

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Research

Humans are social creatures who always carry out activities to fulfill their life needs. All things that appear in society are the results of humans' activities and can be discovered later as the truth of the society. To discover the truth of society, there are many references that can be taken, such as the works of literature. Long (2003) stated literature as an artistic documentation of human's life. It is considered to have aesthetic value, beauty and depth in expressing ideas and human emotions. Literature allows us to discover human's struggle and their dreams in many places and eras (Roberts, 2007). By studying literary works, the reflection of human's life that is reflected in the works can be discovered.

One of the works of literature that can reflect human's life is novel where it contains the story in the form of prose. Novel is a long narrative prose that contains the story of a character's life and the people around him where the nature of each character is shown in the story. According to Watt (1959), novel is a comprehensive and accurate depiction of human's experience. Novel is made based on the work of someone's imagination certainly refers to real life that has happened, which is then reprocessed by the author and creates a new truth (Kadir & Thaba, 2019). This shows that a novel is made based on real event experienced by human and they pour the experience into the form of writing as the reflection of the event.

One of the remarkable novels in 1970s USA that reflects the event occurred in society is “The Chocolate War” written by Robert Edmund Cormier in 1974. “The Chocolate War” was the fourth novel written by Robert out of 22 novels and is also known as the most famous novel with 4 others novel, which are “I Am the Cheese”, “Beyond the Chocolate War”, “Tenderness”, and “After the First Death”. This novel tells about the life of young adult called “Jerry Renault” who experienced bullying at school. “The Chocolate War” novel shows the acts from the bullies to protect their authority, doing bullying through verbal, and using physic to manipulate the victim to fulfill the assignments that they should not fulfill. Thus, it can be ascertained that “The Chocolate War” novel as a part of literary works that shows the reflection of events that happened in society.

Robert Edmund Cormier as the author of “The Chocolate War” novel was born on 17th January 1925 on Leominster, Massachusetts, America. He was known as an American author and journalist and also renowned for his darkly optimistic novels which are intended for young adults. Due to Robert’s brilliant works, several awards were achieved by him, such as “An ALA Best Book for Young Adults”, “A New York Times Outstanding Book for Young Adults”, and “A School Library Journal Best of the Best”. In writing “The Chocolate War” novel, Robert got the idea from the experience of his own son, named Peter who refused in participating the candy sale in his school. Unlike the content story of the novel, Peter did not get any bullying acts or harassments from school students or teachers. Instead, it was Robert himself that created emotional content that reflects social conflicts by thinking the worst possibility

that may happens which gave a result to the creation of inspiration to write “The Chocolate War” novel.

Due to novel as a part of literary work that reflects society, there is a study that explores the relation between humans called sociology. In literature, sociology as an approach sees the function of literary works as the main focus, where the works serve as social documents that reflect the society (Laurenson & Swingewood, 1972). This approach seeks to find the answer of how society is created, how it operates, and why it survives. Sociologists typically employ sociological theory to explain and examine behaviors, procedures, and social structures of the society. On the other words, sociology learns the phenomena that occur in the story, where everything that happens comes from the events that have already occurred in society.

Sociology as an approach that learns the phenomena in society contains the theory of bullying that analyzes people’s behavior. According to Rigby (2007), bullying is a terrible act because it involves repetitive, harsh abuse of the weak by the powerful with no justification. Bullying is a violent behavior, because bully treats the other person badly by harming and threatening that can cause trauma that will affect a person’s personality (Swearer et al., 2012). Rigby (2007) explained the acts of bullying that occur in society usually happen in two forms, which are physical form and non-physical form that can occur directly and indirectly. Besides the acts of bullying, Rigby also explained the impacts felt by the victims due to the bullying acts that they received, they are low level of psychological health, poor socialization, psychological distress,

and physical unwell. In addition, these impacts can harm victims' mind and health and affects their life.

As a former of primary school, junior high school, and senior high school student, the researcher has a view that based on researcher's own experience where the acts of bullying are very often occur in schools' environment. In 1970s, due to several harms of bullying in schools, the United States and academics worldwide have made investments in school bullying prevention and have actively started to develop anti-bullying policies (Zhang, 2021). On the other hand, Astungkoro & Ramadhan (2023) also stated the news that is written "Based on FSGI (Federasi Serikat Guru Indonesia) records, during the first two months of 2023, there have been six cases of bullying or physical violence and fourteen cases of sexual violence in education field". This news shows how many bullying cases occurred to the students in schools in just two months. The impacts of bullying were also stated inside the news where the worst thing that happened to the victims is suicide because the students could not stand to the bullying. Thus, it can be concluded that some schools' students are vulnerable to become the victims of bullying by their peers.

In "The Chocolate War" novel, it is told that the main character named "Jerry Renault" is often experienced bullying both directly and indirectly from his seniors and teachers. The phenomenon of bullying in the novel is shown below:

"Go get your bus, square boy," he called. "Don't miss the bus, boy. You're missing a lot of things in the world, better not miss that bus" (P. 10. Cormier, 1974)

On the quotation above, “Jerry Renault” as the main character is seen as the victim of bullying where he got bullied by strangers when he was waiting for the bus.

