

GAY REPRESENTATION IN BECKY ALBERTALLI'S *SIMON VS THE HOMO SAPIENS AGENDA*

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Abstract. This study aims to reveal gay habitus in Becky Albertalli's *Simon VS The Homo Sapiens Agenda*. This study is descriptive qualitative which applies both intrinsic and extrinsic approaches. The intrinsic approach is applied due to the fact that the study deals with the characterization of the main character in the novel. Moreover, the sociological approach is applied because the study is primarily concerned with a social phenomenon reflected in literary work as the novel portrays the representation of gay habitus reflected in the attitude and behaviours of one of the main characters in the novel. In revealing the gay habitus reflected in the novel, Bourdieu's theory of habitus is applied. The discussion is focused on the Simon's habitation as a gay and the factors that contribute to the formation of Simon's habitus as a gay. The result of the study shows that Simon develops gay habitus. The representations of his gay habitus include are having no attraction to the opposite sex, adoring the same sex, obsessing and fantasizing about the same sex, feeling jealous and cynical to the suspected competitors, and falling in love with the same sex. There are two factors that support the development of Simon's gay habitus i.e. primary and secondary socialization.

Keywords: *habitus, gay, representation, supporting factors*

INTRODUCTION

There is a difference understanding between gender and sex. Referring to the explanation of the World Health Organization (WHO) sex deals with biological differences between male and female which are genetically or genetically good, and gender talks more about differences in roles, functions, status, and responsibilities between men and women. Moreover, the difference between male and female gender is constructed by the community as femininity or masculinity because gender is a result of the construction of socio-cultural forms that are formed through the process of socialization to a place at one time at a time, continuing from generation to generation. This is in line with Foucault in Spargo (1999: 45) who

argues that sexuality is a cultural product that cannot be regarded as a simple extension of a biological process.

The relation between sexuality and gender is that gender is not the conceptual or cultural extension of chromosomal/biological sex, but an ongoing discursive practice currently structured around the concept of heterosexuality as the norm of human relationships. Compulsory, heterosexuality is installed in gender through the productions of taboos against homosexuality, resulting in a false coherence of apparently stable genders attached to appropriate biological sexes (Butler in Spargo, 1999: 54). This condition is even getting worse as LGBTQ are stigmatized and stereotyped in a bad way which then leads into

the occurrence of prejudice and homophobia toward them. Thus, gender is not something that is natural but an agreement between humans themselves and generally varies and can change and be exchanged from one person to another depending on the time, place, and culture that are in the domain of society itself. Butler in Spargo (1990: 53) presents gender as a performative effect experienced by the individual as a natural identity. So that by not ignoring the fact that humans will be biologically born with sex between men or women, it cannot also be ruled out for the opinion that gender is fluid or is not absolute or can vary according to culture at a place and time certain. Even in all societies there are also many folks who experience gender fluidly, identifying with different genders at different times.

Mostly, LGBTQ, especially gay, are stigmatized and stereotyped in a negative way which then leads into the occurrence of prejudice and homophobia toward them. Homosexuality is still considered as a major deviation from highly traditional and/or religious view. The negative stigma is that gay or homosexual orientation is inherently associated with mental illness or even like a contagious disease that can cause someone turn into gay from heterosexual male. This stigma results in negative stereotype toward gay. Gay is stereotyped as males who are less masculine and more feminine than heterosexual men (Kite & Whitley, 1996: 337). This makes some heterosexuals especially males do not feel comfortable to interact with them.

Habitus

Habitus is a generative basis for individuals to act and practice. Individuals practice and socialize with their social structure through habitus. According to Bourdieu (1990: 59) habitus is the system of dispositions for action that are socially constituted and it constitutes a set of schemes of perceptions, appreciations, and beliefs. An individual's

habitus leads to decide what can do or cannot do, what is good or bad, in relation to a probable future (Bourdieu 1977: 95). In addition, Bourdieu (1977: 125) states that the habitation is not adapted to modified field conditions. Habitus could be represented through behavior and attitude.

Bourdieu's theory of habitus is applied in this study to explain the representation of Simon's habitus as a gay reflected through his attitude and behaviors.

