

The Portrayal of the Main Character's Hegemonic Masculinity Dispositions in Natsume Soseki's *Botchan*: A Gender Study Perspective

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Abstract. Literature can be the window to discern new perspectives about life and broaden the reader's horizons. *Botchan* by Natsume Soseki is a novel that has a big theme about morality which can be comprehended by the archetypes of the people from a big city and remote area, yet the polemic that appeared is rooted in the discrepancy of the characters' dispositions. The writers attempt to analyze it in the frame of gender study which later gets elaborated with the hegemonic masculinity in two questions: "In what way does *Botchan* represent hegemonic masculinity?" and "How do the hegemonic masculinity dispositions within *Botchan* affect *Botchan*'s relations with Hotta, Mr. Yoshikawa, and Red Shirt?" The writers utilized the close reading method alongside the gender study approach. The hegemonic masculinity from *Botchan* attracts the character with a similar disposition (Hotta) and dissociates with Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa that do not embody hegemonic masculinity dispositions. The indicator for hegemonic masculinity is determined by multiple factors, such as strength, competitiveness, assertiveness, confidence, and independence. Hegemonic masculinity is a glimpse of the extensive range of the definition of masculinity, therefore it is fenceless for arguments from other notions.

Keywords: Disposition, Gender, Hegemonic Masculinity.

1. INTRODUCTION

Human beings are considered complex creatures since everyone has respective characteristics that cannot be synonymous with each other. Therefore, literature can encapsulate the mind of the creator to express the uniqueness that the human mind produces. In novels or on the broad scale which is literature, readers can relate on a personal level in terms of deciphering the innate characteristics of human beings and the behavior of human beings in society (Austin, 2022). Literature emanates with the perpetual element and is lenient for the room of discussion, therefore it does not bind in the development of epoch and geographical conditions. An instance of it is how the play entitled *Hamlet* which was made by Shakespeare in the year 1599-1601 got integrated with the theory of psychoanalytic by Sigmund Freud (Jones, 2023). That analogy induces the writers to input the theory from gender study within the novel *Botchan* by Natsume Soseki.

The writers intend to bring up the character study from one of the legendary literary works from Japan, entitled *Botchan* which was written by Natsume Soseki in 1906. Even though the novel *Botchan* does not explicitly state the theme of gender study, there is an implication of the characters within the novel that reflect the gender norm restrained by the environment or social construct and the characters' past experiences. In the novel, concretely

the main character is compacted with how the males raised by the hardships converge with the exemplar of the male gender that diverges from what he deemed as the masculine archetype.

Each character in the novel has a unique disposition and this study aims to examine the characters within this novel with the assistance of the sub-theory of gender study which is the hegemony masculinity theory that is compiled in the *Fair Treatment in Sport* book by Mann and Krane from 2016. This theory accentuates the disposition of masculinity as the tool to assert social status and how it influences other people or as the act to subjugate others. There was a previous study that also utilized the hegemonic masculinity theory by Michael Messner in his book titled *Sport, men, and the gender order: critical feminist perspectives*. In the related book, it depicted the hegemonic masculinity within the sports industry, predominantly in the scenario of match games for the athletes in which they applied the respective dispositions as the defense mechanism to win the rivalry to the opposite teams and as the signifier to assort with other male teammates. However, the indicators to expound hegemonic masculinity in the viewpoint of Michael Messner are too broad and only gravitate towards aggressiveness traits. That source of reference is cultivated by the writers by concretizing the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity into pronounced parameters according to Mann and Krane. By the benchmark from Mann and Krane, the writers can examine the main character's utilization of linguistic elements, how one's wears attire or one's visual appearance, the somatic mobilization, and personality that is reflected based on the intensity which results in habits.

The selected theory which is hegemonic masculinity is aligned with a particular gender, by that, the comparison element of it is named hegemonic femininity. The divergence lies down where the hegemonic femininity saturates with the archetypes of being gentle, compassionate, emotional, and dependent. The hegemonic femininity theory can be fathomed by one of the instances in Disney's reincarnation of the folklore titled *The Little Mermaid* from the year 1989.

Disney portrayed the main character from *The Little Mermaid* which is Ariel as a woman who is a pacifist and reluctant to get embroiled in conflict, relying on the strength of other characters, having sentiment toward the secondary characters, and putting her aspirations by contrive to entangled with the man of her dream. It generates the isomorphism within the women demographic about the epitome of the "ideal woman" (Hoey, 2020). Nonetheless, those sub-theories of gender study are innately under the umbrella of social science, therefore it is open to a multitude of interpretations, agreements, or refutation. Therefore, the writers propose the theme within this writing to be an incentive for further discourse or as a tool of comparison to other academic perspectives by the readers or researchers. Based on the background of the study, there are two questions formulated in this research:

1. In what way does Botchan represent hegemonic masculinity?
2. How do the hegemonic masculinity dispositions within Botchan affect Botchan's relations with Hotta, Mr. Yoshikawa, and Red Shirt?