Besides this research that analyzes “The Chocolate War” novel, Thapa (2019) also chose “The Chocolate War” novel as his data source. Even the data source is similar to this research, the thing that differs from this analysis is on its topic. The focus of their analysis is on social and psychological abjections in order to gain freedom from bullying. It discusses how the main character called “Jerry Renault” oppose the bullies by using his own physic power. Besides Thapa, Sakban et al. (2019) also analyzes the topic of bullying where the focus of their analysis is on discovering the methods used by Indonesian police institution to prevent and resolve cyberbullying cases. In doing the analysis, police from 9 province in Indonesia were interviewed in order to discover the methods. As the result, the thing that differs this research from previous researches is on the topic of the analysis where the researcher focused on analyzing the acts of bullying and the impacts that occur to the main character in “The Chocolate War” novel.

In this research, the reason the researcher chooses “The Chocolate War” novel to be analyzed is because there are many bullying incidents that can be taken to be analyzed. From there, “The Chocolate War” novel will be analyzed by the researcher by using the theory of acts of bullying from Rigby (2007) and the impacts of bullying from Rigby (2003) in the scope of sociology. As the result, the researcher entitles this

research as: **“Bullying in 1970s USA as Reflected in *The Chocolate War* Novel by Robert Cormier: A Sociological Approach.”**

1.2. Identification of the Problem

According to Punch as cited in Creswell (2013), it is crucial to choose the problems of the research that must be beneficial to the people being examined and also must be beneficial not just for researchers, but also for readers. Based on the background of the research, there are some problems found by the researcher, which are:

1. The reason of the bullies occurs in 1970’s USA as seen in “The Chocolate War” novel by Robert Cormier.
2. The obstacles faced by the main character against bullies in 1970s USA as seen in “The Chocolate War” novel by Robert Cormier.
3. The regulation in education institution to protect students from bullies in 1970s USA as seen in “The Chocolate War” novel by Robert Cormier.
4. The acts of bullying faced by the main character in 1970s USA as seen in “The Chocolate War” novel by Robert Cormier.
5. The impacts of bullying felt by the main character in 1970s USA as seen in “The Chocolate War” novel by Robert Cormier.

1.3. Limitation of the Problem

Based on the identification of the problems above, the researcher found the limitation of the problems, they are:

1. The acts of bullying faced by the main character in 1970s USA as seen in “The Chocolate War” novel by Robert Cormier.
2. The impacts of bullying felt by the main character in 1970s USA as seen in “The Chocolate War” novel by Robert Cormier.

1.4. Formulation of the Problem

In order to scope the problems to become more specific, the researcher formulates the main problems that need to be discussed, they are:

1. What are the acts of bullying faced by the main character in 1970s USA as seen in “The Chocolate War” novel by Robert Cormier?
2. What are the impacts of bullying felt by the main character in 1970s USA as seen in “The Chocolate War” novel by Robert Cormier?

1.5. Objective of the Research

Based on formulation of the problems above, the researcher found the objectives of the research, they are:

1. To find the acts of bullying faced by the main character in 1970s USA as seen in “The Chocolate War” novel by Robert Cormier.
2. To discover the impacts of bullying felt by the main character in 1970s USA as seen in “The Chocolate War” novel by Robert Cormier.

1.6. Significance of the Research

In significance of the research, there are two significances that can be given in order to fulfill the research purpose, which are:

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretical significance is useful in order to add more knowledge that was found from the analysis which can be useful for the reader. The data and knowledge found in the research are essential for problem solving, decision making, and also give further explanation about the discoveries that were found from the analysis. In addition, this research can help readers that want to analyze the phenomena of bullying theoretically by using the theory of acts of bullying from Rigby (2007) and impacts of bullying from Rigby (2003) in the scope of sociology.

2. Practical Significance

In practical significance, the purpose of making this research is to help the readers to be able to use this research as their reference which can help to fulfill their own research. Second, the researcher also hopes that teachers can use this research as the material for teaching students about the theory of bullying in the scope of sociology.

1.7. Definition of Key Terms

Bullying acts : A terrible act because it involves repetitive, harsh abuse of the weak by the powerful with no justification. Bullying is a violent behavior, because bully treats the other person badly by harming and threatening that can cause trauma that will affect a person's personality.

Sociological approach : Sociology is essentially the objective, scientific study of people in society, including the learning of social structures and processes. This approach seeks to find the answer of how society is created, how it operates, and why it survives. Sociology learns the phenomena that occur in the story, where everything that happens comes from the events that have already occurred in society.

Intimidation : Intimidation as a personal punishment, as a precaution, or for any other purposes. Intimidation is an action done by a person with a stronger status, position, and rank towards other person that has a weaker position by making him afraid and allowing himself to be controlled. Intimidation is usually carried out through the act of frightening other people, which often refers to violent and coercive behavior.