

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background

In human life as social beings, it is inseparable from interaction activities with the social environment. The social environment is an environment that is very attached to human life where daily activities are carried out. According to Muhroji, et al (2008: 72) the environment is something that is beyond the limits of a person's genetic capabilities and potential. This opinion is supported by Saragih, et al (2013: 2) that the social environment is all people/humans who influence individuals either directly or indirectly. The influence of this social environment has a very broad and large impact on human behavior including an individual's sexual orientation, as explained by APA that a number of studies that have been conducted indicate the possibility that biological factors, psychological development, and the influence of the social environment can influence a person's sexual orientation. Hamer (1999) also claimed that sexual orientation is not a choice, it may still be created and found with the help of environment, associations, and discovering one's actual identity.

Sexual orientation, which is connected to sexuality, is concerned with who a person is sexually attracted to and wants to be in a romantic or sexual relationship with. According to American Psychological Association (2012), the gender of persons to whom one feels sexually and romantically attracted is referred to as their sexual orientation. In 2014, Ngun stated that the majority of human sex is expressed through sexual orientation. Sexual orientation can be distinguished conceptually from other related phenomena such as sexual partner choice, gender identity, and sexual behavior as stated by Rosario et al (2006).

According to Bailey (2016), Men, women, or both may be of interest depending on their sexual orientation. When it comes to sexual orientation, there are not only when men who fall in love with women, which we call heterosexual, as happens with most humans in general. But also in the other side, there are three most common sexual orientations that exist in this world: A homosexual or gay man is one who is attracted to and in love with another man, a lesbian woman is one who is attracted to and in love with another woman, and a bisexual person is one who is attracted to both sexes, male and female.

Although the words "gay," "lesbian," and "bisexual" are still often used today, it should be highlighted that sexual orientation can occur on a continuum rather than necessarily within clearly defined categories. Some persons who identify as bisexual actually only feel comfortable with certain people in their social environment, as happened and felt by Elio, one of the main characters in Andre Aciman's novel *Call Me By Your Name* which will be discussed in this research. Elio Perlman in *Call Me by Your Name* is a cautious 17-year-old American-Italian Jewish boy, who met with Oliver, a 24-year-old Columbia professor who stays with Elio and Elio's family for six weeks to search for Elio's father's assistance in revising his work. Their meeting and story set in Italy in the summer of 1980 can truly be defined as the cause and beginning of the significant changes that took place in Elio's life.

Their story begins when Oliver visits Elio's house to meet with Elio's father and seek for his assistance in improving his work. When Oliver comes for his six-week visit, Elio is startled to discover himself feeling differently about him than the other guests. Oliver's arrival makes Elio sexually attracted, and Elio eventually discovers that he is in love with Oliver, surprisingly it turns out that Oliver also felt the same way as Elio did when he first met Elio. But in the beginning, Oliver sends Elio romantic indications that he likes Elio while dancing and kissing one of Elio's female friends named Chiara. Elio is also having an affair with a woman named Marzia, a young girl in the town who has a love interest in Elio, and they did make love. But as Oliver started to avoid Elio, Elio ended up being the one to initially reveal his feelings first to Oliver. Oliver is the first to feel anything for Elio, so at first he is a little perplexed, but they eventually make out nevertheless.

Elio experienced a strong sensation of love as a result of his attraction to Oliver that emerged from the start of their encounter, as well as the sense of comfort he felt and the habit of meeting also spending time together. Elio eventually opted to ignore Marzia and focus on his serious romantic relationship with Oliver. After his six weeks stay, Oliver will return to Columbia, making it a little difficult for them to reconcile, thus Elio and Oliver will undoubtedly fall in love with one another and enjoy their little time together. Both Elio and Oliver attempted to get past their brief connection because having a gay relationship was still illegal at the time. The novel ends with the revelation that Oliver will marry and have children, 20 years later in New England they met again, where Elio lives alone. They both remember everything that happened to them in Italy 20 years ago and want to always keep it forever as their beautiful memories.

The summary of the story above really shows how much influence the social environment has on a person's sexual orientation. As happened above, before Oliver's arrival, Elio was a normal teenage boy who had a close relationship with a woman named Marzia. But after Oliver's arrival, everything changed drastically, the sense of comfort and attraction that Elio felt during his time with Oliver made Elio realize his bisexuality. Elio's sexual orientation seems to get a big influence from the social environment around him, especially those related to the people closest to him. This shows that there are influences from the social environment that contribute to influencing an individual's sexual orientation.

Andre Aciman wrote the story with a unique and interesting writing style that made the researcher use the novel as the main object of the research. As mentioned above, this study will look from the point of view accordance with the topic and limited mainly focus on the discussion of Elio as one of the main characters in the novel. To forestall wide investigation, a few fundamental speculations and ideas about the influence of social environment on individual sexual orientation are utilized and applied by using behaviorism theory and hermeneutics theory.

## **B. Problem Statement**

Research questions in this study:

1. What is the influence of social environment on sexual orientation in Call Me by Your Name?

2. How is the influence of social environment on sexual orientation described in Call Me by Your Name?
3. Why is the influence of social environment on sexual orientation addressed in Call Me by Your Name?

### **C. Objectives**

The objectives of this study are:

1. To identify the influence of social environment on sexual orientation in Call Me by Your Name.
2. To describe how the influence of social environment on sexual orientation in Call Me by Your Name.
3. To reveal why the influence of social environment on sexual orientation is addressed in Call Me by Your Name.

### **D. Significance**

The findings of this study will contribute to enriching the previous study and improve knowledge in the field of literature, especially about the influence of social environment on individual sexual orientation through the novel Call Me by Your Name by André Aciman. The results of this study are also expected to make the readers can understanding better about behaviorism and hermeneutics theory used in this study and can give inspiration to other researchers who want to develop the same theory.