

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of some important parts as the basics of the research that will be discussed to conduct this study, those are; background of the study, statements of the research problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and scope and limitations of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

As one of the major diverse cultural countries, United States often has conflicts over racial differences. The problem arises when the black race group moves to the United States as immigrants. In addition, other problems arise as they move there, such as people being kidnapped and forced to become slaves and being employed illegally. The statement above as supported by Collins (2000:4) who states that the vast majority of African-American woman were brought to the United States to work as slaves in a situation of oppression. Furthermore, black woman citizens faced struggle in gaining freedom to be able for participate in society. In the meantime, some of them are United States activists who are trying to fight for the same rights and the horrible actions they received. They are trying to get the right to freedom of speech, opinion, and a decent life in general and hopefully these problems will be solved soon. As an illustration, humans must be able to respect each other in the environment in order to create peace, mutual respect, and appreciation without splitting or bringing down the other party.

Hooks (1982:2) further states that one of the efforts of women to deal with these problems is by participating in the struggle against racial equality and trying to get women's rights back, such as what Anna Cooper did in 1893 at the World Congress of Representative Women in Chicago, Anna talked about how black women had faced their problems so far.

The higher fruits of civilization cannot be extemporized, neither can they be developed normally in the brief space of thirty years. It requires the long and painful growth of generations. Yet all through the darkest period of the colored women's oppression in this country her yet

unwritten history is full of heroic struggle, a struggle against fearful and overwhelming odds, that often ended in a horrible death; to maintain and protect that which woman holds dearer than life. (1982:2)

Environment becomes one of the most important roles in a person's social life and becomes a reference for people to behave. In a daily life, people commonly face many problems that arise due to human behavior that causes conflict. According to Schriver (2017:186) who states that the cognitive aspects of human behavior and the social environment address the role of cognition in thought processes—what we think and know, and how we see reality. This in turn influences feelings and behaviors. It means behavior takes a significant role in the life of a human that arise in everyday life. These aspects can come from anywhere, it can be from the environment where a person lives or maybe a person's mindset which is often misunderstood by some people. Therefore, it is crucial to be wise in choosing a positive environment to create a positive and good behavior.

Related to the environment, the problems that often occur in one's social life are the result of the deviant behavior of one group towards another group. This social issue still often arises in the environment of black women in US and has always been an interesting case to be discussed and studied continuously. According to Charisse (2003:181) the main factors that cause this problem are differences in skin color and social level, those are: [1] Black women have experienced prejudice or discrimination from other based on skin color 24%. [2] 80% personally affected by persistent racist and sexist assumption. [3] Women have experienced sexual harassment in public or social setting 45%. [4] 74% of women were treated differently than men in their workplace, and 68% of blacks were treated differently than whites. In fact, the case of discrimination are still exist in the society and it cannot be solved nowadays with the victim is black people because of their ethnicity, gender, race are difference with others. These make black people often getting injustice treatment by whites and often treated inappropriately, such as violence, sexual discrimination, oppression, and others. They even tend to accept everything without the slightest defense. Not a few of them are separated from the community, and frequently do not have many rights to have an opinion on something.

In exploring the extent of the role of black woman in literary works, many black writers use black female characters in their stories. According to Collins (2000:93) U.S. Black women writers provides one comprehensive view of Black women's struggles to form positive self-definitions in the face of derogated images of Black womanhood. In the meantime, the raising issues often involve several aspects related to woman that are currently happening as their reference for making literary works. It can be said that the author creates the literary work based on an event that occurred in society, and that literary works can be interesting to talk about in a certain field of knowledge.

The author's literary work frequently portrays the truth of life, implying that literature is a reflection of society. The author directs their creativity to a situation that occurred in social issues. As described in literary works such as poems, drama, short stories and novel. Novel is a long fictional story written in narrative styles. It also can contain story based on the actual moment or event that happens in the certain time, it can be a media for the author to express what they feel or concern about their society and often brings up some social issues or concerns that they either know or experience such as economics, politics, social and culture. By reading a novel, people not only find relationship between literature and social but they will also know someone experience.

One of those examples is Angie Thomas, she is one of the United States writers who discusses the issue about women in her literary work, namely *On the Come Up* which tells about black woman in dealing with problems in the surrounding environment and who experiences racial discrimination. The story takes place on Garden Heights where black people live also the place is full of crime and drug trafficking. Unfortunately, Brianna Jackson as main character never got a chance to express her opinion or what she wanted to say, she uses this as her motivation to pursue her dream. To prove that a black child deserves what she dreams of to be professional rapper and a black child also has the same rights as others. What she hopes is not only to pursue her goals which she has always dreamed of, but to tell people that they should never look down on someone.

Furthermore, previous studies are needed to support in this study. After looking for several sources of related information about black feminism, the writer found several previous studies, specifically; *Feminism in Late 20th Century American Literature: Black Feminism in Alice Walker's The Color Purple* by Dilara Isik (2017). *The Representation Of Female Character As Black Feminist In Hidden Figures Movie* by Destri Delastuti (2017). *Black Women Oppression in Toni Morrison's God Help The Child* by Vina Hartsa A'yuni Hidayati (2019). *Black Women's Oppression and Resistance in Kathryn Stockett's "The Help" Novel: Feminist Approach* by Mutia Rafael (2021). *Main Character's Responses Toward Prejudice In Angie Thomas' On The Come Up* by Nurul Lailatul Badriyah (2021). *Racism Reflected In On The Come Up By Angie Thomas: Racism Study* by Nur Hasanah (2021). Here the writer only lists some previous studies that are closely related to this study that the writer will examine with a view to finding out the elements of the problems that occur in the data source that the writer will use by using the theory of black feminism and the theory of racism.

In this study, the writer selects a novel entitled *On the Come Up* as the data source to be examined. It was first published by Blazer + Bray and printed by Harper Collins Publisher on February 5th 2019. Even though, the novel *On the Come Up* is classified as a new novel but it has been got many achievements one of them is from American Library Association (ALA) as Top Ten Books for Young Adult and many more. Hence, this novel is suitable to be a material for a reference in researching the problems that will be discussed by the writer. In conclusion, the writer chose this data source due to the whole story in this novel describes problems that still often occur in people's daily social lives. Those are the reasons why the writer chooses the novel.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of the problems that have been described in the previous sub-chapter, there are 2 problems which are formulated as follows:

1. What kinds of racial discrimination are experienced by Brianna Jackson in *On the Come Up*?

2. How do the character struggle to oppose discrimination?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Regarding the formulation of the problem that has been mentioned, the objectives of this study are:

1. To find out kinds of racial discrimination experienced by Brianna Jackson
2. To elaborate the way the character struggle to oppose discrimination

1.4 Significance of the Study

There are two points of prominent objectives, the first is a theoretical objective and the second is a practical objective.

Theoretically, this study is expected to be a reference or reference source for other reseachers in analyzing different data sources by applying the same theory in further research. In addition, the writer found several phenomena that still often appear in Angie Thomas *On The Come Up* which are related to the problems faced by women. In the meantime, other researchers can pay more attention to the issue of social phenomena that occur in society which are still closely related to the theory used.

Practically, the purpose of this study for writers and readers is that this study can provide an overview of information about the problem of racism that often arises. Subsequently, it is also expected to provide theoretical in general, so that it can be useful for researchers and readers in the future.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The writer focuses on analyzing the discrimination aspects in the novel *The On The Come Up*. This study analyzes Brianna Jackson problems through Fred L Pincus about racial discrimination theory and the tenets of black feminism as the empowerment side of the character which is analyzed through Patricia Hill Collins black feminism theory.

