

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **1.1. Background of the Study**

In this life, human beings have life needs that must be fulfilled, especially primary needs. Life needs here are divided into three needs. The first need is primary needs which include clothing, food, shelter. The second is secondary needs, the needs of which are fulfilled after primary needs are met which include education, tourism or recreation. The third is tertiary needs, which include cars, motorcycles, computers, gadgets that fulfill their needs after secondary needs are met. Nevertheless, sometimes not everyone lives in luck, and those who are unlucky may struggle very hard to fulfill their needs, especially for people who lives in poverty circle. People who live in poverty should work hard to feed their family, although they have to do it with the wrong way.

In this research, the researcher is interested in the issue about struggle. Struggle is not primarily physical, it can also be intellectual or psychological according to Adams and Balfour (in Muel, 2015). People are able to struggle for a better future also better environment that is valuable to them. Public are able to struggle against something unwanted such as scarcity, since there is something else they rate, and in this case is prosperity (Kaptein, 2017). In other hand, the researcher examined the opposite of prosperity that is argued by Kaptein on the theory above, because the issue that is raised by the researcher was examining the struggle of women in facing poverty. The poverty that is depicted in this novel is a struggle of a mother to support for her family's life, and the form of the struggle is a physical struggle.

Beside the issue about struggle, the researcher will use the feminist approach to get a deeper understanding of the women struggle that is depicted by Patty, as one of the character in the novel, whose struggle are also related to socialist or feminist-marxist which was conducted by Marx and Engels who discussed social inequalities experienced by women workers. Feminist theory believes that men and women must be equal, and feminist approach is a movement or a struggle of women to reject everything that is marginalized, demeaned both in economics and politics as well as social life. According to Jaggar and Rothenberg (1984),

feminist theories are usually divided into four concerns. First, feminist theorists make some research to know the gendered personality of in fact all institutional relations. Second, femininity relationships are developed as connected to other injustice and contradictions and as problematical, in social life. Third, gender relationships are not seeing as permanent or natural too other than as sociocultural and chronological productions, topic toward reconstitution. Fourth, feminist theorists tend to be clearly political in their defense of social transform.

Marxist feminist is a sub-type of feminist ideology and the combination concepts of patriarchy with the key concepts of Marxism which focuses in the dismantling of capitalism as a way to liberate women (Niblock, 2014). Marxist feminist states that economic inequality, dependence, political confusion, and ultimately, unhealthy social relations between men and women are the root of women's oppression and it is also caused by their economic dependence in the family and in the work force and in the current social context and women are not oppressed by men or by sexism, but by the capital itself. Some authors adopt the theme or story about women who struggle in the economy life to support her family, and one of them is Gillian Flynn in her novel entitled "Dark Places".

One of the authors that creates novel about women struggle is Gillian Flynn. Gillian Flynn is an American writer and former television critic. She was born on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 1971. Gillian Flynn has published three novels and all of them have the same genre, that is thriller. The three novels are *Sharp Object*, *Dark Places* and *Gone Girl*. *Dark Places* and *Gone Girl* have already adapted to movie. Gillian Flynn also wrote novella entitled *The Grownup*. Flynn worked at U.S News & World after she graduated from Northwestern. She married with Brett Nolan in 2007 and they have two children. One of Flynn's works that is raised by the researcher to examine the struggle of a women is *Dark Places* was published in 2009. *Dark Places* is a novel that tell, about the story of a family who lives in poverty at Kinnakee, Kansas City and the researcher will focus on one of the main characters named Patty.

Patty is a mother of four children named Benjamin, Michelle, Libby, and Debby. Patty supports her family by working in a creditor's farm. This creditor made Patty's life even more gloomy, because if when the creditor collects debts held by

Patty and Patty are unable to pay them on time, Patty must pay for it by satisfying the creditor's lust. This happened repeatedly and was carried out by the creditor because Patty's husband named Runner left their family for a long time. This struggle makes Patty increasingly depressed with her current situation. Day after day, their family condition is getting worse. This is what makes Patty tries to get money faster to support his family. This is also compounded by the condition of their son, Benjamin, who follows the satanic sect and he is dating Diondra, who is the daughter of a rich merchant that frees Diondra to do anything that she wants.

The fact is that Patty decides to pay a contract killer to kill her because she wants to get compensation money. The compensation money is to save their agricultural land that will be taken over and save the lives of their children. The second truth is Ben didn't rape Krissi and other girls. Krissi just wants to show off to their friends and have bad consequences of doing that. The third truth is that Diondra kills Michelle because she knows that she is pregnant. Ben covered up the fact because he didn't want Diondra to give birth to their baby in prison and ended up into foster care. The fourth truth is that the contract killer also killed Debby because she sees him when he tries to kill her mother.

The connection between this novel and Marxist feminist theory and women struggle is the mother, Patty Day. Patty is the mother of the Day and Patty family is the only hope in the family to support her own family after Patty's husband Runner left them alone just to gamble and get drunk. This is where life is under pressure and poverty hits the Day family, Patty who always supports her family. On the other hand, Patty wants to commit suicide, unusual suicide in the hope of getting compensation money from the government and can be used to support his family later after he is gone, Patty wants an unusual death by hiring a contract killer, the executor is Calvin Diehl, and this is why poverty and the struggle of a mother is really portrayed in this novel, the author uses feminist marxist theory because of the social stratification of the creditor who arbitrarily performs Patty for debt purposes.

The reason why researcher chooses this novel because *Dark Places* is a mystery thriller novel published in 2009 that is succesful enough by Gillian Flynn after *Sharp Objects* novel on 2006 and before her most succesful novel that reaches 4.0

ratings on goodreads.com *GoneGirl* novel on 2012. Gillian always success in creating the mystery or thriller genre novel and reaches about 4 stars average on goodreads.com. The researcher raises women struggle as the issues on *Dark Places* novel. Gillian Flynn is famous and smart novelist, especially through her novel, she depicts about the poverty, women struggle, Patty the mother of the family who struggling all alone to fed her family, and have women struggle issues in this situation. Also the researcher is interested from the women struggle and poverty which is done by Patty Day. Based on marxist feminist perspective Patty is in trouble to get some compensation from government for her family, and the solution from her is committing suicide by rent a professional killer Calvin Diehl. Based on those considerations, the researcher focuses to analyze the women struggle of Patty in *Dark Places* using feminist theory. Therefore, the researcher conducted a study entitled Woman Struggle Experienced by Patty Day in Gillian Flynn's *Dark Places: A Marxist Feminist Theory*.

### **1.2. Research Questions**

In conducting a research, the researcher want to classify some research question that should be solved at the end of the research, the research question as follows:

1. What are the kinds of woman's struggle in the novel *Dark Places*?
2. How the struggle of woman is being depicted in the novel *Dark Places*?
3. Why did the author specifically address woman struggle in *Dark Places*?

### **1.3. Objective of the Study**

In order to solve the research question, this research will fulfill the research question which aims:

1. To know the kinds of woman's struggle in the novel *Dark Places*.
2. To know the struggle of woman is being depicted in the novel *Dark Places*.
3. To reveal the reason why the author address woman struggle in *Dark Places*.

### **1.4. Benefit of the Study**

The benefit of the study which is conducted by the researcher, include:

1. Theoretical Benefit

This study can be a positive adding and positive information contribution to the teacher that study literary studies and especially in the literature.

2. Practical Benefit

This paper could give the significance information for all people who needed, especially for students of English Department in order to increase their knowledge in analyzing *Dark Places* novel using Marxist Feminist Theory.