

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Background of the Study**

Racial prejudice is an assumption in superiority based on race or ethnicity. It is one of disease in society which can manifest a symptom include fear, intolerance, segregation, separation, discrimination and even hatred. Race perspective in society begins how people differentiate human in physical characteristic. Smedley and Smedley (2005, p.20) argue that most of them consider a human seen in physically appearance includes skin color, hair color, nose and eyes shape. While all of these prejudices can emphasize a race as a standard interaction between individual or groups in society.

A problem of racism is usually a difference of skin color between white and black people. Historically, white people regarded as superior meanwhile, black people as inferior which always gets an oppression. In sociological aspect, this conflict regarded a racism. People view an individual or group not only on race as physical appearance but also behavior, culture and custom. Thus, in economic aspect, black people categorized in hierarchically lower class after white people. For instance, the black people will get difficult in job opportunity which makes they get low income. Sometimes, prejudice of white people regards the minorities as criminal because their appearances have dark skin. The human right of black people also confined in delivery opinion and vote. The regulation only made to protect for white people and the punishment easily decided for black people. The perspective of white people think that the descent of black people is ghetto, barbarian and thug so they can be unreliable. Smedley and Smedley (2005, p.20) argue that “The whiteness assume that both physical features and behavior are innate and inherited”. Therefore, the white people assume that the black deserves an oppressive treatment.

However, prejudice of race is an old problem that have widely happened in the world. Nevertheless, in the modern era racial prejudice still haunted the black people as the minorities. For instance, the case of Oscar Grant in 2009 was killed by the California transit officer as white people. They involved a fight and quarrel in the train. Then, Oscar was shot by the police until death. This incident made a fury for citizen which supreme court pleading not guilty for the officer. Thus, this phenomenon inspired Angie Thomas to write the novel of *The Hate U Give*. She was born and lived in Jackson, Mississippi. She holds a BFA (Bachelor of Fine Arts) in Creative Writing from Belhaven University. Angie is former teen rapper. Tupac Shakur is one of favorite rapper and the biggest influencer for her. One of the title song of Tupac Shakur inspired Angie to make the title of this book which acronym of “*THUG LIFE*” (*The Hate U Give Little Infants Fucks Everyone*). This book brings a view about the discrimination of black people. Angie described about the daily activities of black people, poverty, education and environmental worthiness for the black children.

*The Hate U Give* is the first book that written by Angie Thomas. Angie Thomas’s first novel was published in 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017. *HarperCollins* was a publisher in this novel. Angie’s first novel was a success because it can reach the top of best seller list for young adult novel. This novel has 464 pages. And this year, Angie was published the second novel entitled *On the Come Up* in 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

*The Hate U Give* is one of the young adult fiction novels which tell about the teenager life of Star Carter. Star is a black 16 years old girl. This story began with Star attending the party in Garden Heights where she lived. She feels uncomfortable in the Big D’ spring break party with her friend, Kenya. Then, she meets with her childhood, Khalil. He wears an expensive clothes and jewelries. Star thinks that he has trapped in drug dealer and it makes her upset. Suddenly, the party changes a clamor. The people stampede toward the door because they hear a shooting gun. Star and Khalil run to Khalil’s car and drive away. While on the way, Khalil’s car was

pulled over by policemen 115. The policeman ordered Khalil to get out the car with his hands up and pats him down to find drugs or weapons. When the police 115 steps away to his own patrol car, Khalil moves to the driver's door to check on Star. Suddenly, the officer 115 shoots Khalil three times and kills him.

Khalil's death becomes a trending topic and national news. Media portrays Khalil as drug-dealing gangbanger so it provokes the white police into shooting gun. Star is the only one of witness in this incident. Carlos is Star's uncle who regards as her own father. He is a cop who persuades her to do an investigation. She is still traumatic with this accident but, her family will support her and keep her safe. Finally, Star does an investigation in post office, but the police show an uninteresting with this problem. Meanwhile, Star's witness status is kept by the investigators. She still keeps to going school and pretends not to have known about Khalil. This happened because, Star lives in the suburb which is predominantly black neighborhood. Meanwhile, she goes to school in majority white person. She has friend named Maya Yang as an Asian girl and Hailey Grant as white and also a white boyfriend that she is afraid to tell her father about it.

Finally, the police announce in media that Brian Cruise (the cop one-fifteen) will not be arrested because have no reason to do it. The riots emerge in the whole streets, car and the police station are burned. Star blames herself toward her witnesses which cannot prosecute justification for Khalil. On the other hand, Hailey as Star's friends remarks racism. Maverick as Star's dad knows his daughter relationship with white boy. And King Lord take an advantage from the riots to grab Maverick's grocery store. Star's family decided to move from neighborhood of Garden Height. Maverick has agreed about his daughter relationship because they confess that they love each other. Besides, Star determines to defend the justice for Khalil's death although it can also endanger her family. Her family always support what she does and decides, they will help as much as possible. Ms. Ofrah tell Star to use her voice as a weapon. Star begins to use her voice and

explain what is happen with Khalil's death. At the end of story, she promised Khalil that people will not forget him and she too. She will never give up. She will never be quiet. She keeps speaking up for racial justice on people killed by police brutality.

There are many people have read this book and give many responses positive and negative. This novel gets a rating almost perfect. The review of this novel taken from *Goodreads* website. Some people give their response about *Angie Thomas's The Hate U Give* novel such as Emma who adore with this book, she argued that this book has the strongest aspect in social commentary and politic criticism. Kai, read this book in march 2017 mentioned that this novel can open reader's eyes because they can lean about black culture and racism. On Kiki point of view that this book has an incomparable story which the writer can draw and develop the character properly.

