

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background, statement of the research problems, objectives, significances, scope and limitation, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background

Racial diversity is a crucial issue since colonial era. It is because racial diversity can effect oppression to the minorities' race. Generally, racial oppression is experienced by Asian, African, and Latin America., but the discussion here focused for African Americans and the Whites. African Americans as minorities' race are inferior, whereas the Whites are superior. According to Marable in *Racializing Justice, Disenfranchising Lives* (2007: 1) Blacks as a group were relegated to live outside of civil society; they were legally defined as private property, not citizens, and were largely excluded from legal and constitutional rights. It means that the African American citizens are not considered or recognized as a group of people in the world. African Americans or black Americans considered as object owned by their master or the Whites. The life of African Americans are bridled by the master does not have legal protection from the state. There is oppression for Blacks. African Americans has no legitimacy to get and work freely like the whites.

There is a racial stratification in education, government, and employment between African American citizens and white citizens. According to Patrick during

the first half of the twentieth century, especially in the South, segregation was practiced in most areas of American life. Blacks and whites could not attend the same school, or eat at the same table in a restaurant, or marry someone not of their race (1998: 109). It can be shown that there is segregation experienced by the Blacks or African Americans.

Segregation which is experienced by the Blacks or African Americans is a form of oppression. Since they are oppressed by the treatment of the Whites, African Americans are under pressure of the Whites. This bad treatment is done by the whites in order to Blacks do what the whites want, everything and every time. African Americans, who are considered as the weak, cannot do anything to struggle and arrogate their right which is bridled by the whites.

Segregation as the bad treatment of the whites to the blacks can be said as the form of racism. It can be found in the novel *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison, because one of the functions of literary work is to reflect the real condition in a particular time. Actually Ralph Ellison is one of the most significant writers of the 20th century. According to Samuels, *Invisible Man* garnered the National Book Award, making Ellison the first African-American author to win the prize. Besides the National Book Award, Ellison received the Rockefeller Foundation Award in 1954 and the Chevalier de l'Ordre des Artes et Lettres and the Medal of Freedom in 1969. In addition, the novel which is published in 1952 by Random House was received appreciation from literary voice in the country. By the end of the century, *Invisible Man* is also included

as one of the most significant works of American literature (Samuels, 2007: 167-168).

Invisible Man is a great novel which tells about the character of African Americans who is segregated by the whites and how the effort of the invisible man in survival. Since the main character in the novel always segregated by the whites, the main character who calls himself as the invisible man chooses to live “invisible”. It is because according to him, since he gets bad treatment from the whites, live as the invisible man is better. Moreover, it is because he is as African Americans always rejected by the whites. In the article, Roger Rosenblatt (1995) says that he (the invisible man) is Every Black Man in America; wherever he turns (to capitalism, Communism, nationalism, nihilism), someone is trying to make him disappear. White America, in its secret and bitter heart, wants black America to go away. Isolation, assimilation, expulsion, destruction: any means will do.

The novel which is analyzed here more or less shows a portrayal of an African Americans. It always becomes an interesting issue to be discussed. There are many things from the life of African Americans which can be explored. In the novel, the character of the narrator will show us about the portrait of the main character as Negro or African Americans. It shows how segregation experienced by the invisible man as African Americans who live among the whites. Since segregation is a form of racism, this study uses Racism theory as the guidance to analyze the problem of this study.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problems

Based on the background of the study, the following questions are formulated:

1. What are the forms of segregation experienced by the invisible man?
2. What are the efforts of the invisible man to survive?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study will describe the answers of questions in the statement of the research problems. The objectives of the study are:

1. To reveal the forms of segregation experienced by the invisible man,
2. To reveal the efforts of the invisible man to survive.

1.4 Significances of the Study

Hopefully this study gives several benefits both the theoretically and the practically. Theoretically, this study gives better understanding in Racism study from a literary work. In addition, this study is expected to give better understanding about life of black Americans who is segregated by white Americans and the effort of the invisible man in survival. Meanwhile, practically this study gives an inspiration and knowledge to the reader who will analyze a literary work by using Racism.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The scope of this study is Racism which concern about portrayal of black Americans. Furthermore, this study focuses on the how the invisible man segregated by the white Americans and also the effort of the invisible man in survival. Moreover, this study also limits on the utterances of the characters and the author's narration that the best describe about forms of segregation experienced by the invisible man and the effort of the invisible man in survival.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Several key terms needed to be defined for the limitation of the study. Hence, this part provides brief definition and description of the key terms used in this study.

Racism : On the one hand, it is a matter of behavior, usually a manifestation of hatred or contempt for individuals who have well-defined physical characteristics different from our own; on the other hand, it is a matter of ideology, a doctrine concerning human races (Les Back and John Solomos, 2000: 64)

Segregation : an arrangement whereby Black Americans, as a minority, were systemically treated in separate, but constitutionally sanctioned, way (King, 1995: 9)