

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

During the early 20th century, the United Kingdom experienced a transformative period for women because the suffragette movement developed as a response to gender-based inequality. The movement fought for voting rights while simultaneously working to achieve complete social and political and economic equality in a society controlled by male dominance. Women who fought for voting rights became known as suffragettes who used both peaceful demonstrations and disruptive civil disobedience and hunger strikes in their activism. Emmeline Pankhurst along with other leaders became prominent figures who united people while exposing the gender-based injustices that women endured (Gavron, 2015).

Suffragette (2015) fictionalizes historical events of women's suffrage movement in England and conveys feminist message relatable to modern-day audiences. Carey Mulligan's portrayal of Maud Watts symbolizes working-class women marginalized by patriarchal regimes and discriminatory legislatures. Through the characters' suffering, the movie opens space for feminist critique, highlighting individual sacrifices towards structural change (Stevenson, 2022).

The suffrage movement requires analysis because it establishes the foundational context which explains why feminist movements today emphasize women's rights and gender equality. The issue remains important since it explores women's past struggles to achieve social justice and political rights which continue to matter in present times. Through her study of the suffrage campaign the researcher developed an understanding of how women defeated institutionalized discrimination alongside the concessions they accepted during their fight for equality.

The choice of this topic stems from the suffragette movement's twofold impact which both established voting rights for women and sparked extensive societal transformations. The study serves as a crucial tool to evaluate past difficulties which have formed existing conditions and to discover the obstacles which still exist in reaching gender equality. The research published in *Gender & Society* revealed that women's political involvement expanded substantially following their right to vote yet gender disparities continued to affect political representation and policy outcomes (Kittilson, 2008).

The suffragette movement created a concrete example of how public policy changed after women earned voting rights because many females started working in male dominated positions within industry and government during World War I. The research demonstrates that female workforce involvement in wartime activities sped up their acceptance for leadership roles and

policymaking positions (Goldin, 1991). The analysis of the suffragette movement serves two purposes as it reveals historical facts and educational wisdom about advocacy and political participation needed to fight present-day social inequalities.

1.2 Limitation of Problem

Historical films which show made-up or basic historical events tend to inaccurately portray the subtleties of suffrage movement and the actual lived experiences of participating women. The film displays only limited aspects of suffragist experiences while it neglects to portray women who fought for different social and economic and racial causes. The film *Suffragette* highlights important gender equality challenges yet the complex nature of gender politics and changing social environment prevents direct connections between its themes and current feminist discussions. The extensive collection of reliable historical records and feminist theory critiques creates challenges for their application which results in weaker research analysis and conclusions for future studies.

1.3 Research Question

Here is the research:

1. What patriarchal structures are depicted in the film *Suffragette*, and how do they influence the lives and decisions of the female characters?
2. How does *Suffragette* contribute to contemporary feminist discourses regarding women's rights and gender equality?

3. What insights can be drawn from *Suffragette* about the ongoing challenges and achievements of feminist movements in today's society?

1.4 Research Objective

The objective of the research:

1. To objectively recognize and classify the several patriarchal dynamics that are depicted in *Suffragette*, look at how these systems influence the behaviors and experiences of the women in this film.
2. To analyze how *Suffragette* adds to current feminist discussions by bringing attention to past battles for women's rights and making connections to modern concerns about gender equality and representation.
3. To evaluate *Suffragette*'s portrayal of the feminist movements' hardships and victories critically while comparing past activism to contemporary feminist issues.

