

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

We are still fighting for acceptance and a true understanding of the term 'feminism,' it should be noted that we have made tremendous progress since the first wave. It is a term that has been unfairly associated first, with ladies in hoop skirts and ringlet curls, and then followed by butch, man-hating women. Due to the range of feminist issues today, it is much harder to put a label on what a feminist looks like. Feminism is a range of political movements, ideologies, and social movements that share a common goal: to define, establish, and achieve political, economic, personal, and social rights for women that are equal to those of men. This includes seeking to establish equal opportunities for women in education and employment.

Feminist movements have campaigned and continue to campaign for women's rights, including the right to vote, to hold public office, to work, to earn fair wages or equal pay, to own property, to receive education, to enter contracts, to have equal rights within marriage, and to have maternity leave. Feminists have also worked to promote bodily autonomy and integrity, and to protect women and girls from rape, sexual harassment, and domestic violence. Feminism was not an isolatable issue, a particular 'campaign' alongside other political projects, but a

dimension which informed and interrogated every facet of personal, social and political life

Regarding to feminist movement, the term of independent woman can be defined explored by various sources in pop culture. Rapper Roxanne Shante's 1989 rendition of Independent Woman highlighted relationships and asked women not to dote on partners who do not reciprocate. Similarly, the definition of an independent woman in the Urban Dictionary is a woman who pays her own bills, buys her own things, and does not allow a man to affect her stability or self-confidence. She supports herself entirely on her own and is proud to be able to do so.

As the famous encyclopedia in the internet, Wikipedia stated that literature as cultural and historical phenomena investigates the conditions and the movement of feminism in the form of drama, novel, short story, prose, poetry, etc. The feminist movement produced both feminist fiction and non-fiction, and created new interest in women's writing. It also prompted a general reevaluation of women's historical and academic contributions in response to the belief that women's lives and contributions have been underrepresented as areas of scholarly interest. Much of the early period of feminist literary scholarship was given over to the rediscovery and reclamation of texts written by women. Studies like Dale Spender's *Mothers of the Novel* and Jane Spencer's *The Rise of the Woman Novelist* were ground-breaking in their insistence that women have always been writing.

According to Kumar (2010) in her article entitled *Poetry Vs Song* that Poetry is a separate art form to lyric writing. Poetic devices such as assonance, alliteration, metaphors etc. are used, but whereas poetry is a stand-alone art, in songwriting, lyrics are only one factor in the song- the melody, the harmonic choices, the rhythm and texture are all part of the art. The meaning and message found in most songs, especially those songs that are composed today, are pretty direct and straight to the point. In fact, there is not much thought and analysis needed, on the part of the listener, to determine what the song is all about. In the case of poetry, Meaning is one of the major elements of poetry. In some cases the meaning is explicitly expressed, and in others it is implied or hidden under the symbols. The readers have to understand the symbolic figures to discover the meaning. Besides, poets will often utilize a variety of different figurative forms of speech in order to convey a particular message.

There is the manner on how poems and songs are appreciated. In the case of poetry, the appreciation of the poem comes from the careful analysis of the wording of the poem itself. This includes the play of words, the rhyming scheme, use of figurative forms of speech, and the like. On the other hand, songs are mostly appreciated based on the accompanying music.

As stated by Hess in his article entitled *The Music – Poetry Connections* that songs and poetry are normally not mentioned in the same sentence together. However, the similarities between music and poetry are far greater than observed by the general public and media. Some of the similarities are: Rhythm, Expression

and Emotion. Songs themselves have to be rhythmic. As well, poetry flows just the same. Rhythm is what makes music as well as poetry. The flowing of words, the instruments, smooth melody are all a part of the greater meaning, poetry. In fact, there's even a form of poetry which is made into music called lyrical poems. They are just that, musical lyrics. Sometimes they are used in songs, sometimes left as just words with a specific rhythm. They are what they are, lyrics express the thoughts and feelings of the author. Nonetheless, even music without words is poetry, just not in the most recognized sense of the word. Poetry is about flow, rhythm, meaning and expression. Instrumental music expresses, flows and shows just as much emotion as does music with words.

Zapruder (2012) also said in his article entitled *The Difference Between Poetry and Song Lyrics* that many musical artists present their song lyrics as poetry. This reflects not a commercial move on their part, but a desire for the words they write to be taken seriously. Lyrics inherently have less literary merit than poetry, or are easier to create, or are less valuable in a cultural or human sense, and therefore somehow do not deserve the rarified title of "poetry." But the desire to consider lyrics as literature reflects some unfortunate and persistent biases that are detrimental to both poetry and song. This desire presumes that poems, because they are "literature," must be serious, that is, written in forms that reflect obvious mastery of literary mannerisms. And it presumes that what is valuable about lyrics is how they reflect those literary values and skills. The biases inherent in such a widespread distinction do a disservice to both poetry and song. The expressions of this belief also have been evidenced in another various forms.

