

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of The Study

People were born with the two kinds of sex, male and female. Actually the term male and female rose in society because of the different biological organs, so they treat male and female in different way since they were young or even since they were in their mother's womb. People have basic trust that male have to be strong, powerful, and think rationally while female is powerless, emotional, and weaker than male. Its differences and also the patriarchal line that held in societies are automatically make the different treatments to the two sexes.

Actually gender difference is not a problem as long as it does not cause inequalities of gender. But, in fact that gender differences cause many inequalities moreover women, because woman is known as a weak person who has low power in society. Those phenomena cause many unfair treatments toward women like sexual harassment, violence in the households, violation, negative judgment, economical poverty, etc.

One of the problems which is often faced by every human being especially, women is how to stand up their right and not allow their male dominated society to define what it means to be women. Women them selves must show their capability, to prove who they are and what role they will play in society. Most importantly, they must reject the assumption that woman are

inferior to men. Therefore, according to Mandell (1995: 5) that every person has equal opportunities and civil right and they should be allowed to exercise freedom of choice without interfere of public opinion on or law.

Oppression of women in the patriarchal society is seen daily. Men dominate women in so many ways; it becomes hard to distinguish one form of oppression to another. Women are exploited and face oppression every day. In the work place women are forced into low paying, insecure and unskilled jobs. Women problems do not stop at the work place. When they come home, they have to face another shift of housework for their family. Actually, women also have to deal with violence in family life. Traditionally, women and men have accepted the fact that men have rights in public or political lives but women do not. Many stereotypes about women's nature and roles hold that women have been viewed, to some degree, as inferior. Through history, women have been labeled physically weaker than man, more emotional, less reasonable, less able to learn, and dependant. Therefore, women's public decision making has often been dismissed as illogical, emotional and subjective. Men's on the other hand, has always been considered logical, rational, and objective (Horton and Hunt, 1996: 157).

From the phenomena of women's problem in sex discrimination in the form of sexual harassments, the researcher is interested in this research because *North Country* is very interesting film, especially its story which obviously describes the success of women's struggle to find equal sexual treatments from male co-workers and the employers at the work place and also

the chance to work normally as the men that is related to feminism. Women development cannot be separated from the influence of feminists' movement. The meaning of feminism is a belief in the social, politic, and economic equality of the sexes, and a movement organized around the conviction that biological sex should not be the pre-determinant factor shaping a person's social identity or socio-political or economic rights.

In *North Country* film, there is a main character, named Josey Aimes (Charlize Theron) is single parents for her two children, she has a bad stories in her past life. She lives with her parents and she works as a washing hair in local salon for earning some money for her kids. When she works, she runs into an old friend, Glory (Frances McDormand) gives information to her that there are some good jobs with great paying available to women in iron mines. She does not have too many options, she has kids to feed and she can not live with her parents forever, and that iron mine job pays 6 times what she makes from washing hair, so she accepts than she goes and applies. Before they hire her, they have to do a pelvic exam in order to prove that she is not pregnant. She and her kids move in Glory house after she applies for the job. Then they see her and the other women orientation. When the women start working, they get introducing from their shift leader who is clearly relishing the opportunity to abuse and sexuality harasses them. When the women start working, they see pictures with their names written on the walls. Josey goes and talks to the supervisor about the unacceptable working conditions. But he clearly states to her that nobody wants her there and nothing is going to change. Josey gets

home loan, buys her own house and provides all the stuff that her kids want and need.

There is up-hill battle for the company to provide portable toilet for the women. Glory explains to management that it takes women no longer to use the bathroom. A worker named Sherry (Sean Bean) goes to use it. The guys stand around and inform her that they have taken a big dump in it before she enters. When she goes in, they knock it over with her in it and she hurt and very traumatized. At the point, Josey is taking one day off work to go to the city for a formal meeting with the owner, Mr. Pearson. He tells her if he will “help” her by arranging for her to quit. She protests that she does not want to quit.

