

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into five parts. Those are background of the study, statements of the research problem, objectives of the study, significances of the study, and the last one is scope and limitation of the study.

1.1. Background of the Study

Literary work provides us with enjoyments and intellectual delight. It gives opportunities to know much more about life. Pickering (2004:1) argues that reading a literary work differs from reading most other materials mainly in the attitude with which we approach them. Different people of course have different interpretation. More we read, more we get the points. In short, reading a literary work can be meant also as studying human life. The readers can get not only an entertainment but also knowledge of human being in a certain period.

Wellek and Warren argue that literature is mirror of life, because literature is expression of human society (1954:95). It means that the literary work presents about the condition at that time, but it is not all the copies of the condition at that time. The authors also use their imagination to create their works beautifully and well acceptable for the readers. Through the literary work, the authors can also express their experiences and ideas.

One of the interesting literary works is a novel. Novel, as a genre of literary work, can also be taken as an example to show the relation between society and literary work. Consequently, directly or not, a novel cannot be seceded

from sociological aspects. Thus, a novel is the mirror of human life. It means that a novel can be a reflection or representation of human life. Many novels deal with social life, social status, and social phenomenon or problems which have a relation with human's life such as economy, education, culture, social, politics, and all aspects of life.

Novel, as one of the long fiction of literary works which includes many characters, is capable of simulating and bringing the reader's emotion. Then they can get adventures and enjoyment as well as entertainment. Readers usually have a certain impression while reading a novel and it makes the readers curious to know more about the content of the novel. In addition author's imagination produces the reader's impression through the narration and description used in the novel. Therefore, the writer decides to take a novel as a source of the data.

The Help is the first novel by American author, Kathryn Stockett. She was born and raised in Jackson, Mississippi. After she graduates from the University of Alabama with a degree in English and Creative Writing, she moves to New York City where she works in magazine publishing and marketing for nine years. (Stockett, 2009: 393). Based on Skeeter's experiences, she herself has an African American maid named Demetrie whom she loves and cares about. Demetrie dies when Stockett is sixteen years. For many years, Stockett wondered how Demetrie feel being black in Mississippi and working for a Whites family. That is why Stockett writes *The Help* as her first work. *The Help* is one of interesting novels to analyze. So far, only Susi Susanti (2010) from Sumatera University who analyzes *The Help* as her source of data in which she uses different theory. She analyzes

The Help through intrinsic element. It means that there is no researcher who analyzes *The Help* by using Racism theory. Therefore, this study is different with other studies.

There are three major characters in the novel; those are Aibileen, Minny and Skeeter. Aibileen is an African American maid who has no husband and children. Minny is Aibileen's close friend who works for White family to fulfill her family need because she has many children, and the last major character is Skeeter a White journalist who wants to make a different life condition. Skeeter has a planning to invite Aibileen and Minny to write a book. It is about African American maids' experiences working for White families.

Stockett produces this novel wants to show the discrimination and separation between African American and Whites during sixties. It means that in that era African American is discriminated by Whites. The African American get different treatments in working sector and almost in all aspect of life. During the sixties, discrimination and segregation are the high issues in America. African American and Whites are separated in many sectors of life. The places, houses, church, and hospital are some of the examples.

Farley and Hermalin (1972; Levitan, Johnston, and Taggart, 1975) in *Race and Ethnic Relation* book state that during 1960s, the real income of African American families increases substantially after World War II. Occupationally, African American as a group also has improved their position of job. The most significant changes of occupation occur in the 1940 and 1970. In 1960, only 8 percent is farm workers. Nevertheless, African American are still constrained to

work for White people. Men are worked in the factory whereas women are worked in White family as domestic such as cleaning Whites' houses and also taking care of their children.

Asante (2005, P: XXIX) argues that Black Studies movement began in the late 1960s; nearly 10 years after the Africans movement, there is little contact between the two interests. Indeed, African American tended to be largely. It means that during 1960s African American try to move from the real condition. They try to against Whites people to have an equal life eventhough discrimination and segregation are still exist at that time. Discrimination and segregation are the part of racism theory. Therefore, racism is an appropriate theory used to analyze the novel.

In short, racism is treating someone differently or unfairly simply because they belong to a different race, ethnic and culture. From the explanation above, the writer is interested in conducting the study entitled *Racial Discrimination and Segregation of African American in Kathryn Stockett's The Help*.

1.1. Statements of the Research Problem

Based on the previous elaboration, here the problem which is formulated as the following questions:

1. What are racial discrimination and segregation toward African American which appear in the novel?
2. How are the economic condition in education, occupation, income and wealth portrayed as the effect of racial discrimination and segregation in the novel?

1.3. The Objectives of the Study

Based on those statements of research problem above, the objectives of the study are:

1. To find out and analyze the racial discrimination and segregation toward African American which appear in the novel
2. To elaborate the economic condition in education, occupation, income and wealth as the effect of racial discrimination and segregation in the novel.

1.4. The Significances of the Study

This study has significances of study which are very useful. Theoretically, the results of the study expected to give some contribution to the study about theory of Racism especially racial discrimination and segregation of African American. On the other hand, it also as consideration and give some references for the students who take English Study Program as their major in University of Trunojoyo Madura.

In relation to the statements above, practically it is supposed to invite the people in order not to be imbued with the racial discrimination and segregation. In another side, it is supposed to give some knowledge about the impact of racial discrimination and segregation if it occurs in our daily life.

1.5. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study discusses about racial discrimination and segregation of African American. The scope of this study focuses on the theory of racism, especially racial discrimination and segregation during 1960s. In addition, this study is

limited on the form of words or utterances of the characters, names of people, and narrator's narrations in the source of data which is related to the racial discrimination and segregation of African American.