

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. **Background of the Study**

In reality, women generally have had fewer legal rights and careers opportunities than men. It happens all along the time, from the past until today, in all aspect of life. It can be found in political, cultural, economical, sexual, racial, and ethical dimensions. Wifehood and motherhood were still regarded as women's most significant professions. It is considerable evidence that, particularly in the family, women have been targeted for victimization.

The phenomenon above have resulted women's rights movement. Women's rights movement in nineteenth and twentieth century actually include extending the natural right to vote, changing married women's status by protecting married women's property, improving women's legal position in child custody cases, liberalizing divorce laws, providing married women with economic autonomy and ensuring women access to higher education wage labor, and the professions (Mandell, 1995: 7).

The spirit of women's right movement, actually, was pioneered by the birth of feminism in 1960s in American society. Since that day, the struggle for women's rights in American society extended. This phenomenon has influenced the sociologists to study gender as sociological issues. The sociological imagination was first described by C. Wright Mills (1916-1962), an eminent sociologist and radical in his time. Mill's radicalism is founded, in

part, on his passionate belief that the task of sociology is to understand the relations between individuals and the society in which they live (Andersen, 1983: 6). Feminist perspective in sociology were formulated only recently when women (and some men) in the profession of sociology began applying the tools of sociological analysis to their understanding of the position of women in society.

Outside the sociologists, some authors also care for women's rights. Danielle steel, as one of the greatest American Novelist who cares about women's rights, has written many literary works such as *Accident*, *In Thurston House*, *Passion's Promise*, *A Perfect Stranger*, *The Ring*, *Silent Honor*, *Malice*, *Five Days in Paris*, *Wings*, *The Gift*, *The Ghost*, and other highly acclaimed novels. Her works above have famed for the internationally novel's readers. Many of her literary works have tried to assert and to criticize the low position of women. They have broken the differences between men and women. They also have shown the struggle for women's rights. One of them is reflected in *Answered Prayers*.

Answered Prayers, one of Danielle Steel's novels is a picture of phenomena in the late twentieth century in USA. In *Answered Prayers*, Faith Madison, as a major character, on the out side is the very picture of a sophisticated New Yorker. Slim, blonde-haired person, stylish, and she has a life many would envy. Overcoming a childhood marked by tragedy, married to successful investment banker and have been raised two grown daughter, Faith has enjoy her role as mother and wife, and the good life that emanates

from their bustling Manhattan town house. However, every step of the way, Faith has carried within her a secret she could divulge to no one.

Moreover, with it, she has kept an event more painful secret from herself. When she was child, her earliest memories, were of her father molesting her. He had been sexually inappropriate and abusive with her starting when she was four or five. She had never dared to tell her mother about it, and her father had threatened to kill her and her brother if she told her nightmares experience to her mother. It was something she never talked about, and which had taken her a good part of her adult life to resolve.

After her father's death, her mother married Charles. It had been more difficult for Faith when her mother married Charles when Faith was twelve and Jack fourteen. Faith had been suspicious of him, and fully expected him to do the same things her father had. Instead, he ignored her entirely, which was a mercy for her. He was not a man who was comfortable with women or girls. Even his own daughter was a stranger to him. All he did for Faith was sign her report cards and complain about her grades, which he seemed to think, was expected to him. It was his only role. The relief she felt made up for the coldness Charles always exhibited to her, and every one else. That was at least a familiar style to her.

Finally, she chooses Alex as her husband, whom looks like her stepfather's style of coldness. Alex had kept Faith at arm's length for years, while blaming her for whatever problems came along. In a family, she has

become someone who knew in her heart of hearts that she was to blame for everything. It was her sin, not his, and somehow her fault.

Determined to fulfil a long-held desire for a career of her own, outside her role as a wife and mother, Faith applies to law school against her husband's wishes, igniting a barrage of anger and recrimination. In this case, he was beginning to believe in herself and in her right to grab hold of her own dreams.