METHODS

This study is a qualitative study with descriptive method. Patton and Cochran (2002: 12) states that qualitative research methods originated from social science in order to enable a study about social and cultural oriented phenomena. Moreover, Hancock et al (2007: 9) explain that qualitative research involve identifying what is happening or being experienced, rather than measuring how much of something exists, or focusing on the way changing one thing produces a change in another. This study is a descriptive qualitative study because it descriptively describes and interprets the collected data from the novel about gay phenomenon that mainly deals with the representation of gay habitus and its supporting factors.

The discussion in this study involves extrinsic and intrinsic elements. Therefore, this study applies both intrinsic and extrinsic approaches. Wellek and Warren, (1977: 139) state that the main part of intrinsic approach is based on the text of literary works itself by doing an interpretation and analysis of it. In this study, intrinsic approach concerns with the characterization of the main character in the novel. It is mainly about the characterization of the main character as a gay. In addition, Sociological approach is also applied in this study due to the fact that this study deals with a social phenomenon reflected in Becky Albertalli's *Simon VS The Homo Sapiens Agenda*. That is to

say this study reveals the representation of gay habitus reflected in the attitude and behaviours of one of the main characters, Simon. This is in line with Jadhav's statement. Jadhav, (2012: 81) states that the sociology of literature is a specialized area of study which focuses its attention upon the relation between a literary work and the social structure in which it is created.

The data in this study are quotations from the novel by Becky Albertalli entitled *Simon VS the Homo Sapiens Agenda* which are related and relevance to the theory and analysis. The novel consists of 303 pages and was first published in 2015. The novel is a PDF datum source which has downloaded from website and printed out.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. The Representation of Gay Habitus

Simon is described as a boy who has deviant sexual orientation. Sexually, Simon is a male but psychologically he has physical, emotional, and/or spiritual attraction to the same sex. Due to the facts that Simon has deviant sexual orientation, he develops habitus as a gay. Simon's habitus as a gay is represented by having no attraction to the opposite sex, adoring the same sex, obsessing and fantasizing about the same sex, and feeling jealous and cynical to suspected competitors.

a. Having No Attraction to the Opposite Sex

The first representation of Simon's habitus as a gay is that he has no attraction to the opposite sex. Simon has ever tried to date a girl but he finds that he does not comfortable with the relationship. He admits that he has tried to steer clear of his girlfriend. He is confused and feels at odd with himself until he finds out that he is not interested in girls. Since then, he avoids dating girls.

In eighth grade, I had this girlfriend. It was one of those things where you're "dating" but you don't ever go anywhere outside of

school. And you don't really do anything in school either. I think we held hands. So, we went to the eighth-grade dance as a couple, but my friends and I spent the whole night eating Fritos and spying on people from under the bleachers. And at one point, this random girl comes up to me and tells me my girlfriend is waiting in front of the gym. I was supposed to go out there and find her, and I guess we were supposed to make out. In that closed-mouth middle school way.

So, here's my proudest moment: I ran and hid like a freaking preschooler in the bathroom. Like, in the stall with the door closed, crouched up on the toilet so my legs wouldn't show. As if the girls were going to break in and bust me. Honest to God, I stayed there for the entire evening. And then I never spoke to my girlfriend again (Albertalli, 2015: 13-14).

... Honestly, though? I think the real reason I had girlfriends was because I didn't one hundred percent believe I was gay. Or maybe I didn't think it was permanent (Albertalli, 2015: 15).

Apparently, Simon's reason to date a girl is that he is not sure yet that he is a gay. As Simon finds that he does not meet what heterosexual or straight males are supposed to do about girl and dating, it can be assumed that Simon actually likes the same sex or he is a gay. Moreover, if Simon is a heterosexual, he will like Abby because she is the type of a girl that is liked by most heterosexual boys: "Abby's eyes are closed. She has the kind of mouth that always rests in a faint smile, and she smells a little like French toast. If I were straight. The Abby thing. I do think I get it (Albertalli, 2015: 27)." Simon does like Abby, but it does not mean he is attracted to Abby. This implies that if Simon was a heterosexual or straight male, he would be attracted to Abby. Simon's habitus as a gay becomes clearer from his self-talk that he is as gay when Abby tries to tell him that Leah is a perfect match for him.

