

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of five subchapters. This chapter discusses the background of the study, the statement of a research problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study also the scope and limitation of the study

1.1 Background of the study

Readers have many purposes in reading literature. Those are, as a form of entertainment, to gain information, and a learning source. From the writer's perspective, writer use literature to express their concern, retold an event that happened at that time they live, share an idea, and many others. Many literary works talk about racism and it is a good thing to do because it will give the reader an insight into what the victim of racism feels. Gerald in Swenson (2000) states that in a society which is heavily dominated by white culture, black people do not get representations of black characters. The main characters are always played by white people. This spurred black people to developed their own literacy to break the feeling of not being considered and the negative image society had on them (Swenson, 2000, p. 83-84). By writing story with balck people as the main character and the main character struggle as black person will make the reader feel sympathy and learn more about the topic. Literature that talks about racism also gives information about what words or actions are considered as racism by the victim. Because sometimes some people do not know that they are racist. Many modern people believe that racism is declining and society thinks that class is much more important than race, however racism still happens in peoples of color lives and they, people of color, still face injustice in their social life (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 9-10).

Racism has become a topic that is often discussed and fought for but still happens in everyday life. Racial minorities have repeatedly carried out movements against

racism such as campaigns, and education to make people aware. However after the campaign was over and education about racism was spread widely, there are still people who are racist and they sometimes do not realize it. Sue (2007) quoting from The Race Advisory Board of President Bill Clinton concluded that (a) racism is one of our society's most divisive forces, (b) racial legacies of the past continue to haunt current policies and practices that create unfair disparities between minority and majority groups, (c) racial injustices are so strongly rooted in American society that they are nearly invisible, and (d) most White Americans are unaware of the advantages they enjoy in this society and how their attitudes and actions unintentionally discriminate against persons of color (Sue et al., 2007, p. 271).

Even in this era racism still has become a hot topic to be discussed. When talked about racism the common thing that can be thought of was racism against black people. Racism against black people is a very common occurrence, especially in the United States. Many news about racism against black people usually originated from the United State and the causes of racism vary from bullying to murder. Cuncic (2022) wrote a list about possible psychological explanations why racism exists (1) personal insecurity, (2) lack of compassion, (3) projection of flaws, (4) poor mental health, (5) hatred and fear (Cuncic, 2022). Roberts and Rizzo (2021) conducted a research about racism in America which resulted seven factors that contribute to racism in America: (a) categories, which categorize individuals into separate categories by encouraging essentialist and normative thinking. (b) factions, which spur intergroup rivalry and threat as well as ingroup allegiance. (c) segregation, which prevents intergroup contact and hardens racial attitudes, preferences, and beliefs. (d) hierarchy, which encourages racial thoughts, feelings, and actions. (e) power, which enforces racism on both a micro and macro scale. (f) media, which normalizes stereotypical and idealized depictions of White Americans while devaluing and marginalizing people of color. (g) passivism, which obscures racism by ignoring or denying its existence, encouraging others to do the same, and enabling racism to fester and endure (Roberts & Rizzo, 2021, p. 2).

One of the common hate against a race that many people know are against black people. However the act of racism turns out not only to black people, but it happens to almost all racial minorities. Reason of choosing racism as a topic in this study is to explore more about types of racism and how to overcome racism and use a character named Emira Tucker from *Such a Fun Age* novel by Kiley Reid as source of data. This is not the first time a black writer or writer from another racial minority has written a work on the topic of racism and all the bad things that happen because of bad stereotypes of a race. The inspiration they get may not all come from the writer's personal experience but readers or the people around the writer may be or have been victims of racism or stereotypes. *Such A Fun Age* is a debut novel of Kiley Reid that is published in 2019. This novel centers around a character named Emira Tucker. she is a black woman works as a part-time babysitter for a white girl named Briar Chamberlain. Alix Chamberlain is the one who hired Emira Tucker to take care of her child, she is a blogger and public speaker. This book talks about racism that Emira Tucker experienced. One of the racism that Emira Tucker gets is prejudice when she visits Market Depot with Briar Chamberlain (Reid, 2019). Reid's writing made her reader analyze deeper that even a subtle thing can be considered racism by other people even when the one doing it does not have the intention of doing so. From her writing Reid's told us even with Obama as their president of the United States there are still many black people becoming a victim of racism. One of the reasons the writer choses this novel as a source of data is because at this time no one has discussed the topic of racism in this novel.

