

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents some sub chapters, those are background of the study, statements of research questions, objective of the study, scope and limitation of the study and significance of the study. They are necessary to be explained because they can be used as the basis of conducting this study.

1.1 Background of the study

The intricate periode having made black women miserable occurred in the mid 1960-1970s in America. At the period, black women faced dominance and oppression very badly by men. Black women forced to have a marginal role in the world of men not because of their inability to regulate themselves but because of the social and cultural conditions that made them subject to such domination. In addition men exploited black women for their own desires, where they was also discriminated against in the social, political, economic, educational to religious. Black women at that time were considered weak, and even appear of the term *Misogyny* (hatred of women) emerged where black women became objects of male domination such as slavery, female sexual objectivity, violence, sexual discrimination, oppression and so on, resulting in their psychological condition being suppressed. As stated by an American feminist Patricia Hill Collins in her book *Black Feminist Thought, In The Matrix of Domination* that “African-American women have been victims of race, gender, and class oppression. They are portrayed as black women are merely passive recipients of racial and sexual harassment and as if they are subject to their oppression.” (Collins, 1990:544).

Black women became the agent of satisfying men's desires, so that the emerged issues of sexism, racism, gender identity, and domination among the black women at that time before the emergence of the feminism movement. The famous authors of African-American such as Toni Morrison, Gayl Jones, Toni Cade Bambara and others raised black social critics in their works such as Toni Morrison's *Bluest Eye* is about disrespected humiliation and racial mockery to African-American Girl, Gayl Jones' *Corregidora* is about domestic and sexual violence between roles as women and mothers. And Toni Code Bambara's *Those*

Bones Are Not Child is about renders a horrowing portrait of a city under siege in Atlanta, where more than forty black children were kidnapped, sexually assaulted, and brutally murdered that these works were manifestations of the liberation movement for black people, especially for feminism.

For these reasons, a new feminist movement emerged in the nineteenth century to support women's rights which called for equality between men and women with their rights and obligations. *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker is considered as one of the movement's major supporting novels, where *The Color Purple* highlights African-American women who have suffered much from various persecution including segregation. Alice Malsenior Walker is an Afro-American female writer and feminist born in 1944. Her third novel, *The Color Purple* was published in 1982 which received both the Pulitzer Price and The American Book Award for fiction in 1983. It is a feminist novel about an abused and uneducated black women struggle for empowerment. The color “purple” is a symbol of excitement and victory in the struggle of black woman against racism, sexism, domination and oppression that leads to her life until the end of the novel can achieve financial, emotional and spiritual freedom. *The Color Purple* has been praised for the dept of its female characters and for its eloquent use of black english vernacular.

Novel *The Color Purple* tells the story of an African-American woman named Celie, she is as a main character who experienced a lot of oppression, even though there are several other female figures such as Nettie, Shug and Sofia but they don't experienced as much oppression as Celie did. Celie is an uneducated fourteen-year-old woman living in rural Georgia, poor and oppressed in the early 20th century. She is rape by her father Alphonso as Pa until Celie give birth to a boy and girl who were both stolen and possibly kill by her father. The Color Purple contains Celie's letters to God because of Alphonso's prohibition to not tell the incident for anyone. Celie thought it is only to God that she believes and able to understand fill in her heart, even though in the end her letters were address to her sibling Nettie. Not up here the oppression continues when Alphonso marry Celie to Mr. __ and Celie's

suffering increased. Many issues are of concern to the reader to understand how much the struggle of black women in achieving freedom at that time.

The literature has played an important role in changing the image of black women in society as a whole. Many feminists and writers as well as scholars struggle to change the stereotype of black women that they want to show gender equality and eradicate the injustices experienced by black women. In this case, literary works are used as a means of criticism and show that women can have a normal life like the others. In the color purple many issues are of concern to the community. In thesis entitled "*Black Feminism in Alice Walker's The Color Purple*" submitted by Yasmine Bendjelloul and Sara Selseldeb from Institute of Letter and Languages Departement of English 2017.

In IJARnD "*Marginalization and Oppression of African American Women*" conducted by G.M. Madhavi from Rayalaseema University 2018. And then thesis from Universidade Da Coruna 2018 prepared by Maria Medin Doce entitled From Subaltren to Heroine: "*Sisterhood and Empowerment in Alice Walker's The Color Purple*". Futhermore, conducted by Dilara Isik, feminism in late 20th century American Literature: "*Black Feminism in Alice Walker's The Color Purple*" 2017. And last in thesis "*The sexual orientation of Celie in Alice Walker's The Colour Purple*" prepared by Risanti Intan al Baluni from Yogyakarta State University 2012. Here the researcher only lists a number of previous studies related to the issues that the writer want to examine. However, formerly researchers did not analyze the writer's intention in *The Color Purple* regarding the problem of the relationship of the novel's title regarding "color purple" with domination. Therefore, the researcher intends to analyze the relationship between the two as well as the hidden critique of what the author intends in the novel *The Color Purple* to use the theory of black feminism.

Thus, intertwined with the discuss of oppression, domination, sexism, and gender identity, the researcher decide using theory black feminism. Through lens of black feminist theory, the novel gonna be studied critically to analyze Men Domination Over African American Woman in Alice Walker's *The Colour Purple*.

1.2 Research statement of the Problem

Based on the description of the background stated in the previous sub-chapter, the following research questions are advanced as follows:

1. How is African American Woman treated or depicted in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* ?
2. How does men domination give impact to the woman character in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* ?
3. What are the implied meaning of the "color purple" within interrelatedness of domination in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In relation to the research statement of the problems above, the objectives of the study are:

1. To explain how is African American Woman treated or depicted in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*.
2. To discover how does men domination give impact to the woman character in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*.
3. To describe the implied meaning of the "color purple" within interrelatedness of domination in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*.

1.4 Scope and the Limitation of the study

This study focuses in the portraying of Men Domination Over African-American Woman in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*. Black Feminism is used as the theoretical lens in order to convey the depiction of African-American people in the novel. In addition, the analysis is limited to the narrator's narrations and characters utterances which describe the condition, situation, and cultural view that occur through the narrative.

1.5 Significances of the Study

There are two points of significances:

1. Theoretically, This study provides important information about the discussion of black feminism from feminist Patricia Hill Collins, she offers her theories on matrix of domination within the relation of oppression, race, class and sexuality. In this study the researcher also finds the hidden issues

regarding social critics that the author intended in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* and black feminism theory support the analysis source of data that discuss oppression, sexism, slavery, domination experienced towards of black women.

2. Practically, The importance of this study can provide more understanding to readers in the field of black feminism literature. In addition, the importance of the proposed study is not limited to academic boundaries. Not only that this research provides an opportunity to question the fundamental assumptions that guide community practice outside the academic institution. It is only through continuous examination and criticism that society can continue to dismantle the inherent social prejudices that occur in social structures and relationships. The purpose of this research is not only limited to providing analysis that takes a particular novel and utilizes a methodology to analyze it, but this research can also expand further understanding of oppression, sexism, domination, slavery inherent in our society. It is also hoped that this research can encourage students to become agents of change for social improvement as well as a reference material for students at the University of Trunojoyo Madura especially in the English Study Program to analyze the others literary work.