“You could ask Leah,” Abby says. She looks at me sidelong, with a weird, probing expression. I feel a storm of laughter brewing. “You think I like Leah.” “I don’t know,” she says, smiling and shrugging. “You looked so sweet together tonight.” “Me and Leah?” I ask. But I’m gay. GAY. Gaaaaaaayyyyy. God, I should really just tell her. I can kind of picture her reaction. Eyes widening. Mouth falling open (Albertalli, 2015: 39).

Simon’s not being interested in girls strengthen that he is a gay. Thus, Simon’s habitus as a gay is clear since he does not really date or totally likes girls as a heterosexual or straight male is supposed to.

b. Adoring the Same Sex

Another representation of Simon’s habitus as a gay is shown through his adornment to the same sex. Rather than attracted to, likes, or even dates girls, Simon tends to express his adornment toward the same sex.

Here’s the thing. I have this feeling in my gut that Blue is Cal Price. I just do. I think it’s the eyes. He has ocean eyes: just waves and waves of bluegreen. And sometimes when I look at Cal, I feel like we understand each other, and he gets it, and it’s perfect and unspoken (Albertalli, 2015: 35).

One of the ways he adores the same sex is expressed by praising their physical appearance, especially to the same sex that is attracted to him. As a gay or homosexual will physically attracted to the same sex, it cannot be denied that Simon’s habitus is a gay. Simon also expresses his adornment to the same sex by paying close attention to them who are attracted to him.

... He’s this quiet black kid who’s supposed to be really smart, but I’ve never heard him speak unless he’s

forced to. He leans way back into the corner of the couch, shuffling the toe of one foot against the other, and I never noticed it before, but he’s actually kind of adorable (Albertalli, 2015: 46).

... He smiles a little bit and looks back down at his desk. You never really know what he’s thinking. But I have this theory that Bram’s probably really funny inside his own head. I don’t even know why I think that (Albertalli, 2015: 68).

... Also, Bram is cute. Like, really, really cute. He stands a foot or so back from the fence, totally sweaty, with a white turtleneck under his soccer shirt. And he’s not really talking, but he has very expressive brown eyes. And light brown skin and soft dark curls and cute, knobby hands (Albertalli, 2015: 135).

Simon often has deep thoughts about how the same sex thinks and always has positive mind toward them especially when he notices that they are attractive to him. Moreover, he really pays close attention toward their behavior through observing. It is something that is really exaggerated to do by heterosexual or straight males. If he was a heterosexual or straight male, he would not do that. A heterosexual or straight male must be attracted to or think about the opposite sex, instead of the same sex. Therefore, it can be inferred that Simon is a gay and he develops gay habitus.

Adoring the same sex makes Simon feel excited and he is more excited when he can communicate or has physical contact with the same sex he adores.

I mean, he’s cute, so I’ll let it slide, but the dogs on my pants are clearly golden retrievers.

I sneak a look at his script. “What are you drawing?”

"Oh, this? I don't know," he says. He pushes his bangs back and blushes, and good God, he's adorable.

"I didn't know you could draw."

"Sort of." He shrugs and tilts the binder toward me.

He has this style of drawing that's all movement and sharp angles and bold pencil lines. It's not bad. Leah's drawings are better. But it hardly matters at all, because the important thing is that Cal's drawing is of a superhero.

I mean, a superhero. My heart almost squeezes to a stop. Blue loves superheroes.

Blue.

I slide an inch closer, so our legs are touching, just barely.

I'm not sure if he notices.

I don't know why I'm so brave today.

I'm 99.9 percent sure that Cal is Blue. But there's that fraction of a percent chance that he's not. For some reason, I can't seem to come out and ask him (Albertalli, 2015: 96).

Simon is not only excited about having contact with the same sex but he is also excited when he gets attention from the same sex to whom he is attracted. This condition makes Simon think that he is being liked by the same sex and it makes him feel happy and special. His feeling brings him into nervousness and excitement in the same time. If Simon was not a gay, he would not be that happy to have contact with the same sex and find that he is being noticed by the same sex.

... A couple of the others including Cal Price. My heart beats faster. I knew Cal would be here.

I squeeze through my row and back down the stairs, feeling like every eye in the stadium is on me. Then I reach

under the banister to tap Cal on the shoulder.

"What's up, Simon?" he says. I like that he calls me Simon. A lot of the guys call me Spier, and I don't mind that, but I don't know. Honestly, I think I would like whatever Cal Price called me.

