

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer presents five sub-chapters. They are: 1) the background of the study, which provides some information about the topic of the study, 2) the research question, which contains the questions to give the study a clear focus, 3) the objective of the study, which includes the aim of the study, 4) the significance of the study refers to the contribution and impacts of the study on academic learning or the research field, 5) scope and limitation, contains the focus of the study that would be analyzed.

1.1 Background of Study

In today's society, the ideology of patriarchy is still preserved. This patriarchal ideology has a major influence on women's lives. According to Walby (1990: 20), they were stated that patriarchy refers to the system of social practices and social structures that create men's domination, women's oppression, and also women's exploitation. Men are more powerful and dominant than women. In society, the roles of men and women are different, for example, in households. Men, as husbands and fathers, have the responsibility to earn a living and also have the power to control their wives and their children. In contrast, women as wives and mothers are responsible for handling household tasks such as cooking and nurturing children. This aligns with Tamir and Elfira's statement that men as fathers must earn a living whereas women as mothers have the task of taking care of children, cooking, and gardening (Alifah Tamir & Elfira, 2021: 267). Therefore, the role of the mother is frequently associated with the term motherhood.

In wider society, motherhood becomes an identity of women after giving birth. Being pregnant is natural for women, but motherhood does not come along with it (Roifah, 2021: 179). It means motherhood does not comes naturally to mother. Motherhood is a trait that is attached to women due to cultural construction that

assumes motherhood must be owned by a mother. This concept of motherhood embedded in society is applied repeatedly from generation to generation. Motherhood and mothering are different things, they have different meanings, but they are correlated. According to O'Reilly (2016: 15-16), mothering refers to women's experience of mothering, such as being pregnant, childbearing, raising, and nurturing children. It is centered on women, defined by them, and has the potential to empower them, while motherhood refers to the patriarchal institution, which is man-defined and controlled and is deeply oppressive to women. Patriarchy shaped the concept of motherhood, where the traits of motherhood are controlled to fulfill patriarchal expectations. It creates a dynamic where women are disproportionately burdened with childcare responsibilities, limiting their ability to participate in other areas of life.

In Adrienne Rich's book entitled *Of Woman Born*, she stated that a mother's love is unconditional (Rich 1995: 23). It means mothers' love is not limited to their children. Mothers will do anything to fulfill their children's needs. However, O'Reilly said that nurturing and loving their children is one of the constructions of the patriarchal culture that demands the mother be the one to provide for the children's needs (O'Reilly, 2016: 4). Patriarchal culture assumes that mothers as the sole providers for the children's needs, therefore mothers demand to always be available for their children, loving their children, raising their children, being someone who can help their children's needs, and also, they should prioritize their children's needs before themselves. All of these assumptions were created and constructed by a patriarchal society that controls women to become idealized mothers defined by patriarchy. According to O'Reilly (2016: 19), she stated that the term patriarchal motherhood became the official meaning of motherhood because motherhood is what patriarchy constructs to the role of mother.

According to O'Reilly (2016: 14), she mentioned ten mandates of patriarchal motherhood in her book under the title *Matricentric Feminism*. First, there was essentialization when the role of the mother was seen as the identity of all women. Second, there is privatization that puts women only in a reproductive sphere, such as

pregnancy and childbearing. Then, naturalization assumes that being a mother is natural for women. All women must know how to be a mother because becoming a mother is driven by instinct, not intelligence, and developed by habit. Therefore, it is in line with individualization that assumes mothering is the mother's responsibility, so all the duties in nurturing children are seen as the responsibility of one person. Similarly, normalization assumes that the mother is a wife and the nurturer, while the father is a husband and the provider. The next thing is idealization, which assumes mothers have a good ability to do mothering. Then, the mandate of biologicalization emphasized the blood connection between the child and the mother. This mandate said that the birth mother was the "real" mother. Then, there were expertization and intensification that referred to the term "intensive mothering" that was conveyed by Michaels and Douglas, intensive mothering demands mothers to spend their time in childcaring, dedicating her entire physical, psychological, emotional, and intellectual life to her children. Then the last one is depoliticalization which characterizes childrearing solely as a private and nonpolitical undertaking with no social or political importance.

The issues of motherhood also appear in many literary works. It is possible because literary work is always related to human life (Mardiyani & Tawami, 2022: 166). Literary work contains issues or problems which reflect the condition of human and social life. For example, the novel *A Woman Is No Man* was written by a Palestinian-American novelist, Etan Rabin. This novel was published in 2019 and became a bestseller in New York. This novel tells about Isra as a mother. She married Adam and lived in Brooklyn. She gave birth to her first daughter, named Deya. At that time, Isra felt very happy and loved her daughter. She took care of her daughter with affection. But, her mother-in-law, did not look happy with that because she wanted a grandson. In their society, having a son was more desirable because men were superior to women. So, her mother-in-law demanded Isra to have a son soon, however having a daughter or son was out of her control. She has given birth every year for the past four years until she had four daughters. Isra was tired of the expectations of her mother-in-

law. She was overwhelmed by caring for her four daughters. Since the birth of her second daughter, Isra's emotions have been unstable, sometimes she ignores the desire of her children. She often choked and struggled with her mind. Besides that, this novel also explores themes about gender roles, traditions, cultural expectations, and the struggle for self-determination in a patriarchal society.