There are several previous studies that have used the same topic as this study but with different source of data and the writer did not find any other studies with the same data sources addressing the same topic. The first is a research titled "*A Black Feminist Reading of Kiley Reid's Such a Fun Age (2019)*" that was written by Melissa Oumellal and Djaffer Salhi (2021) from Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou. The major findings of this study on black feminists demonstrate how racism is entrenched

in American society and how it spread through a variety of oppressive stains. The second study is by Jessica Zakrisson (2020) with The titled *""New Money Trash," Meet "Dope Bitch": An Intersectional Analysis of Identity in Such a Fun Age"*. This article analyzes the theme of identity in *Such a Fun Age* by Kiley Reid, published in 2019. The third study is named *"Discrimination Against Black People In Kiley Reid's Such A Fun Age"* and was created by Aisyah Andina Ayu Sekar Lestari (2022) from Universitas Pamulang. This study focused on how racism-based discrimination was portrayed in the main character's experiences and response to the prejudice.

The fourth studies entitled *"Racism And Its Effect In Freedom Writers Film By Richard Lagravenese Sociological Approach"* (2020) written by Azna Yulinarni, Asridayani, and Dedi Efendi. Their study discusses types of racism based on Wilson's E Charles theory (2005) and effects felt by the character based on the theory of Allport (1991) in the *"Freedom Writer"* film. This study uses Charles' theory in classifying the types of racism, namely overt/individual racism and institutional racism, to analyze the effects of racism using Allport's theory. From the collected data, 10 data were found for overt racism, 6 data for institutional racism, and 5 data on the effects of racism (Yulinarni & Efendi, 2020). Fifth study entitled *" Racism In Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Americanah"* (2018) a thesis written by Monica Megasari. This thesis talked about racism that an African immigrant woman named Ifemelu felt because of her race. This study claims that many African immigrants experience racism as experienced by Ifemelu, one of the characters in the novel, the racism and social pressure they experience can hinder their achievement and identity development (Megasari, 2018).

The sixth study is by Zul Karno Ra'is (2018) entitled *"Representation of Racism in Dear White People Film"* , this study using racism as a topic and discussing representation of racism that happened to black American students. However this study not just discusses representation of racism in the film but also the characters effort to fight racism (Ra'is, 2018). The last is a thesis entitled *"Racism in Wright's Black Boy"*

Novel " (2021) by Hasmayani. This thesis discusses acts of racism portrayed in *Black Boy* novel and the character responds to racism he experienced (Hasmayani, 2021).

In this study, the writer wants to raise racism as a topic to be analyzed, and the novel entitled "*Such a Fun Age*" by Kiley Reid is used as a data source, in this study the writer will analyze what types of racism exist in the novel and what the main character do to overcome racism.

1.2 Statement of Research Questions

Based on the background above, these are some research questions for this topic:

1. What kind of racism does Emira Tucker experience in *Such a Fun Age* novel?
2. What does Emira Tucker do to overcome racism?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is as follows:

1. To describe type of racism experienced by Emira Tucker
2. To elaborate the ways the main character do to overcome racism

1.4 The Significances of the Study

The significances of the study divided into two significances, those are;

A. Theoretically

This study is expected to provide several benefits for the advancement of science, particularly in the literary research field, and to support the psychological theories in coping mechanisms as well as the definition of racism and its varied forms.

B. Practically

The purpose of this study is to give a contribution to literary research to others who plan to write a thesis using the same theory or novel. The result of this study is expected to help students at the University of Trunojoyo Madura in understanding racism and the writer also hopes that the readers of this study are careful in their speech and action toward others. This study also gives an understanding of racism in Kiley Reid' *Such a Fun Age*.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the study

This research focuses on the main character of Kiley Reid's novel Emira Tucker, a black woman that works as a babysitter for a white family. The analysis uses racism theory to know what types of racism that show in the novel and how the main character overcome racism using psychological theory. The limitations are needed so the analysis does not go out of topic, and the limitation of this research is the narration and utterances of the characters in the novel related to the problem which are relevant to the research questions.