

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Sophie Kinsella is the pen name Sophie Madeleine Wickham an English author was born on 12 December 1969, the first two novels in the series of his best-selling Shopaholic, Confessions of a Shopaholic and Shopaholic Abroad. Her books have been translated into more than 30 languages. Confessions of a Shopaholic the story of someone compulsive shopper, who spends beyond the limits, buys things she has no use for, and uses shopping as a way to feel better temporarily to successfully deal with shopaholics, knowing what goes in the mind of an affected individual is important. Contrary to popular belief, shopping addicts are not always easygoing young women who are only concerned about the latest shoes and handbags. Truth be told, the shopaholic often suffers from emotional problems, has low self-esteem, and desires the approval of other people. Positive encouragement is a great way to help the addict follow constructive advice. Let the person realize that self-worth is not related to the items that they buy and it was told in the novel with the main role of a woman named Rebecca Bloomwood.

Rebecca Bloomwood is the protagonist of the story. She lives in London. She has a job of a financial journalist in Investment Savings, despite she knows almost nothing about person finance. Unlike her job she is a profound shopaholic, other people views her as a irresponsible person while she thinks that she is making investment everyday while shopping. Rebecca is extremely addicted to shopping. She has no control toward buying everything she likes. Throughout the book Rebecca tries to stop spending since she has been in debt but it turns out to be that she was too addicted to shopping so end up spending even more. The researcher find the problem from the novel, Rebecca behaves unreasonably because she worked at a company's financial and became a financial consultant but she cannot stop her shopping. The reality that she wrote

in economical magazine, that she should be able to use it to control her own finances.

A shopping addict also has trouble controlling impulsive behavior, which can be addressed by dealing with the underlying issues. Finally, the shopaholic often has a profound sense of materialism, with the assumption that affection and admiration can also be bought. Shopping gave women increased freedom to spend money; it also fostered, in many women, a sense of identity, which could be expressed by buying fashionable clothes, available in shops. This experience came to be associated with an increased freedom to explore their sexuality. Women's pleasure in touching and trying on expensive material goods was seen as a kind of sensual experience. (Falk and Campbell 1997, pp. 76-9).

Shopaholic means a compulsive shopper, knowing what goes in the mind of an affected individual is important. Contrary to popular belief, shopping addicts are not always easygoing young women who are only concerned about the latest shoes and handbags. Truth be told, the shopaholic often suffers from emotional problems, has low self-esteem, and desires the approval of other people. Positive encouragement is a great way to help the addict follow constructive advice. Let the person realize that self-worth is not related to the items that they buy.

Shopping provided women with an anonymous, safe and socially acceptable public place where they could spend unsupervised time and exert financial control. Shopping was an acceptable domestic activity which allowed women relative freedom of movement and became an important aspect of modern female identity. Partly because of the shopping experience, women developed a new sense of the possibilities of modern life and began to discard the previous view of them as dependent, passive and retiring. Shopping helped women form a new definition of themselves and created 'a space for individual expression similar to men' (Falk and Campbell 1997, pp. 64-70).

Twenty first century is the era when economy takes a major role in everybody's life. This phenomenon happens as a result of the increasing need of goods which people use to support their daily life. Consequently, people become

dependent on the goods to support their life and start to focus on the importance of their possessions.

Daniel R. Fusfeled in *Economics Principles of Political Economy* says:

“Buying and selling, trade, money, and credit become part of the everyday life of ordinary people, and money income determines one’s welfare and status.” (Fusfeled, 1998: 59).

Michael R. Solomon in his book *Consumer Behavior* says that materialism focuses on the importance of worldly possessions and its attachment to people. For example, the American people often judge people from how much they own (1994: 442). This materialistic social life influence people to live with a particular lifestyle, in this case is materialistic lifestyle which urges people to live with a consumerist lifestyle to fulfill their social needs.

There are many factors which cause one to suffer from this disorder. This disorder not only has an effect to the sufferer but also to other people, especially those who are close with the sufferer. Other people mostly get the negative effect of the sufferer’s bad. As a result, the sufferer’s relationship with these people is not as good as it was.