Gender Study

For centuries, human beings are divided into males and females, and in the long run, until now, the classification between the two genders become more fluid (McGuire, 2015). From the 20th century until the 21st century, there is a development of the branch of social science that specifically studies the topic of gender, called gender study. Gender study is a social science that makes humans the subject of the study which not only boxes in the dichotomy of appearance but also grasps the characteristic of respective genders who behave emotionally or physically (Halley, 2022). Gender by the terminology from the book titled *The Psychology of Gender* is:

“It refers to the social categories of male and female. These categories are distinguished from one another by a set of psychological features and role attributes that society has assigned to the biological category of sex.” (p. 3)

The reference for the gender study field can be from the literary works that propose related ideas. Before the existence of gender study, the determinant for gender disposition is based upon the societal norm that has been acknowledged for centuries, for instance, in the story of Hercules by the Greek pundit Euripides which promotes the archetype of a male warrior. This concept has been transfixed for the consensus of people throughout history, which is prevalent for the scenario of warfare and the duty to protect others which is officiated to the male gender (Gerwin, 2022). The male gender biologically speaking is more dominant in the physical aspect which becomes the groundwork for the literature with the male character as the center point to tell stories about the aforementioned archetype. According to Murfin and Smith, the gender study has a function to accumulate the terms regarding the definition of gender and fill the gap of the insufficiency within it.

Gender study is relevant, especially during the current state of the world where there is a thoughtfulness of gender as an academic discourse that percepts humans as dynamic beings which accentuate by the advancement of technology and globalization. Additionally, gender study can assist people who undertake to delve into their identity in which spectrum of gender they belong to. What gender studies discussed are conceived as essentialism which underlined the difference between the counterparts of men and women according to each body and constructionism which highlights the nurture of oneself and the output that connotates with

gender disposition (Bohan, 1993). The gender study has an implication as the medium to deconstruct human traits based on the psychological framework of sexual identification of human beings, whereas, on the contrary, sex is transfixed into the biological realm. However, there is a chance for intersection from either sex or gender (Haig, 2000). By the nature of both, gender is deemed to be more abstract and it becomes a dynamic subject to study which makes the gender study within the conventional education institution relatively holistic, especially in the 21st century where even there is an establishment of a gender study major at some university all over the world (Kowarski, 2021). Tracing back, it was rooted in the Western hemisphere, where the emergence of gender study comes in handy in the context of revising the already stipulated theory as the blueprint for the new belief or having the intention to criticize the pre-existing norm (Gottschall, 2002).

The nature of the gender study is versatile in encompassing literature, linguistics, geography, history, politics, archaeology, economics, sociology, psychology, anthropology, mass media, law, public policy, racial and ethnicity of the human, social hierarchy, nationality, and many more depending on the development and the transitions of the certain epoch (Woodward & Woodward, 2015). Concretely in the literary realm, gender study assists to explain the modus operandi of the characters based upon the psyche, biological, and environments of the characters. Moreover, the output of the characters within the literature, such as the choice of diction, inflection, lingua franca, and the selection of the physical attribute (clothes or makeover) can be the by-products or the variables of the gender study which make the writers put the related characteristics according to the targeted gender.

Hegemonic Masculinity

Similar to the development of gender study, the study of masculinity was first introduced in the last few decades of the 20th century. Masculinity theory is synonymous with the epitome of a “double-edged sword” which can assist men in terms of alleviating male psychological issues or even elucidating the ramifications that emerge from masculine disposition. However, defining the meaning of masculine is subjective and every people grasps it differently. There is a grey area of what it means to be masculine and the discussion regarding this topic never ceases to an end. One of the definitions of masculinity is from the book titled *Masculinity Studies an Interdisciplinary* by Feyza Bhatti. It stated that masculinity is: “...internalized sex role identity that was shaped by cultural ideals and role models.” (p. 10)

By that, the term masculinity is inevitable with the ideal concept that was brought by certain cultures which dictate how males should behave to fit in the category of masculine.

Another example is by the two psychologists, which are Mann and Krane, who attempt to bring up the case of ideal masculinity dispositions which they envisage as hegemonic masculinity. The meaning of ideal by the postulation of Mann and Krane does not mean that is blatantly something that ought to be aspired or achieved by every male, however, it refers to the power dominance to be on top of the social hierarchy that is obtained by machoism, high level of aggressiveness fueled by testosterone hormone, and the proclivity to patronizing towards those who deemed to be contrarian with the epitome of masculinity by objectifying the body of the women and antagonizing the homosexual orientation or even the feminine males (Weber, 1946). Mann and Krane write the scenario based on how the interpersonal relations between athletes in the sports industry. Concretely, Mann and Krane found the widespread bias related to the factor of gender, for instance, the patriarchal domination within the system. Patriarchy as defined by Gerda in the book *The Creation of Patriarchy* is:

“In its narrow meaning, patriarchy refers to the system, historically derived from Greek and Roman law, in which the male head of the household had absolute legal and economic power over his dependent female and male family members.” (p. 238-239)

The one who receives more prosperity in terms of monetary fee and gets better treatment is the male gender, due to the highly populous male that officiates as athletes and in the structural hierarchy of the sports institution. This custom of hegemonic masculinity is perceived to be legitimate, as long the people that practiced it do not befall into resistance and ambivalence from other parties. The term “hegemonic” from hegemonic masculinity got inspired by a Marxist theorist named Antonio Gramsci. Antonio Gramsci popularized the term “hegemony” which means the act of subjugation that make destabilization of equality concepts in the social, economic, and governmental context (Bates, 1975).

