

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses: the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study and the scope and limitation.

1.1 Background of the study

Literature is a work that has a beautiful language in it, which can be interpreted that literature is a someone's work who discusses the human experience that presented in a beautiful language style. According to Wellek and Warren (1963) literature is a creative activity and art with artistic values. Literature would be just another kind writing, along with scientific, works, reports, etc. That statement means that the literature is a beautiful writing that interprets a phenomenon of human life or social reality. Jones (1968) stated that literature is simply another way to show the world around us through our imagination. It is an ideal thought of the author's opinion of social conditions.

Furthermore, it can be concluded that there is a strong relationship between literature, life and society. Many people say that literature is a reflection of social conditions. As the reflection of social condition, an author creates literature for instance novel, to express and to reveal the certain society with the phenomenon and problem.

In the globalization era, racial discrimination is a sensitive issue to be discussed. Discrimination can occur in various forms, such as discrimination based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, religion, and others. The two most prominent forms of discrimination in the global and historical context are racial discrimination and gender discrimination. These two forms of injustice have been going on for centuries, and are still a reality faced by many minority groups, particularly black women. This problem is no longer a trivial problem but it is a very serious problem because it will trigger the destruction of people who are discriminated against. Black women often experience multiple injustices, both because of their skin color and their gender identity. Black women are in a particularly vulnerable position because they

experience double oppression. On the one hand, they must fight against racism that arises from stereotypes, marginalization, and subordination based on skin color. On the other hand, they also face sexism that places women in an inferior position compared to men. These two forms of discrimination are intertwined and exacerbate each other, resulting in a unique and complex experience of injustice for black women.

In this modern era, the issue of discrimination is very easy to spread through social media. Some case that occur in the United States are Trayvon Martin (26th February 2012) 17 year old who was shot by white man in 2012 in Florida. Although Trayvon was not a woman, the case raised widespread awareness of the justice system's often unfair treatment of the black community. Bruna Taylor (13th March 2020) made global headlines when she was shot dead by police in her own apartment. The case reflects how the legal system often fails to protect black women from state violence. Attatina Jefferson (13th October 2019) A 28-year-old black woman was shot and killed by police officer Aaron Dean in her Fort Worth, Texas, home. The incident occurred when her neighbor called police to check on Jefferson because her door was open. Without identifying himself as a police officer, Dean opened fire through a window, killing Jefferson, who was playing video games with her nephew. The latest case occur on (26th May 2020) a man who has black skin named George Floyd, he was killed by a police who has a white person, his name Chauvin's Crane. The tragedy took place in the city of Minneapolis, America. George Floyd was accused of using \$20 fake money when he bought a cigarette in the cup foods, and then the police came and committed violence against him, and finally he died. This case make many people do demonstration because the treatment considered unfair.

From the case above, it can be concluded that discrimination are still very often happened in the world where most of the victims are black people and mostly women. Black woman are always underestimated and are always considered weak by the community, and also black woman are treat differently from white woman. Black women are always oppressed and underestimated because their gender and skin color are different or darker so that those who have dark skin are always underestimated and

even considered dangerous people, not accepted anywhere, so that not a few people who have black skin have gotten decent jobs or education like people in general, it is not surprising that not a few white people think that black people are stupid and never get the same opportunities as white people, especially for black women, not only because of their skin color which triggers discrimination but also because of their gender as women which is also a reference for them to often get discrimination such as lack of trust in women to become career women, often harassed because they are considered weak and so on. Whereas woman should always be flattered and treated fairly because every woman has the right to do whatever they want to do. But in reality inequality against woman is a phenomenon that occurs in aspect of life.