Shopaholic is a series written by Sophie Kinsella, an English novelist. Kinsella’s *Confessions of a Shopaholic*, *Shopaholic Takes Manhattan*, *Shopaholic Ties the Knot*, and *Shopaholic & Sister* tell about the main character’s high level of consumerism and her problems in controlling her shopping desire. Rebecca “Becky/Bex” Bloomwood is a financial consultant who has an excessive shopping habit which puts her in some financial problems.

Consumerism is not a new phenomenon but our current social context is unique decreasing prices for many consumer goods and exponential increases in population and goods for sale. Consumption and consumerism can have negative impacts on natural resource stocks and ecosystem services, resulting in pollution and waste. However, while our attempts to meet basic needs for food, shelter and clothing may exacerbate environmental degradation, we argue that it is the phenomenon of consumerism that is a more pertinent area of inquiry for sociology, particularly environmental sociology.

Consumerism is the belief that personal wellbeing and happiness depends to a very large extent on the level of personal consumption, particularly on the purchase of material goods. The idea is not simply that wellbeing depends upon a standard of living above some threshold, but that at the center of happiness is consumption and material possessions. A consumerist society is one in which people devote a great deal of time, energy, resources and thought to “consuming”. The general view of life in a consumerist society is consumption is good, and more consumption is even better.

Consumerism interferes with the workings of society by replacing the normal common-sense desire for an adequate supply of life's necessities, community life, a stable family and healthy relationships with an artificial ongoing and insatiable quest for things and the money to buy them with little regard for the true utility of what is bought. An intended consequence of this, promoted by those who profit from consumerism, is to accelerate the discarding of the old, either because of lack of durability or a change in fashion.

Consumption is related to shopping. It becomes the beginning of the activity before people being consumptive. Rebecca as the main actor is a shopaholic person. She loves shopping and she realizes that she is a consumptive person.

Environmental sociology brings a unique perspective to the study of consumerism, focusing on the impacts that natural systems have on human beings as well as the impact humans have on the environment, with explicit attention to social beliefs, behaviors and collective action. For instance, one environmental sociology study demonstrated a link between publicized evidence of the environmental consequences of plastics sparked conscious efforts by citizens to curb their use of plastics, by choosing products with less packaging and higher in recyclable and biodegradable content (Thogersen, 1999).

The central idea of the novel which was to evidently show that the novel is a representation of the shopaholic and consumerism context of Rebecca life, she likes shopping. This has been the problem from the novel.

It has also been apparent that the novel's personal reality with many problem cannot be taken out from each other because of the deep correlation between them especially at times in the novel that personal convictions have many problems. Sophie Kinsella has been very successful in retelling the characters of Rebecca Bloomwood.

B. Limitation of the Study

In this study, the researcher focuses this research in analyzing the bad consumer behavior of Rebecca reflected at Sophie Kinsella's novel *Confessions of a Shopaholic* on a sociological approach.

C. Problem Statements

1. How is the extreme shopping of Rebecca Bloomwood's reflected in Confessions of a Shopaholic novel?
2. What the factor makes Rebecca's extreme shopping?
3. What is the solution from the extreme shopping of Rebecca's ?

D. Objective of The Study

In carrying this research the writer formulates the objectives of the study as follows are :

1. To analyze Rebecca Bloomwood as the major character of Confessions of a Shopaholic Novel.
2. To know the factor that makes the shopaholic of Rebecca's .
3. To find the solution from the shopaholic of Rebecca's.

E. Benefit of the Study

1. Theoretical Benefit

The study is hoped to give contribution, understanding and information to the reader, especially the literary studies on the works in connecting to the sociology of literature.

2. Practical Benefit

The study is hoped to give additional knowledge, that can be used the next researcher who are interested in analyzing the works to find certain issues.

F. Research Paper Organization

The research paper organization of The Bad Consumer Behavior of Rebecca's reflected at Sophie Kinsella's novel is as follows: Chapter one is introduction which is explains the background of the study, limitation of the study, problem statements, objective of the study, benefit of the study, and research paper organization. Chapter two is underlying theory that consists of sociology of literature and the notion of bad consumer behavior. Chapter three presents the research method. Chapter four is the bad consumer behavior reflected in Sophie Kinsella's novels. The last is chapter five contains of conclusions and suggestions.