Even though at its first inception this theory directly critiques the sports institution, the essence of Mann and Krane’s hegemonic masculinity theory is deemed as universal and become one of the mediums of check and balance towards the power mismanagement that is perpetrated by the male gender. The pragmatic act from the male that fulfilled the definition of hegemonic masculinity is divided into some characteristics, which are

a. Strength

The parameter to measure one’s strength is by the effectiveness of physique mobilization intends as the defense mechanism or problem-solving method. How the male gender behaves with physical gestures can have an impact on the environment, other people, or even oneself. It can be cultivated by voluntary or coerce physical forging.

b. Competitiveness

The desire or impetus for the male gender to be better than other characters. In detail, it can be seen from what motivation or the effort of the male gender to achieve one's goal.

c. Assertiveness

The method for the male gender to assert dominance which can be conveyed through psychical or verbal aspects. The act of assertiveness can be conducted by own initiative or by the insistence of other characters.

d. Confidence

The feeling of pride rooted in a male's ego can be explicated as the psyche state that correlates with uplifting one's value and how to maintain or even elevate it. Furthermore, the confidence of the male gender can aim for acceptance in the social context.

e. Independence

It is the contrary of interdependency which can be elaborate as the act from the male gender that emphasizes the survival instinct to fulfill the need of oneself. By that, the male gender attempted to gather all the resources by themselves for the purpose of primary needs or even to attract validation from others.

The theory of hegemonic masculinity can be as complementary to the pre-existing gender study or some collectives deem it as an adversary force, especially by the certain political movement that affiliated political gender as the narrative driving force. The nature of hegemonic masculinity theory is subjective, however, for the writers to maintain neutrality, Hegemonic Masculinity theory is utilized as the study that gains knowledge from the disposition of the biologically born male by the evidence that is sourced in literary work with the aim to give the elaboration on the social impact from the gender disposition that is taken to its highest rail without the writers intending to promote or patronize certain ideology.

2. METHOD

Object of the Study

The main object of the study is a novel titled *Botchan* written by Natsume Soseki. *Botchan* was first published on January 1, 1906, during the Meiji epoch, and in total, there are 202 pages with 11 chapters. The novel stamped Japanese literature on a pedestal due to this novel unique way of conveying Japanese burlesque and it describes how the Japanese ethos to socialize in the past, which encompasses the education system, the societal norm, and how the

visual appearance of the people and infrastructure during that era. The topic that this novel discussed in a broad sense is the moral dilemma with a humoristic style, therefore there are the elements of educative and entertainment that become the appealing selling point of this novel.

In detail, Botchan tells a story about a young man by the name of Botchan that immigrated from Tokyo to the county school in Matsuyama to become a teacher. Botchan transition from adulthood to the more mature stage coincides with Botchan's arrival in Matsuyama. Botchan got exposed to the culture shock of Meiji ethic, even in a remote area like Matsuyama. Being a youngling, Botchan was unaware of the sociological complexity, even in Tokyo. Botchan was too focused on the dynamic of person between person, instead of the person with the environment. By delving into the working realm, Botchan got a taste of not only the community but also how the milieu became the "sentient" object rooted in the Meiji epoch.

Botchan is surrounded by a system that insinuates a sense of revolt within him. Botchan as the main character is an intriguing subject due to the naïve sense that Botchan brought ever since at a young age until adulthood. There is a paradox where at first glance, Botchan seems like a character whose dimension only from the black and white perspective, however, due to the turmoil in the environment where Botchan inhabited, there is a clash between Botchan's moral principles and perspective which establishes the complex storyline that involved the conflict or crony with other characters with unique personalities.

Most importantly, the encounter of Botchan with the other characters strengthens the role of Botchan as somewhat a wave breaker to the isomorphic within the environment that is deemed as ambivalent to what Botchan adhered to. Examples of the characters that are inimical to Botchan are characters named Red Shirt, Hotta, and Mr. Yoshikawa who all officiated as teachers like Botchan. The conflicts are generated due to the difference in the respective way of thinking and social ethics. Besides gaining enemies, as the storyline goes on, Botchan can get along with the character named Hotta due to the findings of the personality similarity besides their differences. The climax of this novel is caused by Botchan and Hotta seeking revenge due to both feeling detriment by the Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa. Botchan and Hotta found out that the Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa making false statements about them. Together, Botchan and Hotta work their way to cope with the intricacies caused by Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa.

Approach of the Study

To make the study of literary writing visceral, the writers employed certain approaches and methods that are in line with the aim of the study which also can maximize the medium or the object of the study according to the usefulness. The method that the writers employ is in the form of close reading method. According to the deconstructionist Barbara Johnson, the close reading method can auspices the researcher which she stated:

“the value of close reading lies in its capacity for taking seriously what does not immediately make sense.” (p. 140)

In accordance with the related method, the writers pick up the elements that the novel provides that encompass the structure or composition, the theme, retrospective storyline or flashback, foreshadowing, the significance of language utilization from the characters that poured into the writing, the social narrative that involves the characters in the novel, and any available technicality within the novel. Therefore, the close reading method shines a light on the alternative point of view of the literary work. By implementing the close reading method, the writers are obliged to be itemized in deciphering what is written in the literary work and ruminating it to find the certain essence that is aspired to obtain.

Furthermore, regarding the approach that is suitable and congruent with the theme of the writing, the writers choose the gender study approach. The intention is to highlight the psyche state of human beings according to the specific gender. In the broader scope, the writers by this approach can comprehend the vital role of the culture, or in this case, gender stereotypes that surround the community and how that stereotypes can influence them or in reverse, how can the people set up the standard for how certain gender should behave.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this part of the study, the writers elucidate the specification of hegemonic masculinity dispositions from *Botchan* with the assistance of the book *Fair Treatment in Sport* by Mann and Krane with the aim to concretize the abstract definition from gender study.

