

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains five sub-chapters those are background of the study, research question, research objectives, scope and limitation of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of Study

It is not new that many women from all over the world experience oppression. Gender discrimination and oppression make the lack of opportunities for women to advance in patriarchal societies seem to continue to this day. Afghanistan is one of the countries that seem to have a patriarchal culture that has very strict rules, especially after being ruled by the Taliban government. The Taliban are a group of hardline Sunnis who want to turn Afghanistan into a country based on Islam. As we know that Afghanistan is a country that is about 99.8% of the population is Muslim which is certainly very influential in the life of the state in Afghanistan. Afghanistan itself is a country located in South Asia and Central Asia. The country is bordered by Pakistan to the East and South, Iran to the West, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to the North, Tajikistan and China to the Northeast. Afghanistan is one of the conflict-prone countries and is quite dangerous for its population, especially women. The Guardian cited a 2011 survey by the Thomson Reuters Foundation which identified Afghanistan as the most dangerous place for women. Women in Afghanistan experience many limitations to get education, health, work and others. Afghan women have also experienced violence such as murder, torture, rape and trafficking in women. The variety of limitations and violence experienced by Afghan women causes discrimination and inability for Afghan women to improve their lives. With the conflicts and problems that exist, Afghanistan gets the main attention from the countries of the world.

Oppression itself is a tyranny situation in which people are governed in an unfair and cruel way and deprived of their opportunities and freedoms. In fact, every human being is born with a certain right to life and freedom is one of them.

Thus, oppression is considered a violation of these rights. War, famine, and repression have forced people in the region to flee their homes (Young, 2011). According to *Justice and the Politics of Difference* book by Marion Young, the term oppression refers to unequal behaviour that can improve or limit a situation.

Kinds of Face of Oppression that Young explain in this book are Exploitation, marginalization, and powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence. There all refer to relations of power and oppression that occur by virtue of the social division of labor— who works for whom, who does not work, and how the content of work defines one institutional position relative to others (Young, 2011: 104). Gender oppression itself refers to an injustice with the distinction of attitudes and treatment based on gender. Gender oppression defines the practice of granting or denying privileges to a person based on their gender. In some societies, this practice is outdated and is no longer preserved because in most developed countries it includes lawlessness. However, there are some religious groups holding gender oppression as part of their dogma. Many women and girls, especially those from the poorest families, still face gender oppression in education, work, society, child marriage, and family, sexual violence and unrecognized domestic work. Gender oppression is some of what causes feminism movement.

Feminism first existed at the beginning of the twentieth century where the voicing of equal rights for women began to be voiced. Like every thought, feminism has an inviolable basic assumption that women are oppressed. There are several types of currents of feminism that until now have no end to be discussed around the world. Liberal feminism, socialist feminism, and radical feminism. The type of feminism that will be discussed more specifically in this study is radical feminism. Radical feminism is a movement that believes that sexism has taken root so deeply in society that it completely eliminates the concept of gender. Radical feminism is the oppression of women since the beginning of male dominance, where the physical control of women by men is considered as the basic form of oppression. Men are expected to work outside the home while women are expected to clean the house and take care of children.

Radical feminists note that this traditional dichotomy maintains men as economic rulers over women. Radical feminism sees the oppression of women as a result of the patriarchal universal value system.

Feminism has always been concerned with patriarchy, which means injustice, domination and subordination to women, so is the demand for gender equality. Patriarchy refers to male domination in both the public and private spheres. Feminists primarily use the term 'patriarchy' to describe power relations between men and women. Patriarchy is more than just a term; feminists use it like a concept, and like all other concepts, it is a tool to help us understand the reality of women. Patriarchy itself is a system of structures and institutions created by men in order to sustain and recreate male power and women subordination (Rollin, 1996: 35). According to Sultana (2010: 3), the patriarchal system is characterized by power, dominance, hierarchy, and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women. Afghan women experienced gender oppression and began to struggle against power structures which showed that women in Afghanistan suffered from the social system created by men in their male-dominated society. Men have power or control over women. Women's rights were violated by the Taliban's discriminatory policies. Women's rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly are deprived, also the right to work, the right to education, freedom of movement and the right to health care.

The conflicts experienced by women in Afghanistan attracted a lot of attention from many writers around the world to be appointed as an Inspiring novel. Nadia Hashimi was one of the writers who shared the images of violence and injustice of Afghan women that she poured into her writings in the form of novels, one of which was titled *A House Without Windows*. The Novel tells the story of how Afghan women struggle to confront and fight gender oppression in patriarchal culture. The writer is interested in reviewing the novel because as a woman, there are many injustices experienced, gender inequality, excessive standards between women and men that continue to occur in the surrounding environment. Media coverage of violence and harassment against women continues to emerge, while punishment or actions to overcome them are still very

minimal and are underestimated by the community and the government. In fact, the impact of the oppression is very large for the victim, both physically and mentally. Almost every Afghan women's conflict that occurs in the novel *A House Without Windows* occurs to many women in the writer's life.

