

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Feminist is a social movement that aims to build and achieve gender equality in economic, educational, personal and sociality. The movement is called a feminist movement that campaigns for women's rights. Along with the rise of the feminist movement, many feminists have been voiced either through social media, printed media or in a written essay. One of the writings that voiced feminism is classic novels. Some of the novels that voice the issue of feminism are *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker, *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood, *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf, and *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin. From several examples of classic novels that voice the issue of feminism, the writer analyzes the novel *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin.

In this novel, it is told that the character Edna Pontellier was a character who was not given the freedom to express herself. She is required to follow every word of her husband and she must not do anything other than her husband's words. This is what makes Edna feels that her marriage is unhappy, because she is only required to be a good housewife and do not do what she likes. Edna wanted her right to freedom like most people. From this, Edna fought back from the pressure exerted by her

husband. Not only the phenomena about expressed her freedom in novel *The Awakening* has also reflected other phenomena.

The main character Edna was forced to marry the choice of her parents and caused discomfort in undergoing the household. She is treated arbitrarily because she is only someone who takes care of the child and the house. This can lead to a feeling of pressure on the women because she is demanded to be a good housewife and can take care of children and does not gives freedom on what she wants to do.

An indescribable **oppression**, which seemed to generate in some unfamiliar part of her consciousness, filled her whole being with a vague anguish. (Chopin, 1899 p.35)

In the quote on an indescribable oppression is a violence, especially in the realm of the family. The persecution made by a husband against a wife is an injustice in terms of gender equality. A husband should better appreciate a wife instead of oppressing it by doing some violence against his wife.

In other words, women also want to be respected by their own husbands, as in speaking, women want their husbands in speaking more softly and this indicates that her husband loves her very much and will make her happy. If a husband cannot says be controlled, it will make a woman feel unappreciated.

“you are burnt beyond recognition” he added, looking at his wife as one looks at a valuable piece of personal **property** which has suffered some damage. (Chopin, 1899 p.4-5).

From the quote above, the word **property** it indicates that the husband does not respect his wife as a wife. From the words that Mr. Pontellier clearly indicated that he considered his wife not as his wife or his partner but as a property that he has and now was burned and unrecognized.

The research is a research that is mostly done that discuss the issues of feminist, previously there were also many researcher that discuss this issue such as, the first research, "An Analysis of the Feminist Characters in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*" written by Nur (2017). This study applied Huberman's (1994) theory of model analysis. This research discussed the main character as a feminist character in Kate Chopin's novel. This analysis aims to described the feminist character as the main character of women who adhere to feminist ideology. The result of the study indicate that there is one figure who is considered a feminist figure, namely Edna Pontellier, who has become a feminist character because of social expectations and male domination of her. She wanted to present herself as a woman, an individual, not just as the wife of a man and the mother of children.

The second previous researcher, "Analyzing Edna's Character in Chopin's novel *The Awakening* through Sullivan's Theory of Inter-personal Relations" written by Panhwar et al (2017). This study applied Sullivan's Inter-personal Relations theory. This study aimed to examine and evaluate the main character in Kate Chopin's novel *The Awakening*. The result of this research is that it is found that Edna's character develops her identity and makes her independent from social norms and taboos. She denied doing her duties as wife and mother and decides to be selfish. She

makes decisions that are relevant to her desires but contrary to the average woman in the world.

Based on these two previous studies, it can be concluded that the present research and the previous research are similar with the issues that discussed but applied the different theory. For the first previous study applied Huberman's (1994) theory of model analyzed. The second previous study applied Sullivan's Interpersonal Relations theory and the present research applied Walby (1991) theory.

This research interested to analyze because until now there is still gender inequality that exist in social circles. This gender inequality makes society look down on women. This makes women lose their right to get gender equality.

1.2 Identification of the problem

Based on the background above there are problems as follow:

1. The feel of pressure about matchmaking from the parents in the community.
2. The woman needs to be respected both in speech and in treatment.
3. The forms of gender inequality in novel *The Awakening*.
4. The form of resistance performed by main character to disrupt the gender inequality in novel *The Awakening*.

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

Based on the problems above, the writer limits the following problems that are:

1. The forms of gender inequality in novel *The Awakening*.
2. The form of resistance performed by main character to disrupt the gender inequality in novel *The Awakening*.

1.4 Formulation of the Problem

Based on the limitation of the problems, the writer formulated a problem such as:

- 1 What are the forms of gender inequality in novel *The Awakening*?
- 2 What is the form of resistance performed by main character to disrupt the gender inequality in novel *The Awakening*?

1.5 Objective of the Research

1. To describe the forms of gender inequality in novel *The Awakening*.
2. To describe the form of resistance performed by main character to disrupt the gender inequality in novel *The Awakening*.

1.6 Significance of the Research

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, by knowing the theory in this research it is expected that it can increase knowledge in enrich discourse especially in the field of Literature.

2. Practical Significance

Practically, by knowing the research and applied theories, it is intended as additional reference material in the field of literary works, especially those that raise feminist issues.

1.7 Definition of Keys Terms

Feminism :Feminism is an advocacy of women's rights in achieving gender equality (Thompson & Clement, 2018).

Identity :Assume that identity reflects and evokes ideas that are related to a person's basic self-esteem (Fearon,1999).

Rights : Rights are interpreted as an important element in law, politics, ethics and generally in society (Sarani,2017).