesians still keeps the essence of the religion and obey toward the religion itself. Because of that, mostly Indonesian still thinks LGBT is an unusual thing to be legalized. The powerful religion within Indonesia makes the people reject ‘LGBT’ people.

However, in countries with a liberal value, LGBT becomes a common thing for them, like United States of America for instance. LGBT is not a rare thing to be known by them and they believe that everybody has their choice in life. They have the right to choose what they want to be. Even though, LGBT has been accepted in US, there is still a wall that keeps the LGBT people feel ashamed or hesitant to express their selves as part of LGBT. The main reason LGBT people feel afraid to express or identify themselves is because the latter normative society is typically against LGBT as they see it is sinful or just plain weird. Besides, they will get social harassment or even discrimination from heterosexual people.

“Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are more likely to experience intolerance, discrimination, harassment, and the threat of violence due to their sexual orientation, than those that identify themselves as heterosexual.” (Subhrajit; 2014)

From the quotation, it shows that the harassment towards LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) community is not only because of the very different life styles and ideals but also about the HIV - AIDS problem within the community. Moreover, the harassment felt by LGBT are ranges between, simple teasing, bullying, violent acts, and in extreme cases, or even murder.

Further, transgender which becomes part of LGBT also faces discrimination and also harassment. This is because they are brave to show their passion and sense in dressing not according to the heterosexual community. Transgender people believe that if they are in opposite sex, they could not accept their real identity, so that they try to change their identity and they believe what they do is right. However, even

they believe what they do is right, but sometimes the environment still could not accept them, such normal or heterosexual people will bully them directly, but there are also some people admit the existence of transgender people. They do not mind with Transgender people, because they think everybody in this world have same right and same chance.

Further, if we look the real condition of Transgender, they are just the same with other society, the heterosexual one. They can create works, they can be as productive as other people and nothing differ them. Moreover, in Unites States of America, there is a movement that support them in doing anything and this movement is also supported through plays, movies, novel, and poetry. There are people who also helped them, such as actors and actresses who are Transgender, and artists like Caitlyn Jenner, Laverne Cox, Alabama and so on. Therefore, the fact of being Transgender does not limit an individual to be like other normal people. More example is also exist in literary field that portrays Transgender, a novel that represents the life of being a LGBT especially Transgender and the novel is entitled *The Silence of The Lambs* by *Thomas Harris*.

*The Silence of the Lambs* is a novel by Thomas Harris, he is an American author. He wrote the bestselling Thriller Psychological Horror in *Hannibal Lecture Series*, *Red Dragon*. *The Silence of the Lambs* novel was originally published on July 15 1988. This novel narrates about the life of a man namely Jame Gumb also known as Buffalo Bill, he wants to be a Transgender, he wants to get surgery to change his identity as a woman, because he hates his identity, he is not comfortable with his

gender as a man. The issue is started from Buffalo Bill has lack of attention from his family.

He never get love or get figure's father since he was kid. His mom was a model who obsessed become an actress. His mother had been carrying him a month when she failed to place in the Miss Sacramento Contest in 1948. It made her depressed and frustrated. Moreover, when her acting career failed to materialize, his mother went into an alcoholic decline, Jame was two when Los Angeles County placed him in a foster home. He has unhappy childhood. Many years later, when he was working at the curio store where the butterfly ornaments were made he became obsessed with moths and butterflies and the changes they go through. He was being very obsessed and have desire to change his identity became a woman to start new life.

Based on the explanation above, the urgency of the writer to conduct this research is to give broad view or understanding to the readers that every psychological issues in society can be portrayed in the literary work by seeing the behaviors of the main characters or the element of literary work. Since, in the society there many phenomenon that happen in society and one of them is Transgender personality. There must be reason and there must be characteristic indicate someone become a Transgender.

So this research wanted to discover about the factors that cause the main character “Buffalo Bill” becomes Transgender and how characteristics of transgender are reflected in Buffalo Bill’s character. Hopefully, this research can be a new guidance of other researchers in doing the analysis especially dealing with Queer theory. As the result, the writer hopes that the reader could get new information dealing the issue.

### **1.2 Research Question**

Based on the research background, the writer arranges the research question as follow:

1. How are Characteristic of Transgender personality reflected in Buffalo Bill’s character in *The Silence of The Lambs*?
2. What factors cause of Buffalo Bill to be Transgender in *The Silence of The Lambs*?

### **1.3 Research Objective**

Based on the research question above, the writer gets a research objective of the study as follows:

1. To understand the Characteristic of transgender personality reflected in Buffalo Bill’s character.
2. To describe the factors that causing Buffalo Bill to be Transgender in *The Silence of The Lambs*.

### **1.4 Research Uses**

There are two uses of study, theoretical use and practical use.

#### **1.4.1 Theoretical Use**

Theoretically, this research is expected to support and to contribute the field of literary study especially in a novel. So, it will be advantageous for the readers who are interested in novel and the topic of discussion. Hopefully, this research is able to enrich the reader knowledge and to give brief information and understanding about LGBT especially transgender issue through *The Silence of The Lambs*' Thomas Harris.

#### **1.4.2 Practical Use**

Practically, this research is to give information of LGBT especially transgender in the novel *The Silence of The Lambs*. This research is expected to be reference for the reader or researcher who needs information about how the content of the novel according to the Queer theory is and how to apply the theory to their relevant research.

#### **1.5 Scope of Study**

Based on the research questions, the writer focuses on analyzing about how the Characteristics of transgender personality are reflected in Buffalo Bill's character and the cause Buffalo Bill's character becomes transgender. Thus, the approach and the theory used in this research are psychology literature approach and Queer theory by Butler (1990), because queer theory by Butler is more effective and suitable for the writer to analyze the character in *The Silence of The Lambs* Novel.