Botchan's Strength

Botchan is an individual who has certain rules of right and wrong. If there is the person(s) that perpetrated the act that does not align with what *Botchan* adhered to, *Botchan* will do the act of punishment. *Botchan* does not hesitate to attack anyone who is deviant of his belief even towards his own brother. On page 16, *Botchan* at one point throws a chessman into his brother's forehead until it bleeds. *Botchan* is enraged due his brother mocks *Botchan's* rigid playing rules whereas his brother uses the “waiter” tactic, which *Botchan* perceived to be against the rule of the chess game, especially his own rules.

Furthermore, the male gender has a sense of dignity that needs to be maintained and if there is a third party that attempts to condescend it, it incites ambivalent reactions however in this context Botchan chose the violent way. In the social context of hegemonic masculinity, there are unspoken rules that draw the line of things that are acceptable and vice versa which also apply to where the interaction can go into a more physical altercation. Botchan is accustomed to resolving the conflict the hard way which indicates how thin the composure that he got. There are scenes that strengthen that argument, which involve the physical contest between Botchan and his friend. On page 13, he fights with his childhood friend that is two years older than him with the purpose to show respective toughness.

Botchan's Competitiveness

Botchan is constantly being compared to Botchan's brother that deemed to be acing Botchan's parents' expectations which delineates the cankered feeling within Botchan. Moreover, Botchan begins to gibe towards the brother with ad hominem arguments, which stress the subjective offense. On page 15, Botchan dislikes his brother's clean white face and Botchan compares it with the attribute of the female actress. That sentiment is outward as Botchan's defense mechanism that only Botchan can rely on because objectively, Botchan is overshadowed by the academic achievement of his brother.

On page 16, Botchan even uttered negative thoughts about his brother's toil in learning English and his brother's aspiration to become a businessman. The archetypal masculinity vocation that Botchan envisages is conservative, where Botchan implicitly implied that men are designed to participate in a vocation that required physical attributes compared to armchair science or the miscellaneous type of pensive activity. Ironically, at the stage when Botchan transitioned into adulthood, the career decision that Botchan made is to become a teacher and it is based on the opportunist mindset which agitates with Botchan's passion.

Botchan is self-cognizant that he is not prominent in intelligence, and that, he devoted himself to studying for three years for him to be competent as an educator. Botchan wants to surpass his brother's achievements by Botchan's chosen path of career and also it is based on his parents' and society's academic galvanization, therefore, Botchan has no other choice but to accept the offer from the vacancy which is portrayed on page 24.

Botchan's Assertiveness

Growing up with childhood friends that were considered to be rascals by the community, in terms of perpetrating mischievousness, Botchan got immensely influenced,

specifically in terms of linguistic mannerisms. The related characteristic seems to be adamant even when Botchan got older. Botchan realized his demeanor yet he is ignorant to change it. Botchan got no intention to adjust his linguistic output according to the new environment where he is involved in. Besides physical reliance, males also tend to utter language with the purpose to assert and maintain their status. Botchan by his language utilization, in this case, has a sense of pride that his “imperfect” language is something that should not be bothered, instead it becomes his signature that he originates from a big city. On the flip side, within the page 62, no matter how proper the language utterance from people in Matsuyama, which is in comparison with Tokyo is a smaller region, Botchan does not see it as a redeeming quality because he is already looking down on the villagers.

Moreover, in another scene on page 42, Botchan maintains his fast-paced and high-tone speech in the class and imposes students to follow what he speaks. As the learning activity goes on, the students incrementally become noisy. Botchan as the teacher bears a responsibility to make an order in the case of a chaotic situation. Botchan's life is filled with physical reliance to solve the occurring issues, however, in the academic context, it is clear that Botchan's physique is of no use. By that, Botchan resorts to his language utilization. On page 42, Botchan that already used a high tone, enhances it again to assert his indignant emotions and Botchan orders the students to be quiet which is shown on page 50.

Still in the corridor of male language that was researched in the “Fair Treatment in Sport”, male gender orienting on how things are supposed to be done and aiming for the expected end goals which apply in how males uttered the language, for instance like the basketball coach which dominated by the male gender. It can be done by the male by raising the intonation of a voice which can be a way to emit certain emotions. At a certain point in this novel which is on page 54, Botchan has a duty as a night watch in school. On the night of watching activity, there are beds available for the teachers to stay in. However, in Botchan's bed, he got a calamity. On page 59, Botchan's bed is swarmed by grasshoppers which makes him angry and calls out to the dormitory students to ask who did the related mischief. Botchan conveyed a similar assertive tone like what he reflects in the class activity.

Botchan's Confidence

On the first day of Botchan's teaching activity, he spectates the students and judges their physical appearance. Furthermore, Botchan is on his mind making his own assessment of his stature.

I am a Tokyo kid, delicately built and small, and did not appear very impressive even in my elevated position. If it comes to a scraping, I can hold my own even with wrestlers, but I had no means of appearing aweinspiring, merely by the aid of my tongue, to so many as forty such big chaps before me. (p. 41-42)

It is prevalent for human beings to feel satisfaction and judgment about their body. Specifically for the male gender, the self-body evaluation is not as sensitive as the women in comparison. The female gender assesses its own body in a much bigger scope where the judgment can be prominent whether the woman is relatively big, skinny, or even in moderate shape, there is a proclivity for the conundrum to hit the negative perception of own body. Where on the male gender, the negative evaluation of own body is felt when the male reaches the obese condition or overly weight state.