"Hey," I say. "Can I join you guys?"

"Definitely." He scoots over a few feet.

"Plenty of room." And there is—I won't have to sit on his lap, anyway. It's actually kind of unfortunate.

I spend a full minute trying to think of something to say. My brain feels foggy.

"I don't think I've ever seen you at a game," Cal says, pushing his bangs out of his eyes.

And seriously, I can't even. Because Cal's bangs. Cal's eyes. The fact that he apparently notices me enough to know I'm not at football games (Albertalli, 2015: 52-53).

To sum up, Simon has tendencies to admire the same sex. His admiration is expressed in many ways including giving compliments to the same sex, noticing the behaviors of the same sex, and showing excitement in having communication and physical contact with the same sex. Thus, it cannot be doubted that Simon's habitus is a gay.

c. Obsessing and Fantasizing about the Same Sex

The representation of Simon's habitus as a gay is also indicated through his obsession and fantasy about the same sex. As he gets used to adoring the same sex, he becomes obsessed with the same sex.

I don't even know when I figured it out. It was a bunch of little things. Like this weird dream I had once about Daniel Radcliffe. Or how I was obsessed with Passion Pit in middle school, and then I realized it wasn't

really about the music (Albertalli, 2015: 13).

One of his obsessions is directed to public figures like actor and musician. However, he realizes that it is not just a form of admiration of a fan toward his idols but it is more than that. It has something to do with his sexual orientation as a gay. If his sexual orientation was heterosexual or straight, he would rather have a dream with the opposite sex than a weird dream with the same sex. Moreover, if it is not about the fact that the music group consists of the same sex personals, Simon will just enjoy the music.

When Simon has known Blue, who is also a gay, he directs his obsession toward him. With Blue, he starts to talk about gay related things including to compare hetero sex versus non hetero sex. Blue becomes a friend for Simon to whom he can share about their sexual preference or sexual orientation.

Reese's are better than sex? Admittedly, I wouldn't know, but I have to hope you're wrong about that one. Maybe you should stop having heterosexual sex, Jacques. I'm just saying [...] So, I might have given you the wrong idea with this subject line. I have to admit that I don't TECHNICALLY know whether Reese's are better than sex. Reese's are really freaking incredible, don't get me wrong. And I'm guessing they're better than hetero sex, a.k.a. "intercourse" (per my mom). Non-hetero sex, though? I imagine it may be a little better than Reese's. Is it weird that I can't talk about this without blushing? (Albertalli, 2015: 44-45)

Furthermore, Simon's relationship with Blue is becoming intense and this leads him to be obsessed with Blue: "What I want is to sit here and think about Blue. I think I'm starting to get a

little obsessed with him. ... (Albertalli, 2015: 76)." Simon starts to become aware of who he is attracted to. He identifies who he finds attractive and who he likes. He is the one who shares the same sex as him. This indicates that Simon is attracted to the same sex rather than the opposite sex.

Simon's adornment to the same sex has led him to have obsession toward the same sex. His obsession toward the same sex results in his fantasy about the same sex. As Simon is accustomed to fantasizing about the same sex, it brings him to a sensual desire.

... I picture it. He kisses me, and it's nothing like Rachel or Anna or Carys. I can't even. It's not even in the same stratosphere. There's this electric tingly feeling radiating through my whole body and my brain has gone fuzzy and I actually think I can hear my heartbeat.

I have to be so, so quiet. Nora's on the other side of the wall.

His tongue is in my mouth. His hands slide up under my shirt, and he trails his fingers across my chest. I'm so close. It's almost unbearable. God. Blue. My whole body turns to jelly (Albertalli, 2015: 57).

Simon's sensual desire brings him in the erotic imagination. He imagines being kissed by a person of the same sex. In other words, Simon has sexual orientation to the same sex. Therefore, it can be concluded that Simon's obsession toward the same sex and his habit of fantasizing about the same sex confirm the fact that his habitus is a gay.

d. Feeling Jealous and Cynical to Suspected Competitors

That Simon is attracted to the same sex rather than the opposite sex is also supported by the evidence that he tends to give positive appraisals to his male friends, while to his female

friends he gives criticism with cynicism and hatred.