This novel tells about some case that represent social phenomena, including women's issues in which Afghan culture and society does not provide equal opportunities and opportunities for men and women. The main character is Zeba, a mother of four who is waiting trial for being accused of the brutal murder of her husband. While waiting trial she was in a women's prison. In this women's prison called Chil Mahtab, Zeba meets several female cellmates who are imprisoned for immoral crimes. They are Nafisa, Latifa, Mezhgan, and many others with their respective misfortunes that have led them to these gloomy cells. Their "crime" include things like abandoning abusive husbands, refusing parental arranged marriages, meeting unaccompanied male colleagues outside of working hours that are judged as zina in Islamic teachings. In addition to Zeba and her friends in prison, Hashimi indirectly describes how women in Afghanistan are still in the shackles of a patriarchal culture where families, husbands, and communities are so pressing and regulating women's lives. The women characters who are still below the male class in the realm of education, work, and voting rights.

A House Without Windows released in 2016 is the third international bestseller written by Nadia Hashimi after two previous books, *The Pearl that Broke Its Shell* released in 2014 and *When the Moon is Low* in 2015. Author Nadia Hashimi was born in New York to Afghan parents. She was a pediatrician, a former Democratic congressional candidate for the United States House of Representatives for Maryland's 6th Congressional District who eventually chose to focus more as a novelist.

Based on the above explanation, the writer is interested in examining the oppression experienced by Afghan women and how they face and against discrimination in a patriarchal culture, solidarity among female figures in prisons, and the courage of female figures to exercise their basic rights such as

speech, education, and the right to work. This study is based on the analysis of the prespective theory of oppression by Iris Young (2011). In her book entitled *Justice and the Politics of Difference* argue that:

“...sense oppression refers to the vast and deep injustices some groups suffer as a consequence of often unconscious assumptions and reactions of well-meaning people in ordinary interactions, media and cultural stereotypes, and structural features of bureaucratic hierarchies and market mechanisms—in short, the normal processes of everyday life.”

This theory is also supported by Young's statement about the Five Faces of Oppression and feminist theory of power by Naomi Wolf. Therefore, this study was titled *Oppressions Toward Afghanistan Women Reflected in Nadia Hashimi A House Without Windows* because it intends to examine the oppression experienced by women in Afghanistan and how they finally dared to face and take the right steps to reduce and protect themselves from the patriarchal culture that is very attached to their social life.

In addition, the oppressions issue has been analyzed by some researchers in several novels and the source of data of this study also has been analyzed by some researchers in different topic. There are some researchers who analyze this novel. The first is journal article by Rouwaida Jasim Mohammed and Lamiaa Ahmed Rasheed (2022) entitled *A Non-Western Representation of the Third World Women in Nadia Hashimi A House without Windows*. The second is thesis by Humaira Karim (2021) entitled *Toward the Inclusive and Intersectional Study of the Fourth Wave of Feminism in Nadia Hashimi's A House Without Windows*. However, *A House Without Windows* novel has not been analyzed by another researcher on oppressions topic. In this study, the writer focuses on women oppression issues and women resistance against oppression. The third researcher is Azizatur Rahma, Surya Sili, Erna Wati (2017) which write a journal article entitled *Female Oppression Toward Female Characters in Mars Need Mom Movie*. The fourth researcher thesis written by Nurul Aini (2018) entitled *The Oppression Experienced by the Citizens in Okky Madasari's "The Years of*

the Voiceless". They both use Iris Marion Young (2011) theory with a different novel.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of study above, this study has two research questions:

1. What kinds of oppression that women character's experience in the novel *A House Without Windows*?
2. How does women characters against oppressions in the novel *A House Without Windows*?

1.3 Research Objectives

From the research questions above, this study has two research objectives:

1. To describe kind of women oppressions experience in the novel *A House Without Windows*.
2. To describe the way women characters against oppressions in the novel *A House Without Windows*.

1.4 Scope and Limitation

Based on the formulation of the above problems, the purpose of this study is that the writer examines more deeply include two things, namely identifying an oppression based on gender discrimination experienced by women characters and the steps of women characters to resistance and deal with it which will focus on women's courage, women's solidarity, and women's basic rights. The limitations of this study are dialogues and narratives from the narrator that indicate the existence of these three things.

1.5 Significance of The Study

The significance of this study is theoretical and practical. Theoretical significance in order to expand the perspective of a novel using a different theory, using the theory of oppression Iris Young (2011) based on her book

Justice and the Politics of Difference, it is expected that the results of this study can present something different from another previous research. Meanwhile, the practical significance of this study is expected to help the next writer who apply Iris Marion Young theory to other literary works.