On the other hand, there are also many negative responds that also taken from *Goodreads* website. First, Casey who wrote her review on June 12<sup>th</sup> 2017. She assumed that the plot of this story is good. But she suggested that there is no depth or nuance anywhere in this book and just insult to young adults. Therefore, she argued that this book is so terrible. Second, Drew reviewed that this book can focus on incredibly sensitive topic nowadays, racism. However, she expected a fast-paced contemporary. But the characters were not developed enough and the plot was slow. So, she thought that this book just made her boring. On Anna point of view that the ideas about family were so sweet but the character felt so flat. Therefore, she felt boring when read this book.

The popularity of this novel makes it in first publish sold out amount 100.000 copy in first month. And now, it has sold more than 2 million copies globally. *The Hate U Give* novel has been on *The New York Time Best Seller* list. Therefore, the popularity makes it translated into more than 30 languages. On other hand, this novel gets *New York Time Best Seller*, *Coretta Scott King Book Award* in 2018, *Goodreads Choice Awards Best*

*Debut Goodreads Author* in 2017, *Goodreads Choice Awards Best Young Adult Fiction* in 2017, *Audie Award for Young Adult* in 2018, *Goodreads Choice Awards Best of the Best* in 2018, *Audie Award for Best Female Narrator* in 2018, *William C. Morris Young Adult Award* in 2018, *National Book Award Longlist*, *Michael L. Printz Honor*, *The Odyssey Award for Best Audiobook for Kids and Teens*, *Buckeye's Children's and Teen Book Award Winner* in 2019, *Blue Spruce Award Winner* in 2018, *Amelia Elizabeth Walden Award Winner* in 2018, *Indies Choice Book Award Winner Young Adult* in 2018, *Capitol Choices Ages Fourteen and Up*, *Garden State Teen Book Award Winner Fiction* in 2018, *YALSA 2018 Best Fiction for Young Adults Top Ten*, *CCBC Choices 2018 Choice Fiction for Young Adults*, *Publisher Weekly's Best Book of 2017 Young Adult*, *School Library Journal's Best book of 2017 Young Adult*, *Shelf Awareness 2017 Best Books of the Year*, *Amazon.com Best Books of 2017 Young Adult*, *Chicago Public Library Best Books of 2017 Young Adult*, *Los Angeles Public Library Best of 2017 Teen Books*, *Brightly Best Young Adult Books of 2017*, *BuzzFeed 28 Best Young Adult Books of 2017*, *New York Public Library Best Books for Teens 2017*, *The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books 2017 Blue Ribbons*. Therefore, in October 19<sup>th</sup> 2018 the film released from the adaptation this novel by 20<sup>th</sup> century fox.

There are some reasons why the researcher chooses this novel as the subject of this study. First, the title of this novel makes the readers feel curious about this novel what hatred has given, who feel this hatred and why the title of this book is *The Hate U Give*. In addition, the cover of this book interest to read. The cover portrays a black curly girl. The second reason is because this novel has a strong major character in which most of the chapters in this novel tell about the life of Star. Moreover, the plot of this story is easy to understand for the reader. The next reason is because this novel tells about racism. However, racism is an old problem but until now, this problem still happened. In the story, the events happened in human life. The differences of physically characteristic can also make many problems in

society. The struggle of Star prosecutes a justice as well as disappear her traumatic. The author is not only focus on social problem but friendship, romance, family life and school life which appropriate with teenager life.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher interested to analyze the influence of racial prejudice on the law enforcement in *The Hate U Give* novel. This study will be analyzed by using sociology of literature. Therefore, this paper entitles THE INFLUENCE OF RACIAL PREJUDICE ON THE LAW ENFORCEMENT IN ANGIE THOMAS' THE HATE U GIVE (2017): SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE.

#### **B. Problem Statement**

Based on the background of the study, the problem statements of this study as follows:

1. What are the indicators of racial prejudice on the law enforcement in *Angie Thomas's The Hate U Give* book?
2. How is racial prejudice on the law enforcement portrayed in *Angie Thomas's The Hate U Give* book?
3. Why is racial prejudice on the law enforcement specifically addressed by the author in *Angie Thomas's The Hate U give* book?

#### **C. Limitation of the Study**

In this research, the researcher focuses on the influence of racial prejudice on the law enforcement in Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give* novel by using of sociology of literature.

#### **D. Objectives of the Study**

Based on the problem of study, the objectives of this study are;

1. To identify the indicators of racial prejudice on the law enforcement in *Angie Thomas's The Hate U Give* book.
2. To describe how racial prejudice on the law enforcement portrayed in *Angie Thomas's The Hate U Give* book.

3. To reveal the underlying reason why racial prejudice on the law enforcement is specifically addressed by the author in *Angie Thomas's The Hate U Give* book.

#### **E. Benefits of the Study**

This study expected to give some benefits theoretically and practically as follows;

##### **1. Theoretical Benefit**

Theoretically, the result of this study will enrich reference and insight in studying literary works especially the influence of racial prejudice in Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give* novel.

##### **2. Practical Benefit**

Practically, this study can enlarge knowledge and experience for the readers especially for students of English department who wants to analyse the literature on *The Hate U Give* novel by using sociology of literature theories.