Taylor Metternich. She's the worst kind of perfect. Like, if perfection had a dark side. I don't know how else to explain it. I always imagine her sitting in front of a mirror at night, counting strokes as she brushes her hair. And she's the kind of person who posts on Facebook asking you how you did on the history quiz. Not to be supportive. She wants to know your grade ...

... "Act One, Scene Six is the pickpocket scene, right?" asks Taylor, because she's also the kind of person who pretends to ask a question just to show off what she already knows.

"Right," Ms. Albright says. "Take it away, Cal."

Cal is the stage manager. He's a junior like me, and he carries a doublespaced copy of the script clipped into a giant blue binder, exploding with pencil notes. It's funny that his job is basically to order us around and be stressed out, because he's the least authoritative person I've ever met. He's a little bit soft-spoken, and he has an actual southern accent. Which is something you almost never hear in Atlanta, really.

He also has those kind of shaggy brown bangs I like, and dark, ocean-colored eyes. I haven't heard anything about him being gay, but there's this kind of vibe I get, maybe (Albertalli, 2015: 25-26).

To his male friend, Simon gives praises and even openly shows his attraction by assuming he is a gay just like him. He also expresses his attraction toward the same sex by praising their physical appearances. On the other hands, to his female friend he gives criticism with cynicism and hatred. His giving negative appraisal to his

female friend may represent his jealousy because he may think that the female is a teaser and his competitors in getting "a boyfriend." Moreover, the girl to whom he directs his negative appraisals is close to the boy he likes. This happens not only to the opposite sex but also to the same sex. It happens as they try to get or seek attention from someone Simon is attracted to.

"Hey." Suddenly, someone slides in next to me on the bleacher. It's Martin. I scoot down automatically to make room.

"Adderall," some guy behind us grunts, messing up Martin's hair. Martin grins up at him. Then he smooths his hair back down, or tries to, and chews his lip for a minute.

"What's up, Spier?"

"Nothing," I say, and my heart sinks. He turns his body toward mine, and he's clearly in the mood for a conversation. So much for talking to Cal. So much for the air smelling like possibility (Albertalli, 2015: 52-53).

Simon does not like it when there is someone who disturbs his close interaction with the same sex to whom he is attracted to. This kind of circumstance can even ruin his mood. This condition means that Simon has sense of belonging to the same sex he is attracted to. Simon desires the same sex and he always wants to be close to the same sex so that he does not want someone mess it. Thus, it explains that Simon's habitus is a gay as he easily expresses his jealousy and cynicism toward the people who try to get attention from or give attention to the same sex he is attracted to, no matter they are girls or boys.

e. **Falling in Love with the Same Sex**

Simon's admiration and obsession toward the same sex becomes even bigger. He cannot pretend and discontinue his feeling anymore. He

starts having a feeling toward the same sex. It is a kind of desire or feeling for having romantic relationship.

I HAVE TO MEET HIM.

I don't think I can keep this up. I don't care if it ruins everything. I'm this close to making out with my laptop screen.

Blue Blue Blue Blue Blue Blue Blue.

Seriously, I feel like I'm about to combust.

I spend the entire school day with my stomach in knots, and it's completely pointless, because it's not attached to anything real. Because, really, it's just words on a screen. I don't even know his freaking name.

I think I'm a little bit in love with him (Albertalli, 2015: 92).

... And I think about Blue. Okay. I have a crush. But it's not like having a crush on some random musician or actor or Harry freaking Potter. This is the real deal. It has to be. It's almost debilitating... (Albertalli, 2015: 93).

Simon confirms his identity as a gay when he eventually falls in love with the same sex. Simon does not deny it. He even can distinct that the feeling is not like what he feels as he is idolizing an actor or musician. This feeling is different as this feeling is like having a crush on someone, someone in the same sex. Furthermore, this feeling brings Simon into fantasizing romantic things. When someone is falling in love, it is usual that he fantasizes romantic things like what happen to Simon.

I guess I can imagine us having perfect nights sometimes. And I'll probably feel like shouting it from the rooftops, too. I refresh my browser. "My turn. Okay. Someone Jewish," I say, "posting about Christmas." My Jewish-Episcopalian email boyfriend. I wonder what he's doing right now (Albertalli, 2015: 107).

