

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Discrimination's problem had ever occurred in America caused so many conflicts. Discrimination is an action of accepting or refusing people based on group membership. Inside the group, there are some differences, exceptions, restrictions, or choices which are based on ethnicity, racial, nationality, that have purpose or influence to destroy confession, pleasure for implement a turn on the basic similarity, freedom in politic, cultural, socialized, economic activities, and any other field that exist in society (Sears, 1994). For example, discrimination that happen because of race.

Discrimination is one of the dark part of African- American's life history. The Africans Americans means violation of white people against black people. Discrimination in African- American not only in one aspect but also in many aspects of life that can be seen in public services such as in housing, public transportation, hospital, library, education and justice. This is called as racial discrimination or racism. Racial discrimination action always followed by violence behavior like gets serious injured or injustice treatment for the black people. Racism in America was not necessarily an intended result of the progress of American History in the 15th century.

Female figures are very interesting to talk about. Especially about black women. Nowadays, there are so many cases submitted as evidence to undermine the perceptions, among others, not all societies were discovered that they provided balanced gender roles between men and women (Bryson, 1992). Women who want to discover their existence is sometimes regarded as a form of "resistance" by some people who are still covered patriarchal thinking.

Pink-collar is a term of women are stuck in certain jobs, mostly low paying job like maid, nurse, home health care, etc. Pink collar jobs often required less

education women. Louise Kapp Howe (1977) stated that pink-collar is the crowding women into lower paid, lower-status service sector jobs like clerical, sales and service occupations.

The common-sense term race, and the American understanding of race is used as a foundation in *The Help* novel, and therefore it is necessary to understand how the common-sense term race originated and how the understanding of race evolved and became the common-sense term used today as well as the implied common-sense connotations aligned with race. Theories of racism will be looked at thoroughly to establish the different cultural aspects of racism, which are implied and described in *The Help*.

The Help is the first novel of the American author, Kathryn Stockett. *The Help* publish by Penguin Books in America. Stockett's *The Help* offers a multitude of examples of racial discrimination against black inhabitants of Jackson, Mississippi. Almost every white character demonstrated in the novel shows hatred toward the blacks and treats them with scorn and contempt as if they were second-class citizens without full rights and benefits. Therefore the author of the novel clearly reveals that deeply-rooted racism permeates every aspect in Jackson. *The Help* is a novel of racism, segregation, and feminism set between 1962 and 1964 in Jackson, Mississippi. *The Help* novel is chosen because it presents strong topic about race discrimination to the black women. This is a best seller novel in New York, America. There are some awards from this novel, like being the winner of Good Reads Choice Awards on Fiction Book 2009, Mississippi Author Awards 2009, Audie Awards 2009, SIBA Book Awards 2010, etc.

The novel is narrated by three different characters, all women, who live and work in Jackson and who are brought together by a mutual need to take action against the unacceptable situation of the colored maids in the South. The three main characters of the novel are Eugenia "Skeeter" Phelan, a young white woman, Aibileen Clark, and Minny Jackson, two colored maids. Throughout the story, the researcher follow these three women as they are brought together to write down many colored maids' stories about their experiences working for the white families. The main social issue present in the novel is the treatment and the roles

of women in 1960s America, focusing on Mississippi and the southern states of America. The researcher will explore the differences in how white and colored women were treated, what was expected of them in society, and how they were treated by society. In general, this study will explore about race discrimination of pink collar black women in this novel, it refers to the maids.

There are two reasons why *The Help* is chosen to be the object of the study. First reason is this novel is an interesting novel which discusses about some women issues. Kathryn Stocketts as the writer of the novel portrays how black women's life, especially about race discrimination issue. Kathryn also describes about African-American life. Second reason is this novel has epic ending, it is about someone who helps the black women solve their problem, Miss Skeeter. She is also white lady, who helps black women to get their civil right. Miss Skeeter helps them against discrimination although she has to quarrel with her friends.

Because of the relation between the subject matter and the content of the novel, so the researcher decided to make a research paper entitled *RACE DISCRIMINATION WITHIN PINK-COLLAR WORKER BLACK WOMEN IN AMERICAN SOCIETY: CRITICAL RACE FEMINISM STUDY ON THE HELP NOVEL BY KATHRYN STOCKETTS (2009)*

1.2 Limitation of the study

In conducting the study, it intends to limit the problems that are going to be discussed. This study wants to analyze about race discrimination using critical race feminism theory. The problem that is going to be discussed is about forms of discrimination to the black women's life and how black women were treated in 1960's. It will discuss about how black women against discrimination. In this case, the black women are white people's maid. The study has limitation because it wants to analyze kind of discrimination in critical race feminism perspective that has not been analyzed yet in previous research.

1.3 Research Question

Based on the background and the limitation of the study, the researcher formulates the research questions which are related to the study. It is determined as follows:

1. What are the sociological aspects that affect the author to write *The Help* novel?
2. What are the forms of race discrimination to the black women portrayed in the novel?
3. How did Kathryn Stocketts as the author of the novel depicts how black-women are right were discriminated in the novel?

1.4 Objective of the Study

According to the problem statement above, the objective of this study will be delivered like:

1. To describe the sociological aspects that affects Kathryn Stocketts as the author to write this novel.
2. To explain forms of race discrimination to the pink-collar black women in American society that is elaborated by Kathryn Stocketts from *The Help* novel.
3. To reveal how Kathryn Stocketts depicts black women were treated in 1960's and explain black women's struggle to against discrimination in this novel.

1.5 Benefit of The Study

This study has theoretical and practical benefits that can use to help the next research.

1.5.1 Theoretical Benefit

This study used to add knowledge of critical race feminism study in literature and it can be used as a reference for literature study in the future. The study also can improve reader's knowledge concerning to the critical race feminist study in literature.

1.5.2 Practical Benefit

There are some practical benefit from this study. The practical benefit can be used for student, lecturer, and present researcher.

1. Students

This study can help student in discussing about critical race feminism theory and how to elaborate the dialogue in the novel to explain and prove race discrimination issue.

2. Lecturer

This study can be used as a reference to the lecturer when they want to teach about critical race feminism theory and race discrimination issue.

3. Researcher

The study can be used as a reference to the future researchers who want to discuss about race discrimination or critical race feminism theory.