In the *Fair Treatment in Sport* book which is mostly filled with the characterization of male athletes, the skinny, moderate, and muscular body shapes still got acceptance in the sport realm because those types of bodies still function for certain type of physical activity. However, overweight athletes will get shunned which transfix bad sentiment towards that related type of body. Here, Botchan has the stature to be relatively small and he has justification where he deemed himself to be able to survive even when he is in a confrontation with other people.

Botchan's Independence

Botchan as a male character has the idealism to strive for independence instead of dependency. Botchan is keen to do the thing on his own and it correlates with upholding the sense of dignity within the male gender if the subject can be useful with his own's effort. However, Botchan is not equipped yet to bear that responsibility, and his brother is seen to be in a better professional trajectory.

It is also the factor of the age difference between the two characters which makes the distinct level of maturity. The chemistry between Botchan with his brother is tremulous due to the tension of competitiveness between both. The male gender innately has the desire to overlap the others by being self-proving in elevating personal value. When the brother offered help to Botchan on page 21, Botchan seemed to be skeptical and not receiving it with an open hand.

Botchan will do anything as long it is not contracted with the shadow of his brother. Even though the two brothers have non-seamless relations with each other, as siblings, they deeply have a sense of empathy, in the case from page 23, Botchan's brother shows it through monetary assistance. Botchan received the brother's help with a surprised reaction but was

grateful for it. Moreover, the given money is the basis to sustain Botchan's early life in Matsuyama.

It is prevalent for male with male rivalry to occur at certain moments, however fundamentally, they have a bond that makes awareness to have each other back when it needed. In the aforementioned scenes, Botchan can be viewed to reek of the male ego which eventually got outlined by his brother. His brother is more excels in regulating his ego and by that, the dispute between Botchan and his brother starts to wane.

The Effect of Hegemonic Masculinity Dispositions within Botchan towards Botchan's Relations with Hotta, Yoshaiko, and Red Shirt

This section has the intention to answer the second question. In general, the reaction from other characters toward Botchan is influenced by the hegemonic masculinity that Botchan reflects. Corresponding to what Mann and Krane portrayed, there is a sameness in the portrayal of the male athletes in the Fair Treatment in Sport book within Botchan, which further elaboration is Botchan only can be befriended by the person(s) with a similar type of hegemonic masculinity. On the flip side, the person(s) with the contrary disposition gets aloof. The writers attempt to pick up the scenes from the novel storyline to convey the evidence from Botchan's relations with related characters.

The first character that the writers elucidate is Hotta. Botchan's first encounter with Hotta is at Matsuyama, precisely in the teacher's room in the school which Botchan is assigned to. Botchan gazed at every one of the teachers and formed his perception based on the respective teacher's body characteristics. Botchan is transfixed when he looked at one of the teachers named Hotta.

This was a fellow of massive body, with hair closely cropped. He looked like one of the old-time devilish priests who made the Eizan temple famous. (p. 35)

As elucidated on page 35, Hotta has a contrasting image compared to the rest of the teachers whom Botchan deemed as "well-tailored". Hotta is more like a fighter that Botchan usually encounters in Tokyo. The moniker of the "devilish priest" is uttered by Botchan to Hotta due to the towering stature of Hotta which gives a sense of authority. However, Botchan changed the alias that he made into "porcupine" which has a lighter connotation and eradicates the sense of intimidation due to Hotta that starts to become open to Botchan by initiating a conversation that started on page 35. Not only by discourse, but Hotta also wants to have rendezvous with Botchan in the near future. Those interactions become the starting ground of the "bro-like" relationship as Mann and Krane describe which is the social chemistry that

enkindles from the tantamount hegemonic masculinity dispositions. Hotta seemed to be aggressive in reaching out to Botchan and it indicates how Hotta initiate to visit the inn where Botchan inhabited.

“Is this the room?”—a loud voice was heard,—a voice which woke me up, and Porcupine entered. (p. 38)

Not just impromptu, Hotta rings a signal of his visitation in a loud voice that wakes Botchan from his sleep. Subsequently, they have a conversation about formal and informal topics that are compiled on page 39. There is an idea from Hotta that Botchan should stay in the better settlement. Hotta is imperative and additionally independent in forming his thinking that in this context does not cross Botchan’s mind.

He seemed satisfied by arranging all by myself. Indeed, I should not be able to occupy such a room for long. (p. 39)

Later on, still on page 39, Botchan believes to have a trusted companion and asks another favor from Hotta to get a room for him. Hotta placed Botchan in the dormitory named Ikagin which the tenants of it are the connoisseurs of antique artworks. As Botchan agrees to stay in the new settlement, Botchan feels the tenants’ treatment firsthand. Botchan often got offered by the tenants to purchase the artworks. It occurred in the often period according to page 46, which make nausea within Botchan and Botchan is reluctant to the offer due to his lack of money.

Even though there is no involvement of Hotta in the related scenes, what occurred in Ikagin will have fruition in Botchan and Hotta’s relations that the writers elucidate later. In retrospect in the early part of Botchan’s life in Matsuyama, his relationship with Hotta is in a good state, even in the mundane moment from page 41, Hotta occasionally greets Botchan at school. Even at a certain, point Hotta even treats Botchan with the beverage.