Simon has romantic feeling to a gay called Blue even though he just knows him by email. Simon is sure that the feeling he has for Blue is the feeling of love because it is not like what he feels when he is idolizing an actor or musician. Furthermore, this feeling brings Simon into fantasizing romantic thing. When someone is falling in love, it is usual that he fantasizes romantic things like what happen to Simon.

I guess I can imagine us having perfect nights sometimes. And I'll probably feel like shouting it from the rooftops, too. I refresh my browser. "My turn. Okay. Someone Jewish," I say, "posting about Christmas." My Jewish-Episcopalian email boyfriend. I wonder what he's doing right now (Albertalli, 2015: 107)".

Simon often fantasizes of having romantic events with him. Fortunately for him, Blue has the same feeling for him. They eventually decide to date and Simon announces via Facebook that officially he has a gay boyfriend.

"That night, as of 8:05, Bram Greenfeld is no longer Single on Facebook— a.k.a. the best thing that has ever happened in the history of the internet.

At 8:11, Simon Spier is no longer Single either. Which generates about five million Likes and an instantaneous comment from Abby Suso: LIKE LIKE LIKE... (Albertalli, 2015: 189-190)."

By falling in love with and dating the same sex, Simon confirms his identity as a gay.

B. The Factors Supporting Simon's Habitus as a Gay

Bonnewitz in Asimaki and Koustourakis (2014) states that habitus is acquired during primary and secondary socialization. This means that there are some factors contributing to the development of one's habitus. The development of Simon's habitus as a gay is also determined by

primary and secondary socialization. The primary socialization deals with family and the relationship in the family, and the secondary socialization deals with the social life circle.

a. Primary Socialization

Simon's primary socialization is with his family. Simon is the only son of three children in his family. He has two sisters named Alice and Nora. Having two sister makes Simon is more habitualized to socialize with girls. Simon's family is a humorous and harmonious family. They are very close and caring to each other and they seem intermingle in any situation and condition. However, they are not religious. Family is the first social group for a child to socialize with others. Thus, the family has a very important role regarding the formation of individual's ideology and behavior. Simon is raised by Democratic parents, as it is seen in the quotation: My parents are Democrats. My dad likes to joke around, and it would definitely be awkward, but I guess I'm lucky. I know they're not going to disown me... (Albertalli, 2015: 41)."

As a Democratic family, Simon's family must uphold individual's freedom on the basis of human rights. Hyland (1994: 107) sates that as democracy serves individual freedom. It is supposed that everyone has an equal right to freedom. This freedom can be in the form of the freedom to choose and determine his or her gender and sexual orientation as they are the base of human rights as well. Hence, there is no doubt that Simon's family supports his habitus as a gay.

In addition to being democratic, Simon's family is not religious as well. It is well-portrayed in Simon's character which is not religious as he is not habitualized with religious matters, "Nora and I both say "Adam and Eve." It's a little surprising, considering we're probably the only family in the South without a Bible... (Albertalli, 2015:65)."

Because Simon's family is not religious, they must not consider gender and sexual orientation

as big problems as is the case with religious matter. This circumstance supports Simon's habitus as a gay.

Another condition in Simon's family that supports his gay habitus is his mother's profession. Simon's mother is a child psychologist. As a child psychologist, Simon's mother must understand well that homosexuality is not a disease or abnormal thing. Therefore, she cannot judge gay people. Besides his mother's profession, the condition in Simon's family that contributes to the development of his gay habitus is his father's tolerance toward LGBTQ. Simon's father is portrayed as a humorous father who always makes jokes about gay-related things.

And how are Leo and Nicole?" my dad asks, mouth twitching around the edges of his fork. Switching Leah's and Nick's genders is like the pinnacle of Dad-humor [...]"How about Daniel F.?" Nora asks, tucking a lock of hair behind her ear. Seriously, the piercings. I don't get her.

"Okay, Daniel F.'s the hottest one," says Alice. My mom and Alice are always using the phrase "eye candy" to talk about these people.

"Are you kidding me?" my dad says. "The gay one?"

"Daniel's not gay," Nora objects.

"Kid, he's a one-man Pride Parade. An eternal flame... (Albertalli, 2015:18-20)."