Black woman took the risk of the principles of reality, namely in addition to taking care of and earning a living for their children, they have to share the burden of frustration because of the racism experienced by the husband. As a woman, they have to be tough to constantly word off negative stereotypes caused by their history, social strata and skin color. Black woman are also considered immoral, bad, etc., these statements support the amount of sexual harassment of black woman. In this era, it is not uncommon for women to be harassed by men because they think that they are women who are identified with weak, useless people, so that men easily harass or treat women arbitrarily. This things encourage black woman to demand their right to get out of this oppression. Black woman took the risk of the principles of reality, namely in addition to taking care of and earning a living for their children, they have to share the burden of frustration because of the racism experienced by the husband. As a woman, they have to be tough to constantly word off negative stereotypes caused by their history, social strata and skin color. Black woman are also considered immoral, bad, etc., these statements support the amount of sexual harassment of black woman. In this era, it is not uncommon for women to be harassed by men because they think that they are women who are identified with weak, useless people, so that men easily harass or treat women arbitrarily. This things encourage black woman to demand their right to get out of this oppression. In this context, literary works play an important role as a

medium of social representation that is able to depict the reality of injustice experienced by marginalized groups. Literary works not only reflect social life, but can also be a tool to criticize oppressive social structures. One of the literary works that successfully represents the issue of racial and gender discrimination in depth is the novel *Girl, Woman, Other* by Bernardine Evaristo.

Girl, Women Other is a 2019 Booker Prize-winning novel that tells the stories of twelve female characters, most of whom are black women living in the UK. Evaristo writes their stories in interconnected narratives, showing the diversity of their social, political, and economic backgrounds, as well as the complexity of their identities. The novel is considered one of the most important works of contemporary literature addressing the identity, race, gender and lived experiences of black women in modern Britain. The story highlights their struggles with issues of race, gender, identity, sexuality, and class. The characters come from a variety of backgrounds from feminist activists, academics, farmers, to teachers each facing challenges and discrimination in their lives. Although the narratives are told separately for each character, these stories are connected thematically and structurally. Some of the prominent main characters are Amma, a feminist activist and theater director; Shirley, a conservative teacher climbing the social ladder; Dominique, a lesbian woman who moves to America; and Yazz, Amma's daughter who represents the millennial generation. Each character has a different background and struggle, but all are directly or indirectly connected, forming a complex web of life. Through their lives, Evaristo highlights how black women in Britain face various forms of discrimination and identity struggles, both from society, family, and themselves. The novel culminates in a moment at the end of the book when most of the characters gather in one room, showing the deep connections between their stories.

The central themes of the novel are racial and gender discrimination, as well as intersectionality, the overlapping forms of oppression experienced by individuals based on their dual identities, such as being both women and black. The novel depicts how the characters deal with marginalization, stereotyping, social exclusion, and the

struggle to find their identities amidst the pressures of a society dominated by white, heteronormative standards. Racial discrimination in this novel appears in various forms, ranging from institutional discrimination such as job rejection, unfair treatment in education and health care, to interpersonal discrimination that is verbal, psychological, and symbolic. For example, the character Clovis is rejected for a job and even refused to sleep in an inn because of his skin color. Meanwhile, Shirley, a black woman who successfully becomes a school principal, actually experiences pressure to prove that she deserves to be in her position, as if her skin color is the main obstacle. Meanwhile, gender discrimination also appears in the form of labeling of black women's bodies, social expectations of domestic roles, and gender-based violence. The character Amma, an activist and theater artist, for example, is considered not to fit Western beauty standards because she has large hips and a body typical of African women. This experience shows that black women are not only excluded because of their race, but also harassed because of their physical appearance and life choices.

The concept of intersectionality by Patricia Hill Collins & Sirma Bilge (2016), is very relevant in analyzing the experiences of the characters in this novel. Intersectionality explains how various forms of injustice, such as racism, sexism, and homophobia, intersect and exacerbate the oppression experienced by individuals, especially black women. The novel shows that identities are never singular, but interact with each other, creating complex dynamics of oppression and resistance. In this study, important objects to analyze in the context of literary studies and gender and race studies. This study aims to examine how racial and gender discrimination is represented in the novel, as well as how black women face it in everyday life. the writer interest to analyzing the novel '*Girl, Women, Others*' because there is a racial and gender discrimination topic in it and the topic about racial and gender discrimination in this novel never analyzed before, besides that, the word in the novel is easy to understand, so the writer can easy to catch the point. The writer in this study focuses on the

depiction of racial and gender discrimination contained in the novel '*Girl, Women Other*' by Bernardine Evaristo.