Porcupine treated me to a cup of ice-water. When I first met him in the school, I thought him a disgustingly overbearing fellow, but judging by the way he had looked after me so far, he appeared not so bad after all. Only he seemed, like me, impatient by nature and of quick-temper. (p. 40)

Botchan sees himself in Hotta due to the similarity in aggressiveness in the context of conveying emotions. Besides how the linguistic approach in the social context, the males who adhered to hegemonic masculinity dispositions also emphasized the physical strength which Botchan and Hotta come in hand in terms of their method of resolving issues. In Chapter X of this novel, the scene on page 159 is revolving around the festival to commemorate Japanese victory during wartimes. The festival is filled with a multitude of people from all segments of

society, which include the students. Considering how crowded the festival is, the people seem to be uncoordinated and not gathered in order. The teachers that are also present in this festival attempt to tidy up the collective of students.

Botchan as the spectator judges the imperfection from the effort of the teachers. Similar to the male athletes in *Fair Treatment in Sport*, there is a prevalence of hegemonic masculinity dispositions that tend to judge each other physical competency. However, on page 162 the composure of the teachers starts to break when the students are embroiled in an altercation. The cause of the riot to incite is the school gangs that clash with each other. Botchan as the witness got in the rush of adrenaline that make him eager to show his physical strength.

I am fond of fighting, and hearing of the clash, darted forward to make the most of the fun. (p. 162)

The celebratory event does not only commence once. On the next day which is on page 164, Hotta invited Botchan to attend the subsequent event. The additional motive for Hotta to have Botchan alongside him in the event is that Hotta wants to taste the delicacy that is available. Surprisingly, this event also causes a riot similar to the first one. From page 172, the chaos is perpetrated by the same party which is the school gangs that were mentioned beforehand.

Why can't they stop it!" Porcupine, as he spoke, dashed forward, dodging among the running crowd. (p. 172)

This occurrence becomes the momentum for both Botchan and Hotta to exhibit what they can do to resolve the conflict the hard way. Besides Hotta, there are characters that are contrary to the hegemonic masculinity dispositions within Botchan which are represented by Red Shirt. Red Shirt is also one of the teachers that teach at the same school as Botchan. Back to the earlier page on page 34, concretely at the first teacher meeting, the striking appearance of the Red Shirt is deemed strange by Botchan.

And it was a red shirt; wouldn't that kill you! I heard afterwards that he wears a red shirt all the year round. What a strange affliction! According to his own explanation, he has his shirts made to order for the sake of his health as the red color is beneficial to the physical condition. Unnecessary worry,... (p. 34)

Botchan is ignorant of the reason behind the application of a red shirt in this man. Ever since a young age, Botchan was habituated to "suck it off" everything that befalls him. In another explanation, Botchan does not like complicating things, even when it detracts him. On page 12, precisely in his early childhood of Botchan, Botchan injured himself when he was in his school year for the sake of accepting the challenge from his classmates. Botchan jumped

from the top floor of the class which make him dislocate his bones, and his father reprimand him by:

"What a fellow you are to go and get your bones dislocated by jumping only from a second story!" "I'll see I don't get dislocated next time," I answered. (p. 12)

The male athletes as in the book *Fair Treatment in Sport* also do not put any significance on the injury from the sports activity, as long it does not entirely impede their mobilization. In the nuance of hegemonic masculinity, the males are demanded to be sturdy which becomes a custom in the male-dominated industry. There will be alienation for the male that is deemed to be low endurance by the hegemonic masculinity standard.

Botchan by that does not put any interest in Red Shirt, hence the real name of Red Shirt never got revealed until the end of this novel. The general substance of this novel is in the mind of Botchan, therefore what the character portrayed is synonymous with what Botchan perceived. In Chapter V of this novel, from pages 71-72, the Red Shirt based on cordiality invites Botchan to go fishing with him. Botchan got no other choice rather than accepting the invitation. Botchan has a thought that if he declines it, Red Shirt will patronize him for his lack of fishing aptitude. Botchan as a competitive individual wants to prove himself and break the assumptions. However, the invitation from Botchan is deemed unusual for Botchan due to the tone that Red Shirt uttered.

Won't you go fishing?" asked Red Shirt. He talks in a strangely womanish voice. One would not be able to tell whether he was a man or a woman. As a man he should talk like one. (p. 70)

I answered with the smallest enthusiasm,... (p. 70)

From the auditory sense, Botchan got bothered because Botchan is accustomed to encountering a male with an assertive voice, for instance like Hotta. The impression that Botchan gets from Red Shirt's appearance alongside the tone of Red Shirt's voice enhances the distaste within Botchan. Their fishing activity furthermore got an additional company, which is Mr. Yoshikawa.

From page 71, what Mr. Yoshikawa sparked got ambivalent feedback from the person with the Hegemonic Masculinity disposition, which is the striving for independence. Botchan gives the epithet "clown" to Mr. Yoshikawa, which can be inferred as a derogatory term for the man involved in circuses who obeyed certain rules (cannot stand for himself). Yet, Botchan is wondering what makes both seem to be in conjunction. As the story unfolds, the main reason for the proximity between Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa is due to how both often express themselves by exchanging words that sometimes have a subversive connotation. For Botchan,

he got the principal from hegemonic masculinity which proposed aggressiveness in building relations with others, like when Hotta spoke something out loud which feels normal to Botchan.

