

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background, statement of research problems, objective of the study, significances of the study, scope and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background

Racial discrimination is a phenomenon that occurs in society in the form of oppression over other communities. Racial discrimination is one of the problems that people often do because of the dominance of a group that creates thoughts toward minority groups. For example, someone who has a dark skin colour is then oppressed by a white-dominated society. As explained by Ronald L Simon, et al.(2021) in his journal explained that “In the USA, individuals of colour, especially Black Americans, suffer a greater prevalence and earlier onset of chronic illness and disability than other ethnic groups”.

In addition, cases of racial discrimination that often appear in people's lives are the oppression of a narrow-eyed group or the so-called Chinese group. In this case, certain racial discrimination cases do not only emphasize differences in skin colour orientation, but also various aspects which are considered not in accordance with the existing scope in an area. Discrimination of sense or racism arises because of a thought from society. Society considers that a culture can reflect a person's behaviour. This statement is also supported by Dalmage's statement in his book entitled 'Racism: A Very Short Introduction' he explains that “The idea that human biological characteristics such as skin colour, shape of nose, type of hair, and size of skull were associated with ingrained cultural and behavioural traits was well established(2018:17)”. Based on this, people assume that if a new culture enters their territory, it is feared that it will have a bad impact

on the people around them. This thought is one of the reasons for the existence of cases of racial discrimination that are still inherent in society.

In society, the occurrence of racial discrimination is caused by differences in skin color and a person's physical and biological form. As happened in America, racial discrimination still occurs, such as white dominants that become superior so that they have the right to discriminate against black human minorities who act as oppressed people. This statement is supported by a statement from Maya D Suastifa who assumes that “ Inamerica, the black got unjust treatment and cruelty by the white just because their race identity. At the moment the black were insulted, oppressed, and even killed by the white (Suastifa, 2011:02)”. The depiction of forms of racial discrimination is often found in a literary work.

Literary work is a form of written expression related to the reality of life which is poured into the form of writing with aesthetic writing so as to create a beautiful essay. In this sense the concept of a literary work is dependent upon there being human institutions (of which indeed critics have become an integral part), governing its production, and guaranteeing its relationship to human purpose (Weber, 2020:29). Literature and literary works are an art that is expressed in written form with a series of beautiful sentences. According to Bressler (2011:12) explain that “To solve this difficulty, others choose define literature as an art. Thereby, leaving open the question of its being written or oral”. Every literary work certainly has elements that support the integrity of a work. In addition, literary works of course have various types of works, namely poetry, drama, short stories, and novels.

In a novel, the problems that arise have many different themes raised. Several authors describe themes that are in harmony with human life such as the journey of love stories, oppression, tragedy, humor and also social discrimination. In this study, the author uses a novel that raises a theme about an issue that often occurs among the public, namely race discrimination by Linda Sue Park entitled '*Prairie Lotus*'.

The novel '*Prairie Lotus*' is a children's novel that is in 1990 and tells the life of a little girl named 'Hanna' who lives with her father and has a dream to have a higher education and be able to work with her father in her father's boutique. Hanna is a little girl with half Chinese and half white descent, this is what causes Hanna to get racial discrimination so that Hanna does not get justice. Hanna had to hide her identity from her friends when she decided to go to school because she was someone who wasn't white.

Hanna has a desire to become a designer in her father's clothes shop. And she wants to fulfil her mother's wish to have a diploma. However, because 'Hanna' is a little girl who is different from the majority of the population in Dakota, Hanna's wishes are fiercely opposed by local residents and ostracized by the white majority there. The novel '*Prairie Lotus*' provides some very deep understanding of the author regarding the beauty of a literary work. This novel raises a theme that is very interesting and also tends not to give the reader a sense of boredom and gives a deep meaning to the reader.

