

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter elaborates the background of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and scope and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of Study

In the modern world, gender-based oppression continues to affect women in both public and private spheres. The patriarchal system, which upholds male dominance over women, reinforces unequal power relations and perpetuates social, physical, and psychological restrictions on women. Hiwarkhedka in Sharma & Bano (2024, p. 501) argues that patriarchal dominance has been a recurring theme in literature, illustrating the societal norms that favor men over women. Similarly, Ade in Sharma & Bano (2024, p. 501) also state that patriarchal structures continue to manifest through economic, political, and social discrimination against women, such as unequal educational opportunities and domestic violence. This form of oppression often infiltrates domestic relationships, particularly between parents and daughters, where control is disguised as care and protection. According to Frisky Nur Salvianny and Eka Nurcahyani (2020), oppression is a social act of a dominant group that controls the others and limits the suppressed group that is being devalued, exploited, and deprived of privileges. Bell Hooks (1984, p. 1) emphasizes that feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression, reminding us that the private sphere, including the family, is a crucial space where such oppression manifests.

In particular, isolation in feminist terms, refers to the act of separating women from access to social spaces, emotional expression, and decision-making power. This separation may occur physically such as restricting movement or psychologically through emotional manipulation, guilt, fear, and the pretense of love. It functions as a mechanism of control to limit women's agency and autonomy within patriarchal structures. According to Prasetyo and Suryaman (2022, p. 45), resistance emerges when elements in power begin to limit gender roles in an

environment. Fitri Amalia and Hartono (2023, p. 94), also emphasize that literary works reflect real societal power systems, including the ways isolation is used as a cultural and emotional tool. Bell Hooks (1984, p. 27) argues that patriarchy has no gender, suggesting that even women can enforce patriarchal control when they internalize its values, often under the guise of maternal love. In many patriarchal societies, women's bodies and choices are not only regulated by men but also by family systems that adopt protective narratives to justify restrictions.

On the other hand, resistance particularly female resistance, arises as a response to these acts of isolation and control. Defined as both subtle and overt acts of defiance, resistance challenges the legitimacy of systemic power that suppresses women's freedom. Wahyuni in Prasetyo & Suryaman (2022, p. 46), defines resistance as either hidden or open actions that oppose rules or policies imposed by an authoritative force. Salvianny & Nurcahyani (2020, p. 67), further explain that resistance is not merely opposition, but also a step toward empowerment toward reclaiming agency. Hooks (1984, p. 45), affirms that the absence of a sustained feminist consciousness-raising movement in our society has meant that many women remain trapped in isolation, unable to name their pain or imagine liberation. Thus, resistance begins when women develop awareness of their oppression. Salsabila et al. (2023, p. 110) also note that modern women are working hard to challenge stereotypes, speak up for themselves, and strive for equal rights—often starting within their own families and communities.

In many cases, the experience of isolation itself becomes a turning point for women to recognize their subordination and begin resisting. The internal realization of injustice gives birth to acts of defiance even when subtle or personal in nature. Hooks (1984, p. 57), asserts that feminist struggle is rooted in neither victimization nor the blaming of others, but rather in the recognition of our capacity to resist. Resistance can be personal and quiet, such as questioning authority or reclaiming the right to make decisions, and these acts are essential in reshaping identity. According to Rima & Suryani (2022, p. 88), resistance is very essential for their struggle to face, go through, and stop the sexist oppression. Therefore, resistance is not only a reaction but also a conscious assertion of freedom.

Bell Hooks theory emphasizes that feminist awareness is not born from ideology alone, but through lived experiences, especially within the private sphere. She argues that domination within family and intimate spaces must be confronted if feminism is to be truly liberating (Hooks, 1984, p. 77). Hooks explains that even loving relationships can become a source of control when power is unequal, stating, patriarchal domination has always been most brutally enforced in the home (Hooks, 1984, p. 79). Thus, feminist resistance must begin by examining how isolation functions in daily life, especially in families. According Willany (2017, p. 113), feminism is a movement that demands women's emancipation, equality, and justice of rights. This movement also includes challenging dominant cultural narratives that accept women's subordination as natural or moral.

According to Rumapea et al. (2023, p. 27), *Everything, Everything* portrays a young girl's isolation as the result of her mother's fear of loss and overprotectiveness. This isolation not only limits her physical movements but also her psychological development and access to social experiences. As Amalia & Hartono (2023, p.94) argue, literature reflects how systems like power, economy, and morality are embedded in daily life, including family structures. The novel presents a form of maternal overprotection that ultimately functions as a restriction to the protagonist's growth and independence. This reflects a broader pattern of how women are often isolated within the domestic sphere. This form of isolation is portrayed not as an act of love, but as a means of power. Even though she is female, adopts a role of control that reflects patriarchal logic. Salvianny and Nurcahyani (2020, p. 70), explain that patriarchal power justifies unequal treatment through love and protection mechanisms used to hide deeper control. Hooks (198, p. 27), supports this when she explains that patriarchy can function through anyone who supports its values, regardless of gender. The novel reflects issues surrounding the control of women's bodies, limited freedom, and the silencing of young female voices within the family.