... I heard suppressed laughter. Between their laughs they talked something, but I could not make out what they were talking about. "Eh? I don't know...." "...That's true... he doesn't know... isn't it pity, though...." "Can that be...." "With grasshoppers... that's a fact." (p. 78)

On page 58, Botcha faced an incident where he got struck by a swarm of grasshoppers when he was on the night watch in school. Therefore, Botchan got triggered by Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa's conversation in which he heard the word "grasshoppers." Not only that, Botchan on pages 78-79 also heard the words "tempura" and "dango" which are Botchan's favorite food. Furthermore, the name Hotta is also got mentioned by Red Shirt and Mr. Yohaiko which incite Botchan's curiosity on how Hotta can be the topic of what they are whispering about. Red Shirt and Mr. Yohaiko do not explicitly share the substance of their discussion with Botchan nor Botchan have the initiative to ask them due to the bias from Botchan to avoid excessive discourse with them. Therefore, Botchan grows suspicions that Hotta is the mind behind the grasshoppers' incidents.

Botchan's assumption makes his relations with Hotta not harmonious. Botchan is not going to stand still by being surrounded by a person that has the tendency as the source of skulduggery and Botchan has a sense of dignity which makes him regret taking a treat of beverage from Hotta. Botchan already antagonizing Hotta and on page 86, Botchan plans to return Hotta's treat money that he purchased a beverage with to his desk. Deep down, Botchan has an apprehensive feeling because he sees Hotta as the man who incites fear in Botchan due to his physical prowess. Botchan has many considerations to return the money which on page 88, reeks the anxious sweat from Botchan. Finally, Botchan decides to do his intention:

I took out that one sen and a half, and saying it was the price of the ice water, shoved it on his desk and told him to take it. "Don't josh me," he said, and began laughing, but as I appeared unusually serious, he swept the coins back to my desk, and flung back, "Quit fooling." So he really meant to treat me, eh? (p. 90)

By Hotta's reactions, Botchan is puzzled about whether Hotta is really sincere in treating him to a beverage, however, Botchan is eager to return the money because he believes it will uphold Botchan's dignity

"This time or any time, I want to pay it back. I pay it back because I don't like you treat me." Porcupine coldly gazed at me and ejaculated "H'm." (p. 90)

What the deuce did he mean by "H'm" when I was red with anger. (p. 91)

The patch-up reply from Hotta angered Botchan. Furthermore, the insistence from Botchan makes Hotta lose his temper which is on page 91, Hotta intend to evade Botchan from the dorm which Hotta previously recommend. Hotta brings up the case about the event that is related to Botchan's new boarding house with the intention to pay back the attack that Botchan gives then Hotta explains the reason behind Botchan's eviction.

“You're too tough and been regarded a nuisance over there. Say, the wife of a boarding house is a wife, not a maid, and you've been such a four flusher as to make her wipe your feet.” (p. 92)

“When did I make her wipe my feet?” I asked. (p. 92)

“I don't know whether you did or did not, but anyway they're pretty sore about you. He said he can make ten or fifteen yen easily if he sell a roll of panel-picture.” (p. 92)

“Damn the chap! Why did he take me for a boarder then!” (p. 92)

“I don't know why. They took you but they want you leave because they got tired of you. So you'd better get out.” (p. 92)

“Sure, I will. Who'd stay in such a house even if they beg me on their knees. You're insolent to have induced me to go to such a false accuser in the first place.” (p. 92)

“Might be either I'm insolent or you're tough.” Porcupine is no less hot-tempered than I am, and spoke with equally loud voice. (p. 92)

Their altercation is back and forth with the loud tone due to their assertiveness and from page 92, their conflict got a surprised reaction from other teachers. It can be concluded that the eviction issues are rooted in Botchan's reluctance to purchase the offer from tenants and Botchan is deemed to be authoritative which left an impression of disrespect from the tenants. Botchan as an independent individual does not want to be subjugated by the tenants' rules. Finally, on page 92, after exchanging heated words, the conflict is ended due to the reminder of them to start teaching. After the heated arguments, it does not leave Botchan mixed feelings towards Hotta because, at the next teacher's meeting, Hotta stands up and opinionated his thoughts.

This meeting is to discuss what kind of penalty that appropriate for the perpetrator behind the grasshopper incident on page 125, Hotta wants a deterrent effect to anyone who incites it. Botchan admired how Hotta have the same tenet as him as both believe to maintain assertiveness to give firm punishment for the wrongdoers. The dilemma within Botchan continued that Botchan wondered how a man with the tantamount principle as him is possible to commit an immoral act. On page 125, Botchan's accusation turns to Red Shirt and Botchan

becomes skeptical that he is gullible to how Red Shirt is eloquent in his words. In Chapter IX, it appeared that Hotta start to open up the latest conflict that revolve around Botchan and Ikagin Dormitory.

“The other day I asked you to quit the Ikagins because Ikagin begged of me to have you leave there as you were too tough, and I believed him. But I heard afterward that Ikagin is a crook and often passes imitation of famous drawings for originals. I think what he told me about you must be a lie. He tried to sell pictures and curios to you, but as you shook him off, he told some false stories on you. I did very wrong by you because I did not know his character, and wish you would forgive me.” And he offered me a lengthy apology. (p. 141)

Hotta's openness and confidence to become transparent and admit his false thought gained a sense of respect within Botchan. If the scenario is in another way around, Botchan will do the same. Botchan despises coping issues with the subversive act. On page 141, Botchan attempts to redo his act by taking back the treat money. It is a symbol of a truce between both of them which is continued by Hotta that laugh about it with the intention to shrugged off the tension. From that moment, it bridges into page 142 which they that tease each other about the misconception that occurred. Furthermore, they plot to take vengeance on the one who insinuate the problems which directed at Red Shirt. For Ikagi, they do not take any account since Botchan does not inhabit in there anymore. On the other hand, the Red Shirt is a prominent person that happened to be in the same environment as both of them, which is why they attempt to handle Red Shirt once and for all.