Because his family often talks about gay related things, it supports the formation of Simon's habitus as a gay. Other than that, his parents do not treat him as they are supposed to. It is because he is the only son in their family. His parents used to think that they would not have a son as they have already had two daughters—Alice and Nora. Thus, this affects the way they raise and treat him. Simon is habitualized with

being treated as a girl as his parents sometimes think and treat him as a girl.

“Oh, it was the most incredible moment. And your dad carried your sister in, and she kept saying, ‘No baby!’” My mom laughs. “I couldn’t take my eyes off you. I couldn’t believe we were the parents of a boy. I guess we had gotten so used to thinking of ourselves as girl parents, so it was like this whole new thing to discover... (Albertalli, 2015:172).”

Basically, Simon has homosexual orientation. So he must have a tendency to develop gay habitus. The development of his gay habitus is strengthened by his family circumstances that seem to support his gay habitus.

b. Secondary Socialization

The secondary socialization that supports the development of Simon’s habitus as a gay is Simon’s social life circle. Simon’s social life circle includes his circle of friends and his school environment. Simon is the student of Creekwood High School. He has two best friends named Nick and Leah, and one close friend named Abby. In other words, Simon has more girl-friends than boy-friends. This circumstance is supposed to be the same as the circumstance in which he interacts with his two female sisters. That is to say, since Simon is surrounded by girls, he might share the same interest with girls, one of which can be sexual attraction toward guys. All the more, Leah is fond of gay guys: “Leah loves gay guys, so she’d probably be freaking thrilled... (Albertalli, 2015: 41).” Leah also has an interest in “yaoi”. It is a Japanese word for a genre or fictional media originating which features homoerotic relationship between male characters: “Though, I guess it happens in reverse. There are girls like Leah, who do these yaoi pencil sketches and post them to websites... (Albertalli, 2015: 19).” Hence, it can be assumed

that this circumstance supports the formation of Simon’s habitus as a gay.

The wider social scope which supports the formation of Simon’s habitus as a gay is school environment. Many students in his school have deviant sex orientation. Some of the girls in his school are lesbians and one of his seniors is a gay. There is also a boy named Cal who is a bisexual. He actually smiles. “Anyway, I thought it might interest you that my brother is gay... (Albertalli, 2015: 1).”

...

On Thursday after rehearsal, Cal very casually mentions that he’s bisexual. And that maybe we should hang out sometime. It catches me off guard. All I can do is sort of gape at him. Sweet, slow-moving Cal, with his hipster bangs and his ocean eyes... (Albertalli, 2015: 142).

It is something interesting for Simon to find out that someone is a gay or bisexual so that he may hang out with them. Moreover, some of his friends are just cool about gay things. It’s funny that I eat lunch with these guys five days a week, but we never really hang out apart from the group. I kind of wish I knew them better. Even if Bram doesn’t have his shit together about Leah. I don’t know. For one thing, both Garrett and Bram have been totally cool about the gay thing all day, which I guess I didn’t expect from a bunch of athletes (Albertalli, 2015: 135).

Since Simon is habitualized with his social circle which is related to gay things, Simon becomes more sure and believes that he is a gay as the more he gets used to it, the more he likes it.

The development of Simon’s habitus as a gay is also supported by his school that celebrates gender bender, “WEDNESDAY IS

GENDER BENDER DAY, which basically amounts to southern straight people cross-dressing... (Albertalli, 2015: 46)." Gender bender is a celebration that requires cross-dressing. In this celebration males perform as female through their outfit or dress and vice versa. By celebrating gender bender, Simon's school implicitly tolerates the existence of LGBTQ. Since Simon has a tendency to become a gay, this condition gives him more trigger to to develop his habitus as a gay.

To sum up, the social life circle of Simon indicates that there is tolerance to the existence of LGBTQ. This means that social life circle of Simon i.e. friends and school environment contribute to the formation of Simon's habitus as a gay. By getting support from his environment, Simon is encouraged to confirm his gay identity.

CONCLUSION

There are five representations of gay habitus represented in the character of Simon i.e. having no attraction to the opposite sex, adoring the same sex, obsessing and fantasizing about the same sex, feeling jealous and cynical to suspected competitors, and falling in love with the same sex. These gay characters are well supported by some factors. These supporting factors come from two kinds of socialization which are primary socialization and secondary socialization. The primary socialization deals with the interaction between Simon and his family. Moreover, the secondary socialization is related to Simon interaction with his friends in his social circle.

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