In this case, the writer analyzes about female resistance against isolation as experienced by the character Madeline in *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon. The novel was chosen for this study because it addresses crucial issues of isolation,

control, and female identity. Madeline's journey from obedient daughter to self-determined young woman highlights the transformative power of resistance. As Salsabila et al. (2023, p. 108) explain women are increasingly rejecting the limitations of traditional domestic roles. The theory of feminism by bell hooks (1984) is used as a critical framework to explore how Madeline's journey reflects a woman's effort to claim her freedom and identity. Hooks emphasizes that feminism is a struggle to end sexist oppression. Therefore, it is necessarily a struggle to eradicate the ideology of domination, including imperialism, economic expansion, and material desires (Hooks, 1984, p. 24). This theory helps the writer uncover how the novel presents Madeline's personal choices and emotional awakenings as acts of feminist resistance against the restrictions placed on her.

In outlining the analysis, the writer focuses on exploring the causes of Madeline's isolation, the forms of resistance she performs, and the effects of that resistance on her life. The analysis also highlights how Madeline's transformation from passive acceptance to active defiance serves as a narrative of female empowerment. This is in line with bell hooks thought that, resistance is not only defiance but also the beginning of feminist consciousness (1984, p. 24). Salvianny & Nurcahyani (2020, p. 70) affirm that women's resistance begins when they develop awareness of the system that confines them. By applying bell hooks feminist perspective, the writer aims to show how resistance can emerge from personal consciousness, emotional strength, and the desire for autonomy. This study emphasizes that even within intimate relationships, such as that between a daughter and a mother, control can operate in subtle but deeply restrictive ways, and that resisting it becomes an act of reclaiming one's selfhood.

There are six previous studies that relate to this study based on data and theory. The first previous study is by Galuh Fitriana Sakti (2022), entitled *Personality Traits of Pauline in Everything, Everything Novel*. This study analyzes Pauline's personality using the Big Five Personality Traits theory, focusing on neuroticism and conscientiousness that lead to her controlling behavior toward Madeline. The second previous study are by Ade Rahmad Kurnia and Asnani (2022), entitled *Parenting Styles in Nicola Yoon's Novel Everything, Everything*. This study uses

Diana Baumrind's parenting theory to examine Pauline's authoritarian parenting style and its effects on Madeline. The third previous study are by Konggang et al. (2023), entitled *Domestic Violence in Nicola Yoon's Everything, Everything*. This study uses psychoanalysis theory to examine psychological violence, focusing on isolation and emotional abuse experienced by Madeline. The fourth previous study are by Siska Dewi Rahayu & Sri Wulan (2019), entitled *Resistance for Truth in Nicola Yoon's Novel Everything, Everything*. This study explores Madeline's resistance against her mother's lies using a general literary approach without specific theoretical frameworks.

The fifth previous study is by Maulida Kurin Inaya (2021), entitled *The Anxiety of Pauline and Madeline in Nicola Yoon's Everything, Everything*. This study applies Freud's psychoanalysis theory to explore the anxiety experienced by both Pauline and Madeline. The sixth previous study is by Shella Aprilia (2019)), entitled *The Analysis of Pauline through Feminism Theory on Everything, Everything Novel by Nicola Yoon*. This study uses feminist theory to justify Pauline's controlling behavior as a protective act based on maternal instinct. There are several differences between previous studies and this study. First, most previous studies focus on psychological analysis or parenting style, while this study focuses on female resistance against isolation. Second, this study uses bell hooks feminist theory to examine how Madeline resists patriarchal control, which has not been specifically addressed in the previous studies. Therefore, this study presents a new perspective that highlights female resistance as a form of empowerment.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of the study that has been written, the writer will focus on the following ideas to formulate the research question problem:

1. How does Madeline experience isolation shaped by patriarchal values internalized by her mother in *Everything, Everything*?
2. What forms of resistance does Madeline use to challenge patriarchal control disguised as maternal care in *Everything, Everything*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the research questions that have been formulated. The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To analyze how Madeline experiences isolation shaped by patriarchal values internalized by her mother in *Everything, Everything*.
2. To identify the forms of resistance Madeline uses to challenge patriarchal control disguised as maternal care in *Everything, Everything*.

1.4 Significance of the Study

There are two contributions the writer hopes to provide through this study. The first is that this study theoretically contributes to the development of feminist literary criticism by applying bell hooks feminist theory. This theory emphasizes the importance of confronting oppression not only in public spheres but also within private and domestic spaces. By using hooks perspective, this study highlights how isolation can be a form of patriarchal control even when performed by a female figure, and how resistance can emerge through awareness and personal agency.

The second is that this study practically contributes to increasing readers understanding of how patriarchal oppression may appear in subtle and intimate forms, such as parental overprotection. This study aims to provide insights for literature students and general readers into how feminist resistance can be expressed through the character of Madeline. It encourages critical thinking about control within family structures and supports the idea that resistance can begin from within. This study also promotes feminist awareness by showing how literature can reflect real-life issues of power, isolation, and female empowerment.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study focuses on the analysis of female resistance against isolation as experienced by the main character, Madeline in Nicola Yoon's *Everything, Everything*. The analysis is based on bell hooks feminist theory as outlined in *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (1984), which emphasizes the

eradication of sexist oppression and highlights the role of resistance in achieving empowerment.

The limitation of this study lies in its textual analysis, which is restricted to Madeline's character, including her thoughts, actions, and dialogue, as well as the narrators descriptions in the novel. This study does not cover other characters, focus remains on how Madeline's resistance reflects feminist ideals, particularly in relation to her isolation within the domestic sphere caused by her mother.