There are six previous studies related to this study. The first study is a journal article entitled *The Representation of Liberal Feminism in A Woman is No Man by Etaf Rum* by Mega Dwi Wulandari, Supiastutik, Hat Pujiati (2019). The study investigated the representation of liberal feminism in *A Woman is No Man* represented by female characters in getting equal rights with men. The study used the theory of representation by Stuart Hall and the discursive approach by Michel Foucault. In addition, the study used the theory of feminine mystique by Betty Friedan. The result of the study showed that the idea that Arab men are superior, whereas Arab women are inferior becomes common knowledge and general agreement in society.

The second is a thesis entitled *Patriarchal Oppression to The Main Characters in Etaf Rum's A Woman Is No Man* by Alfatih Nur Indah Sari (2020). Liberal feminism and patriarchal theories by Sylvia Walby are used in the study to investigate the forms of patriarchal oppression in Etaf Rum's *A Woman is No Man* and also the struggle of the main characters against oppression. The result of the study shows there are four kinds of patriarchal oppression, those are patriarchal mode of production, male violence, patriarchal state, and patriarchal culture.

The third study is a journal article entitled *Women's Resistance Towards Oppression in Etaf Rum's A Woman Is No Man* by Frisky Nur Salvianny, Eka Nurcahyani (2020). The study focuses on investigating women's oppression and their resistance in the novel *A Woman Is No Man* by Etaf Rum. As a result of the study, the writers found four intersecting domains of power that oppressed women, they are the structural, disciplinary, hegemonic, and interpersonal domains of power. Women try to maintain their power of self-definition to be free from domination. Women's self-definition helped them maintain their self-valuation and respect, self-reliance and

independence, and personal empowerment, which are considered key factors in acts of resistance.

The fourth, there was a thesis entitled *Women's Struggles as Portrayed in Etaf Rum's A Woman is No Man* by Rihaadatul 'Aisyil Mubarakati (2021). The study focuses on analyzing Isra and Deya's struggles, as well as their characterization in *A Woman is No Man*. In analyzing the data, the researcher used the theory of Islamic feminism proposed by Amina Wadud. The result of the study shows that gender injustice and discrimination of women in their tradition continue to the next generation.

Fifth, is a journal article entitled *Representation of Patriarchal Motherhood in "Silsilah Duka"* by Dwi Ratih Ramadhan. It was written by Mufidah & Hartanto. The study analyzed the representation of patriarchal motherhood presented by two female characters namely Ramlah and Juwairiyah in Dwi Ratih Ramadhany's novella "Silsilah Duka". The study used the theory of patriarchal motherhood by Andrea O'Reilly 2016. The study showed that the practices of patriarchy are still preserved by society because it is considered a culture. The study found three mandates of patriarchal motherhood presented by two mother characters Juhairiyah and Ramlah, namely essentialization, naturalization, and individualization.

The last is a journal article entitled *Gender Ideology: A Patriarchal View of Etaf Rum's A Woman is No Man* by Humaira Saddiqa, Dr. Sahibzada Aurangzeb, and Saba Hassan (2022). The study used the theory of Patriarchy by Silvy Walby (1990) to investigate and evaluate female characters' roles in patriarchal societies and their struggles and opposition to the system. The result of this study shows that the female characters in *A Woman Are No Man* are degraded, humiliated, and victimized by society's institutions, notably family. Women are also disclosed as agents of continuity in keeping their fellow women colonized and oppressed.

The previous studies almost investigated the practices of patriarchy and women's struggles, it mostly used the theory of patriarchy and feminism with the same source of data which is a novel *A Woman Is No Man* and one of them has the

same topic as this study, but it had different source of data. The study investigated patriarchal motherhood and used the theory of motherhood by Andrea O'Reilly 2016. So, in this study, the writer tries to investigate the representation of patriarchal motherhood with a different source of data which is the novel *A Woman Is No Man* by Etaf Rum. The writer would investigate the representation of patriarchal motherhood through Isra as the main character in *A Woman is No Man*. Furthermore, this study tries to discover the effects of patriarchal motherhood affected on Isra's life. The theory of motherhood by Andrea O'Reilly is used in this study to discuss the problems.

1.2 Research Question

1. What is patriarchal motherhood presented by Isra as a mother in *A Woman is v No Man*?
2. How has patriarchal motherhood affected Isra's life as a mother in *A Woman is No Man*?

1.3 Objective of The Study

1. To discover the patriarchal motherhood presented by Isra as a mother in *A Woman Is No Man*.
2. To discover the contribution of patriarchal motherhood toward Isra's character development as a mother in *A Woman Is No Man*.

1.4 Significance of The Study

In this study, the writer provides two significances of the study:

1. Theoretical significance

The writer hopes this study could give knowledge and significant information to readers about the patriarchal motherhood that appears in literary work by using a motherhood theory to analyze.

2. Practical significance

The writer hopes this study could contribute to the students of the English study program in studying literature. Also, this study could contribute as a reference

for the next writer who investigates the same issue related to the topic of this study.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study focuses on the representation of patriarchal motherhood through the main character Isra, and the effects of patriarchal motherhood on Isra's life as a mother in Etaf Rum's *A Woman Is No Man*. In analyzing the data, this study used the theory of motherhood by Andrea O'Reilly (2016). The limitations of this study are the characters' utterances and the author's narrations related to the representation of patriarchal motherhood.