Based on the phenomenon above the writer is interested in analyzing this novel by using feminist approach because the major character in this novel has reflected the struggle for the women's rights in personal, social and education aspiration. The researcher give the title for her research "STRUGGLE FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN DANIELLE STEEL'S *ANSWERED PRAYERS*: FEMINIST APPROACH"

B. Literature Review

As far as writer knows, there has been no study on Danielle Steel's *Answered Prayers*, at least among the university students in Solo, Yogya, and Semarang.

*The present study gives focus on the author's view on the struggle for women's rights in Danielle Steel's *Answered Prayers* based on the feminist perspective.*

C. Problem Statement

The major problem statement of this research is how the struggle for women's rights is reflected in Danielle Steel's *Answered Prayers*.

D. Research Limitation

There are many theories about feminism. To limit the subject matter and to avoid complexity in this research, the writer focuses her discussion on struggle for women's rights based on liberal feminist perspective.

To intensify the analysis, the focus of analysis was on the main characters in this novel. Other characters are also included as far as they have contribution to the research.

E. Research Objective

The research is aimed to study the content of the novel by describing the structural elements of the novel and to analyze the struggle for women's rights in Danielle Steel's *Answered Prayers* using feminist perspective.

F. Research Significance

The significance of this thesis are:

1. Theoretically, the study is expected to contribute to the larger body of knowledge, particularly the library studies on Danielle Steel's *Answered Prayers* by using feminist approach.

2. Practically, the study is expected to enrich the writer's knowledge and experience either dealing with library research, feminism, or the *Answered Prayers* novel.

G. Research Method

In analyzing "Struggle for Women's Rights in Danielle Steel's *Answered Prayers*", the writer uses qualitative research that expresses feminist perspective. This research paper will cover:

1. Type of the Study

In analyzing Danielle Steel's *Answered Prayers*, the researcher uses qualitative research.

2. Type of Data and Data Source

The writer attains the data from some books that have relation to the study, those are:

- a. Primary Data.

The primary data itself is taken from the novel *Answered Prayers* which is written by Danielle steel and which is published by Dell Publishing a division for Bantam Double day Dell Publishing Group, Inc, New York in 2003. It includes ideas, attitudes, the ways of thinking and dialogues among the characters in the novel *Answered Prayers* relating to their struggle.

b. Secondary Data

Secondary data is data that support the primary data including information, which deals with the text and with problem of this research. These data cover author's biography, many ideas from the theory of feminism that will be used in analyzing the novel and among other pieces of relevant information to the analysis of this research.

3. Data-collecting Method and Technique

The method of collecting data in this research seeks the data from the novel itself and quotes some information, which are relevant to the problem.

In processing data, the researcher will do some steps as follows:

- a. Firstly, the main source of data the novel *Answered Prayers* is read repeatedly and comprehended. Then the researcher makes a list of dates, select them that deal with the problem of the research.
- b. Secondly, the researcher looks for and selects the correlation of the data using a feminist approach.
- c. Thirdly, the researcher analyzes the data.
- d. The last, the researcher draws the conclusion of the analysis that has already been done in the former chapter.

4. Data-analyzing Technique

The technique of the data analysis in this research paper is descriptive analysis. She wants to observe how the struggle of the major character for

women's rights in Danielle Steel's *Answered Prayers*. There are two-analyzis, structural and feminist analyzis.

H. Paper Organization

To give clear understanding of the contents of this study, the writer has appointed the presentation of the study. The presentation of this study consists of six chapters. Chapter I deals with introduction covering the background of the study, literature review, problem statement, research limitation, research objective, research significance, research methodology, and thesis organization. Chapter II deals with underlying theory containing the description of the theory of feminist and women's rights. Chapter III deals with social background of American society in the late twentieth century. Chapter IV deals with structural analyzis containing the structural elements of the novel and discussion. Chapter V presents feminist analyzis. Chapter VI is conclusion and suggestion.