By examining this novel, it is hoped that readers will not only understand the dynamics of discrimination in literary works, but also realize the importance of social justice, gender equality, and recognition of diverse identities. This research can also contribute to the development of interdisciplinary studies between literature, sociology, gender studies, and racial studies. This study is very important for social life in responding to existing issue. It will be described namely; Racial and gender discrimination, triggers of discrimination, type of discrimination and impact of discrimination on black women. It is increases understanding of discrimination in any form that cannot be easily accepted. There are several previous study that analyzed.

The first previous study. This study was written by Sarah Louise Brophy (2014) entitled *Intersectionality and the Politics of Identity in Contemporary Black British Women's Fiction*.

The second previous study used the same issue has same theory, this study was written by Ida Rosida, and Lestari Rejeki (2017) entitled "*Woman in Patriarchal Culture: Gender Discrimination and Intersectionality Portrayed in Bob Darling by Carolyn Cooke*"

The third previous study used the same issue and same theory, this study using intersectionality theory . This study was written by Ayşe Güneş (2021) entitled '*Intersectionality and Identity in Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye and Alice Walker's The Color Purple*'.

The fourth previous study used same issue and different theory. This theory used racial discrimination theory. This study was written by Kiambang Prakasa (2020) entitled '*An Analysis of Racial Discrimination Potrayed in Green Book*'.

Several journals that found to support this thesis have different theories. In this study the writer use intersectionality theory, which is in this study the writer argue that all discrimination and crimes also occur against black women, and also there are

different of gender and skin color that makes them experience oppression and discrimination

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background above, there are several problem statement that can formulated as follows:

1. What type of discrimination experienced by the characters represented in the novel *Girl, Women, Other*?
2. What are the trigger of discrimination experienced by the character represented in the novel *Girl, Women, Other*?
3. What are the impacts of discrimination experienced by the characters represented in the novel *Girl, Women, Other*?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

Based on the problem of study above, the objectives as follows:

1. To explain what type of discrimination is experienced by the characters represented in the novel *Girl, Women, Other*
2. To explain what are the triggers of discrimination experienced by the characters represented in the novel *Girl, Women, Other*?
3. To explain what are the impacts of discrimination experienced by the characters represented in the novel *Girl, Women, Other*.

1.4 Significance Of The Research

There are two significance of the study, those are theoretical and practical;

1. Theoretically, this study aims to gives understanding, knowledge and further information about racial and gender discrimination the happened in the novel '*Girl, Women, Other*' by Bernardine Evaristo especially through the application of intersectionality theory.
2. Practically, this study has high educational and social value. The novel *Girl, Woman, Other* not only presents a fictional story, but also depicts the social

reality experienced by black women in England. Through this research, readers can be aware of the forms of discrimination that often occur in everyday life, both explicitly and implicitly. This is important to increase empathy, critical awareness, and reflective thinking skills in dealing with ongoing issues of social injustice. In the educational environment, the results of this study can be used as open material in learning literature, gender studies, and multicultural education. In addition, this research can contribute to efforts to prevent discrimination through cultural literacy and understanding the importance of diversity. In the wider public space, this research can be an inspiration for social movements that promote racial justice and gender equality, and help create more inclusive spaces for groups that have been marginalized.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study discusses the issue of racial discrimination which happened to black women in the novel '*Girl, Women, Other*' by Bernardine Evaristo. The theory that uses in this study is intersectionality theory by which is that theory can help the writer to find out the depiction in analyzing racial discrimination that is experienced by black women. And this study is focused on the happenings of racial discrimination and the impact of racial discrimination that is experienced by black women which are found in the novel.

This study is limited to a literary analysis of the black women characters in the novel. Other aspects of identity such as social class, sexual orientation, or citizenship are not discussed in depth unless they are directly related to racial and gender discrimination. This study does not aim to provide a sociological analysis of the issue of racism or sexism in a real-world context. In addition, this study is based only on the content of the novel text and does not involve empirical data such as historical documents, interviews, or other field studies.