Just like another literary artwork, songs, lyrics, and poetry are very valuable medium to express the feeling.

Women's music is the music by women, for women, and about women. The genre emerged as a musical expression of the second-wave feminist movement as well as the labour, civil rights, and peace movements. Women's music also refers to the wider industry of women's music that goes beyond the performing artists to include studio musicians, producers, sound engineers, technicians, cover artists, distributors, promoters, and festival organizers who are also women.

In the early 1990s, punk music played an important role for the formation of 'Riot Grrrl', a recent young, feminist (sub) cultural movement that combines feminist consciousness and punk aesthetics, politics, and style. Due to this influence, young women were indeed looking for a way to liberate themselves from the roles and stereotypes that society had set, and music helped create a subculture in which they could enjoy this kind of freedom. More importantly, music made the hope that one day, the values that Riot Grrrl placed on women and their compassion for all oppressed people would become the norms in mainstream society. Thus, it is not surprising that songs with feminist themes can be usually found in almost every period of American history since then.

Besides, in the present time, several recent popular music artists, especially American singers, possess great influences on the masses despite their uniquely queer identity and expression. Some of these popular music artists have been

criticized by the general public and scholars as feminist music icons. Six of these were Madonna, Pink, Beyonce, Britney Spears, Lady Gaga, and Kesha. As well, their contemporary works, which reflected life during this period, were usually reported on by several institutions. One of them which has been well recognized is the Billboard Hot 100 chart, the American music industry standard singles popularity chart issued weekly by Billboard magazine which ranks songs by their popularity. The modern music industry, whilst providing a key social outlet for women to express feminist ideologies, presents a platform on which gender performance, or performativity, has become 'discursively produced'. Women have a choice in the way they represent their gender to the public, many relishing the opportunity to subvert the conventional femininities placed upon them by the patriarchy. A female artist is an example of said cultural object in her branding and commodification within the music industry. Women assume power and control over the way they are presented, achieving an artistic agency and independence from patriarchal pressure.

Alongside to that, Megan Trainor is one of the singers who promote the movement of feminism in her songs. The writer had chosen some of songs to become the object of analysis of feminism as portrait in some Meghan Trainor selected songs. Meghan Elizabeth Trainor is an American singer, songwriter and record producer. Born in December 22 1993, Nantucket, Trainor wrote, recorded, performed, and produced three independently-released albums between ages 15 and 17. Common themes in her lyrics include subjects of modern womanhood, body image, and empowerment. Theses selected songs entitled "Dear future

Husband”, “Me Too”, and “NØ” are three songs that will become the object of analysis. Each song represents the expressive about feminism.

“Dear Future Husband”reminisced on her past romantic relationships, where she was mishandled, and with the track, she wanted to make a statement that women should be treated better by their boyfriends. Another song entitled “Me too” lyrically extends her compositions about self-love and self-empowerment, urging listeners to be more content and confident with themselves.Last song, “NØ” lyrically talks about men who approach women and "can't take the hint" when their advances are rejected. These three songs contemplate 21st-century womanhood especially in the term of independent woman.

To analyze Feminism in this research, the things that are necessary to be considered more are the lyrics in the song entitled “Dear Future Husband”, Me too” and “NØ”. Also this research is using Qualitative Descriptive method by Meleong from his book entitled *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* to analyze Feminism as it is portrayed in the lyrics of Meghan Trainor’s songs.

## **1.2. Problems of the Study**

Problems of study on this research are:

1. How is independent woman portrayed in Meghan Trainor’s song?
2. What is the purpose woman to be independent?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

Related with the problems above, this research tries to analysis the answers of those questions, they are;

1. To describe the way of Meghan Trainor of being Independent Woman.
2. To describe the aim of the writer about woman-independent and equality.

### **1.4. Scope of the Study**

Related to the problems and objectives of the study, the writer has to limit the scope of the study. Therefore, the scope of study on this research is analyzing the feminism as it's portrayed in some selected Meghan Trainor's songs and how the feminism itself takes a big part of nowadays life. Scope of study is necessary in order to make a research to be specific and well managed. This research is only focused on the lyrics of the songs.

### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The significances of this analysis are to make people understands more about feminism life and how it's taking in nowadays life. In doing analysis, the writer hopes that the findings can acknowledge the Feminism in nowadays life. This study also expected to contribute to the development of literature, particularly the point of view in people lives. This research also explains about the meaning of the lyrics song and reflection in our life where Feminism is the biggest lifestyle in this time.