

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

Oppression refers to the unjustified use of authority, power, or control over a particular individual or group resulting in harm to, or denial of, basic rights and freedoms. Around us so far, many women have experienced oppression without us realizing it. Starting from sexual harassment, domestic violence, lack of opportunities in getting a job, restrictions on women's rights to make decisions on their own bodies such as the right not to get pregnant and give birth.

In this day and age, there are still many women in the world who are oppressed. Women are not given the same rights as men even for their own bodies. Many women are treated like "child-making machines" for their extended families. They are not given the right to choose not to get pregnant and give birth. In addition, the most obvious and frequent example of oppression of women is sexual harassment.

According to the annual records of the National Commission on Violence Against Women (2022), violence against in Indonesia reached 338,496 cases. In 2024, cases of violence against women increased by 5,513 cases, the majority of which occurred in households. In contrast to Indonesia, several countries in Africa including Djibouti, Eritrea, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Sudan where around 90% of women experience oppression in the form of FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) or FGC (Female Genital Cutting). FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) is any procedure or action aimed at removing part or all of a woman's external genital organs in the name of culture, custom, religion or other reasons beyond health or healing. (Febrianty, 2017).

Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) has very serious physical, psychological and social consequences. The process is often performed without adequate sterilization, using non-sterile tools, which increases the risk of infection and other complications. The physical impacts include severe pain, excessive bleeding, infection, and long-term reproductive health problems such as infertility. In addition, victims of FGM/C often experience chronic pain, psychological trauma, sexual disorders, and deep social stigma, highlighting the need for concerted efforts to protect women's rights and eliminate this destructive practice.

In 2011, women's oppression in Turkey remained a severe issue, particularly domestic abuse and sexual harassment. A 2009 poll found that over 42% of women in Turkey had suffered physical or sexual assault from their spouses. Even in rural areas, the figure jumped to 47 percent. Although Turkey has approved Law 4320 on Family Protection since 1998, which allows women to obtain protection orders from family courts, its execution is frequently inefficient. Many women encounter obstacles while attempting to obtain assistance, such as the fact that police and prosecutors do not take them seriously and that shelters do not provide appropriate protection.

Elif Shafak pays close attention to the phenomenon of oppression happening around her. The inequality that she concludes focuses on the continuity between the rights and obligations imposed on women is considered burdensome based on existing facts. This can be proven by the many cases of violence and harassment that occur against women. Shafak has produced many novels including *Forty Rules of Love*,

Bastard from Istanbul Palace of Flea and Honor. She is known for her strong writing style and deep thoughts on social issues, especially feminism.

In her novel Honour, Shafak tells the story of Iskandar Toprak, a young Turkish immigrant in London, who was jailed for 14 years for the murder of his biological mother. The incident made headlines in various newspapers, emphasizing the story of "honor killings" as a cruel culture that should not be brought to civilized England.

Elif Shafak begins with Esma Toprak, Iskandar's younger sister, who is on her way to pick up her brother in prison after 14 years of imprisonment as penance for the sins she has committed. Then, the story moves back to the family life of their mother, Pembe, in a village on the banks of the Euphrates. One of her mother's brothers is said to have committed suicide after running away with a man who did not marry her. The suicide, which was forced on her by her parents and family, was considered an attempt to restore the family's honor because the incident that led her to run away with a man who was not her husband was a disgrace to her family. The story continues until Esma's family moves to London.

Then, we are told how the third child, Esma's younger brother Yunus, was born and the changes in their father, Adam Toprak. Adam falls in love with a dancer in a London bar and abandons the family. For years, Pembe took care of her three children alone, until she met the man she fell in love with. Although what Adam did was more shameful, in their culture, Pembe was more at fault. And to restore the family's honor, Iskandar tries to kill his own biological mother.

Honour by Elif Shafak received a lot of positive feedback from readers and the media. The Independent (UK) rated the novel's narrative as skillfully crafted and highly ambitious. The Kirkus review noted that Shafak turned what might seem like a polemic against honor killings on the smaller side into a heartbreaking yet empathetic and ultimately universal family tragedy.

In addition to reviews from the media, readers also leave reviews on online shopping sites. Many people liked Shafak after the publication of this honor book. There are also those who make Honour the best book recommendation to read because of its interesting topic.

Dedicated to "those who see and those who hear," the book deconstructs the specific form patriarchy takes in Turkish communities and vehemently criticizes the normalization of violence against women. Elif Shafak's book was well received by critics who noted that "Shafak turns what might seem a polemic into a novel that explores the deep roots of Iskender Toprak's "honor killing" of his own mother.

Based on the explanation of cases of oppression against women above, the author feels very concerned and feels very unfair. In addition, in this book there is also extreme oppression. This indicates that the oppression of women is not a small problem and should not be ignored. If we don't fight back from now on, more and more generations of women will be oppressed in the future. For this reason, the author chose to take a research topic on the oppression of women.

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

1. What is the indicator of oppression to woman in the honour novel?
2. How is the oppression to woman illustrated in the honour novel?
3. Why does the author raise the theme of oppression of women?

C. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To describe the indicators of oppression to women in the novel.
2. To describe how the oppression illustrated in the novel.
3. To find the reason why the author raised the theme of oppression of women.

D. SIGNIFICANCES OF THE STUDY

1. Theoretical Significances

This study contributes to the body of knowledge , especially literary study on Feminist Theory.

2. Practical Significances

This study enriches the present writer's understanding of oppression to women.