Linda Sue Park is a writer based in South Korea. She is one of the writers of children's novels from South Korea. Linda Sue Park managed to write 6 works of children's literature. The first novel written by Linda Sue Park was titled '*Seesaw Girl*' which was published in 1999. One of the children's novels by Linda Sue Park that won an award was '*Prairie Lotus*'. The novel entitled '*Prairie Lotus*' is a novel that received an award from The Ohio Digital Library. This novel is one of Linda Sue Park's works which was published in 2020 with a total of 138 pages. With a total of few pages, this novel is very easy to understand. The use of grammar and vocabulary used by Linda Sue Park is very easy to understand and also does not use too much language that makes it difficult for readers.

This novel gives an ambiguous form of the problem, at the beginning of the problem the oppression of female characters emerged. However, if the reader is very observant in guessing the problems that arise, the problem that dominates in this novel is a form of racial discrimination.

There are several studies that use the topic of racial discrimination. The first study “An Analysis Of Racial Discrimination Potrayed In Peter Carey’s Novel : A Long Way From Home”. In his research shows racial discrimination potrayed in this novel when the white people gets intimidated The Aboriginal people and also racial discrimination happen in the character who has a different skin colour (Muliadi, 2015). In addition, in the study “Analysis Of Racial Discrimination Towards Uncle Tom In Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin” the writer shows the result that the factors of racial discrimination are slavery and human identity. The human identity refers to the identity of race. In addition, the effects of racial discrimination are human trafficking, family separation, physically abused and rebellion (Dewi et al., 2019).

In this study, the writer is interested in analyzing the novel '*Prairie Lotus*' because the author considers the issue of racial discrimination contained in this novel to be different from racial discrimination that generally occurs because the racial discrimination contained in this novel in the form of racial discrimination on ethnic group namely chinese people. The writer in this study focuses on the depiction of racial discrimination contained in the novel '*Prairie Lotus*' by Linda Sue Park.

To describe some of the questions in this study, the writer uses the theory of 'Race and Racism' from Robert Miles and Malcolm Brown which discusses racism against a race caused by one ethnic group against another ethnic group (Miles & Brown, 2003:04). This is also supported by the statement (Kirkinis et al., 2021:02) ‘The behavioural manifestation of racism, racial discrimination, is at the intersection of power and prejudice. Racial discrimination is understood to be a combination of the ideology of racial superiority (racism) and the social structures and interpersonal behaviours associated with dominance and oppression.(Solomos, 1993:374) “The majority of us understood racism as a social evil perpetuated by prejudiced white people that could be overcome through bonding between blacks and liberal whites, through militant protest, changing of laws or racial integration.”

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background described above, this research has the following problem formulation:

1. How is the main character discriminated in 'Prairie Lotus'?
2. What are the impacts of racial discrimination experienced by 'Hanna'?

1.3 Objective of Study

The objectives to be achieved in this study are to describe:

1. Racial discrimination depicted in the main character 'Hanna' in the novel 'Prairie Lotus'.
2. The impact of racial discrimination on the main character 'Hanna'.

1.4 The Significance of Study

Theoretically, this study aims to enrich a literary study related to the analysis of racial discrimination depicted in a novel such as the one in this study which analyzes racial discrimination depicted in the novel 'Prairie Lotus' by Linda Sue Park. Meanwhile practically, this research is expected to be used as learning material for readers to know the impact of racial discrimination and can also be used as a comparison with research with the same topic. In addition, this research is also expected to be useful for final semester students to add ideas and insights in writing, and can be a reference to bring up new research studies

1.5 The Scope of Limitation

The scope of this study is the use of theory of race and racism by Miles and Brown to analyze the novel entitled 'Prairie Lotus' by Linda Sue Park about racial discrimination portrayed on the main character 'Hanna'. The race and racism theory can help the writer to find out the depiction and impact of racial discrimination on the main character in the novel 'Prairie Lotus'. And the analysis is focused on the racial discrimination which portrayal in 'Prairie Lotus' especially on the main character namely 'Hanna'.