One day, the women are called to clean up a big dump mess which looks like defecation on the wall. Then Bobby calls Josey to do a job for him. She follows him to the private place and he attacks her. She announces that she quits. She finds a lawyer then she is meeting her friend Bill White (Woddy Harrelson). She tells him if she wants to file sexual harassment charges against the company. He warns her that she is not likely to win, but he later reconsiders and asks if she can get the other women to collaborate her story so they can file a class action suit. At first, nobody wants to help her and the Pearson brings Bobby Sharpe and her old teacher as a witness that Josey has sexual relationship when she was 16. But Josey lawyer reminds the judge that they only need 3 plaintiffs to file the class action. Glory suddenly motions, from her wheel-chair, in the back row of the court room, that she backs Josey. And at the point, Sherry stands up. Then half of women in the court room that

work in iron mines stands up like Sherry. Then they see many people all over the court room standing including both men and women at the mines and Josey parents too. Finally she is living a life of quality and being respected and for all the women can work with no worry about sexual harassment.

North Country, which is inspired by true events, sets itself up for a courtroom finale - and indeed, there is one - however it is not strictly a legal docudrama. Woody Harrelson's lawyer is a more interesting character than most lawyers, while the revelations about Josie's life that unfold during the trial add depth to what might otherwise be a straight issue of legal culpability. The plight of Frances McDormand's character Glory, played with typical aplomb, and the epiphany of Josie's parents make this film much more human than it otherwise might have been. It is the strong cast and the thoughtful screenplay which lends this movie impact. In *North Country* film, feminists have taken many different approaches to the analysis of cinema. These include discussion of the function of women character in particular film narratives or in particular genres, such as film noir, where a woman character can often be seen to embody a subversive sexuality that is dangerous to men and is ultimately punished with death. Through the use of various film techniques, such as shot reverse shot. The viewer is led to align herself with the point of view of a male protagonist. Notably, women function as objects of this gaze far more often than as proxies for the spectator. Feminist film theory of the last twenty years is heavily influenced by the general transformation in the field of aesthetics.

Many authors pay attention to women's oppression, one of them is Niki Caro. She was born in 1967 in Wellington – new Zealand. She completed a Bachelor of Fine Art at Auckland's Elam School of Fine Art in 1988 and followed it with a Postgraduate Diploma as a Writer/Director at Swinburne Film and Television School in Melbourne. (<http://www.imdb/name/nm0138297>. Oscar-winning actress Charlize Theron and acclaimed director Niki Caro ("Whale Rider") brightened the red carpet at the Hollywood premiere of Warner Bros Pictures' dramatic film, "*North Country*." Both women looked absolutely stunning as they joined the cast of "North Country" for a special screening of the film at the historic Graumann's Chinese Theater in Hollywood. As a writer she had several books; *The Vintner's Luck* (2009), *Whale Rider* (2002), *Memory & Desire* (1997), *Sure to Rise* (1994). And as a director she had directed several movies; *The Vintner's Luck* (2009), *North Country* (2005), *Whale Rider* (2002), *Mercy Peak* (2001) (TV series), *Memory & Desire* (1997), *Sure to Rise* (1994). (<http://www.nzonscreen.com/person/niki-caro/biography>)

North Country tries to show the ordinary circumstances of recent women oppression, and the evasive action might provide a permanent solution. The director challenges the oppressed women to rise above her limitation as a person in the *North Country* movie version. In this case the main character is Josey Aimes, a woman who finds herself and other women in iron mines by abusing and getting sexual harassment. *North Country* is a film Presented by Warner Bros. Pictures in association with Participant

Productions, "Untitled Niki Caro Project" is written by Michael Seitzman, inspired by the book titled "Class Action: The Story of Lois Jenson and the Landmark Case That Changed Sexual Harassment Law," by Clara Bingham and Laura Leedy Gansler. The film is being produced by Nick Wechsler, with Nana Greenwald, Jeff Skoll, Helen Bartlett and Doug Claybourne serving as executive producers. Two-time Oscar-winning cinematographer Chris Menges ("The Mission," "The Killing Fields") is the director of photography. "Untitled Niki Caro Project" will be released worldwide by Warner Bros. Pictures, a Warner Bros. Entertainment Company.