Red Shirt outranks us in brainy work. And there is no other course open but to appeal to physical force. (p. 182)

Botchan and Hotta agree that Red Shirt is superior in composing words that they cannot match. Therefore, both decide to brainstorm on how to corner the Red Shirt into falling into their plan, which is conflict resolution by physical strength. In Chapter XI, the climax is rising at its peak due Botchan and Hotta's plan to avenge Red Shirt is on the verge of execution. Botchan and Hotta are spying from the high ground which is on the opposite of the street of the road that Red Shirt usually walked. Botchan and Hotta are eager to capture the Red Shirt red-handed. From a distance, they see a vague voice that is similar to the Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa.

“Everything is all right now. We've got rid of the stumbling block.” It was undoubtedly the voice of Clown.

“He only glories in bullying but has no tact.” This from Red Shirt.

“He is like that young tough, isn’t he? Why, as to that young tough, he is a winsome, sporty Master Darling.” (p. 191)

“Master Darling” is perceived by Botchan as a mockery that he is a pampered man from Tokyo. Hearing his name gets mentioned, Botchan is fueled with rage. On page 192, Botchan that is in a rush to catch Red Shirt alongside Mr. Yoshikawa must be patient. They deemed that the timing is not right yet and in broad daylight, it is too crowded. Therefore, it indicates on page 193 that Botchan and Hotta must wait until the sun comes out.

The long waiting ceased when Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa suddenly come out at 5 in the morning. Before Botchan and Hotta launch the ambush, they follow them cautiously, however, Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa heard their coming. Before Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa have a further reaction, Botchan and Hotta already grab their shoulders to avoid them to escape. which results in fear between Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa. Subsequently, Botchan confronts Red Shirt with an intimidating tone.

On pages 194-195, Botchan reaches inside his pocket found that he keeps eggs. Later, these eggs are used as Botchan’s weapon against Mr. Yoshikawa as a sign of disrespect and his attempt to smear his dignity. Hotta initiated helping Botchan during the related scenes to finish off Red Shirt. What is portrayed is the reflection of the “collective mentality” like the sports teams in Fair Treatment in Sport book. At first, it might seem contrary to the independence dispositions from hegemonic masculinity, however, the sense of solidarity can come across if the male sees his same gender, especially when it happens to be a friend of his got into trouble, just like the scenario of the basketball team that working together to defeat the opponent team.

While I was bombarding Clown with the eggs, Porcupine was firing at Red Shirt. (p. 195)

Porcupine walloped him one. Red Shirt tottered. (p. 195)

The two said nothing. They were so thoroughly cowed that they could not speak. (p. 196)

Botchan and Hotta finally make their wish come to reality. Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa are defeated. However, Botchan and Hotta have a contingency plan after what they have done. They both decide to drift away from Matsuyama to avoid the lengthy problems that might occur. “That night I and Porcupine left the town” (p. 197). After that, Botchan and Hotta continued with their respective path in life.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study uncovers the character's dispositions based on the gender study approach within the novel *Botchan* based on the evidence that got picked from the storyline of the novel. Due to how abstract the trajectory of gender study is, the writers utilize the theory of hegemonic masculinity by Mann and Krane to make the variables that are found to be more concrete. From *Botchan's* hegemonic masculinity, there are multiple impacts on other characters namely Hotta, Red Shirt, and Mr. Yoshikawa. The indicator for *Botchan's* hegemonic masculinity is determined by multiple factors, such as strength, competitiveness, assertiveness, confidence, and independence.

Secondly, by *Botchan* displayed hegemonic masculinity dispositions, and the result can be ramifications or benefactor. At the early points of the novel, *Botchan* had a brotherly relationship with Hotta, due to both of them shared similar hegemonic masculinity dispositions. However, as the story unfolds, there is an ambivalence between them due to the gossip that spread regarding them. One of the instigators happens to be from the Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa. Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa are contrary to hegemonic masculinity dispositions, where their bond is emphasized on the subversive verbal exchange. *Botchan* and Hotta believe in settling the issue through transparency and being direct, therefore *Botchan* and Hotta impose their physical strength to defeat the Red Shirt and Mr. Yoshikawa.

Botchan by Natsume Soseki can be the exemplar to enhance what is deemed as light comical reading to something deeper and can branch into the multi-discipline of science. The term meta-reality or something that is more vivid than reality can be dug down from the essence of the novel *Botchan*, therefore the relevancy of it can be felt by inclusive readers. Additionally, the reader of this writing can receive a new novel recommendation and the one who used to read this novel can gain new essence which subsequently enhances the appreciation of this novel. In the academic realm, the writers expects that this writing can also have an implication to utilize the frame of gender study, for instance, the hegemonic masculinity theory from *Fair Treatment in Sport* book by Mann and Krane to analyze the gender disposition at the extreme degree, including the impact from it. Furthermore, the related theory can be the instrument to examine the complexity of human beings which is not narrowed down to the mere biological apparent.

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