North Country reflects women's struggle in order to find the equal treatments in work and sexual treatments. The researcher sees it as the reflection of women's movements in the second wave feminism that is refer to a period of feminist activity began in the late of 1960s and 1970s. Based on the consideration above, the writer is interested in conducting a study on Niki Caro's *North Country* by using socialist – feminist perspective because of women oppression in this movie. The writer focuses her study on **OPPRESSION AGAINST WOMEN in NORTH COUNTRY MOVIE by NIKI CARO: MARXIST – FEMINIST APPROACH.**

B. Literature Review

The study on *North Country* of Niki Caro has ever been used before, but the writer is going to analyze this movie with other perspective and writer tries to analyze the women oppression in *North Country* Movie by using Marxist – feminist approach.

C. Problem Statement

The main problem that is “How is oppression against women reflected in *North Country* Movie by Niki Caro?”

D. Limitation of the Study

The limitation of the study is how oppression against women occurred in *North Country*, especially viewed by Marxist – Feminist approach.

E. Objective of the Study

1. To analyze the film based on its structural elements and technical elements by finding characters and characterizations, setting, point of view, plot, theme, *mise-en-scene*, cinematography, sound, and editing.
2. To analyze the film especially the character of woman in *North Country* Movie by Niki Caro based on Marxist – Feminist perspective.

F. Benefits of the Study

1. Theoretical Benefit

- a. To enrich references of feminist perspective in a movie, which can be used by those who are interested in analyzing this literary work.
- b. To give a high contribution to the body of knowledge, particularly to those who are interested in Niki Caro’s *North Country*.

2. Practical Benefit

1. For getting deeper understanding about Marxist – Feminist approach in *North Country* Movie by Niki Caro

2. For getting bachelor degree of education in English Department.

G. Research Method

1. Type of Study

The writer uses a library research, which employs qualitative method. The writer also applies Marxist – Feminist approach of the main characters as a means of further research.

2. Object of the Study

The object of the study is the *North Country* movie to discuss the oppression against women that is reflected in the main character.

3. Type of the Data and the Data Source

The type of the data is in the form of a movie script entitled *North Country* directed by Niki Caro. The writer divides the data source into two categories; Primary data source and Secondary data source.

1. Primary data source

The primary data source of the study is the *North Country* movie. This movie was directed by Niki Caro, distributed by Warner Bros Picture and released on October 21st, 2005.

2. Secondary data source

The writer takes the secondary data source, including references and materials related to the study whether picking up from books or internet.

4. Methods of the Data Collection

The methods of collecting data are as follows:

- a. Watching the movie for several times.
- b. Reading the script repeatedly.
- c. Finding some related books to find the appropriate theory.
- d. Browsing on the internet to get some information that relates to the research.
- e. Making notes of important parts in both primary and secondary data.
- f. Arranging the data into several parts based on its classification.
- g. Classifying the data into groups according categories of elements of literary study.

5. Method of the Data Analysis

The data are analyzed by using descriptive analysis, where the data are collected, described, and analyzed. It concerns with the relationship between the movie and the Marxist – Feminist theory to show how women oppression is reflected in the movie.

H. Research Paper Organization

Research paper organization is divided into six chapters. Chapter one is introduction which includes the background of study, literary review, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective of the study, benefit of the study, research method and paper organization. Chapter two is underlying theory. It deals with the notion of Marxist – Feminist, the basic concept of

Marxist – feminist, structural element and theoretical application. Chapter three deals with the social background of the 21st century. Chapter four is the analysis of the movie. It includes narrative and technical element. Chapter five is Marxist – Feminist analysis that deals with the problems in the movie. Chapter six contains conclusion and suggestion.