

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Research

Women are always interesting to be discussed. There are always lots of things to talk about Women. The interesting thing about them is not just a matter of beauty or tenderness, but also about how their existence in society. Society is a group of people where women and men interacting each other and live in the same place. In the interacting process, men and women experience different treatments. Unfortunately, women experience more undue treatment that has even been experienced from thousands of years ago until now. For example, injustice, violence, rape, abuse, etc. The cruelest act experienced by all women in the world is women's violence(Bere & Arianto, 2019).

In general opinion everyone says that men are portrayed as being strong and able to take care of themselves which is why men are called leaders. On the contrary women are referred as weak human beings and that is why they are the followers of the leaders. Patriarchal construction also says that men are superior to women. Women were merely objects from time by the time because the influenced of the rules of social life that bind the society itself, (Bere& Arianto 2019). From this it is clear that society gives a biased view to men and in other words, society constructs unfair opinions between women and men. This unfair opinion triggers an unfair treatment of women. For example is how women are treated unfairly in a family. Subordination is a mindset that places women in a lower position than men even in many families. For example, women are more restrained than men, especially when it comes to time when they are out of home. Women tend to be more restricted from leaving the house, citing fear of unwanted things happening, such as rape, etc.

Women's freedom is limited because of such thinking. Another example is in the case of getting out of bed in the morning. Women who like to wake up in the afternoon will be judged and frightened that it will be difficult to get a mate if you wake up too early in the morning. As with men, there tends to be no problem for those who like to wake up during the day. Especially when are unemployed or also on holidays. In case getting a mate or married, age is a scary thing for Indonesian women in terms of marriage. Those who are in their 30's will usually be labeled as spinsters and there will be a lot of negative stigma that arises from society when there is a woman who is in that phase. Examples such as, said to be too picky, too arrogant, not attractive, etc. Another case with men, when a man in his 30s is not married, usually people will think that indeed he is building a career for his future success.

After getting unfair treatment from the society, women still have to go through difficulties in proving their existence, for instance the burdens of a married woman. The purpose of marriage is to unite two families with a view to harmonizing the friendship of two clans. A woman when she becomes a wife is not only responsible for being a good wife for her husband, but also for her husband's entire family. In most traditions in Indonesia, a wife must be able to uphold the dignity of her family and the family of the husband she marries. If not, a variety of conflicts will arise in the form of a judgmental attitude received by a woman from her family or from her husband's family.

According to Puspita (2018) women meant by gender struggle is the effort made in the fight against gender inequality. Women are depicted as weak, irrational, and less daring, and so unsuitable to lead. And it made women felt unfair treatment because all gender could do everything without any difficulties. If we see further about the examples of what society does toward women, let us see the same thing that exists in literary works. The struggle begins with the powerlessness of humans in reaching their goals. This helplessness may not be due to our inability. The society does something that causing people through the struggle. For example the novel by

Miriam Toews (2018), entitled “Women Talking”. The helplessness of women can be seen clearly in this novel. The overall story is about suffered women in the fictional Mennonite colony of Molotschna where nearly have been raped. To fight the sexual harassment, they hold a meeting in the hayloft. The meeting purposes to decide what they are going to do because every time they report to Bishop and elderly in the colony about what they have experienced, no one will believe it. They even will judge the women lying and only dreaming. It is like their society does not admit their existence. As the librarian who met one of the main characters, August Epp said “almost as though you were brought into existence not to exist”(Toews,2018.P.10).This represents the situation of women at that time when their existence is simply not considered.

Human beings have higher value than animals. This value makes the existence of human beings including women should be more priceless. Even if human beings are not anymore exist in the world (die), their existence should always be in another ones . But in a situation where humans are still alive, but their existence is worthless, will they be classified as animals? Perhaps doubts about her worth or not are experienced by the women in this novel, as Greta stated in the meeting “we have been preyed upon like animals; perhaps we should respond in kind”(Toews,2018.P.20).

There are many things that make the women have to pass through many struggles. One of them is the impact of the war. The research which was done by Rahayu (2018)from University of Sumatera Utara entitled “An Analysis of Woman Struggle in Louisa May Alcott’s Novel Little Women aimed to know woman struggle portrayed in Louisa May Alcott’s novel “Little Women”experienced by Josephine March as the main character. By using feminist approach her research concluded that Woman struggle that portrayed in Louisa May Alcott’s novel little women occurred due to the ongoing war that required men to take part in the war. The women who were left behind had to fend for themselves to faced poverty due to the economic crisis to survive without dependence on men. Woman struggle portrayed by how the

characters in novel little women should face the existence of social classes and also gender inequality in the lives of their people which is difficult and disturbing in their daily lives.

Nasution (2019) stated in her article entitled "The struggle of gender equality in five novels of nh. Dini" patriarchal culture and the fight for gender equality as exposed in Nh. Dini's novels. There are still many women who are trapped in domestic sector and loose their rightsto manage their own lives with their own way. Her research aimed to explores the problems of women, patriarchal culture and the fight for gender equality as exposed in Nh. Dini's novels. By using the feminist analysis, her research concluded the fight for gender equality that revealed in five novels are in agreement with the thought of feminism ideology, among others is the fight to get education and job.

Based on the two literature review that researcher has described above, there are some similarity and difference between previous and present research. The previous and the present research used feminism as the approach. Meanwhile, the difference between the previous and the present research is about the problem of the research and the aim of the research.

Based on all the explanation above, the researcher is interested to analyze the "Women Talking" novel through the characters contained in the novel. All of the characters are women who have a level of patience in fighting a very cruel thing in their life. The focus of feminism research from the "women talking" novel is to examine the struggle that faced by all women in the novel, how they struggle and cares each other's. Express the important values of individual women and the experiences they shared together and the struggles they carried out. Feminism movement is a movement of struggle in the framework of transforming an unjust social system and structure towards justice for men and women. Therefore, feminism requires women's independence, not only depending on men.

1.2 Identification of The Problem

1. The unfair treatment toward men and women as seen in “Women Talking” by Miriam Toews.
2. The women’s struggles to fight sexual harassment in “Women Talking” by Miriam Toews.
3. The women’s oppression portrayed in the novel “Women Talking “ by Miriam Toews
4. The roles of woman in life struggle in the novel “Women Talking “ by Miriam Toews

1.3 Limitation of The Problem

In line with the identification of the problems, focuses of the research are:

1. The women’s oppressions portrayed in the novel “Women Talking “ by Miriam Toews
2. The women’s struggles to fight sexual harassment in “Women Talking” by Miriam Toews

1.4 Formulation of The Problem

1. What are the women’s oppressions portrayed in the novel “Women Talking “ by Miriam Toews ?
2. What are the women’s struggles to fight sexual harassment in “Women Talking” by Miriam Toews?

1.5 Objectives of The Research

According to the problem that researcher has stated above. This research has two objectives as follow:

1. To find out the women’s oppressions portrayed in the novel “Women Talking “ by Miriam Toews.

2. To find out the women's struggles to fight sexual harassment in "Women Talking" by Miriam Toews.

1.6 Significances of The Research

Significances of the research are the purpose of this research. These purposes are divided by two parts. They are theoretical and practical significances.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

Based on objectives of the researcher mentioned, this research is expected to have benefit to the reader, such as:

1. This researcher will give further information to learning, especially in the woman struggle that faced by Ona and the other women and role of women usage in the novel.
2. This research will help to enhance our knowledge, insight, and experience as well as in application of materials science research. Especially in the language study.

1.6.2. Practical Significance

Practically, this research is expected to be useful for the following parties. First, this research can be implemented in studying English language in literature field. Second, this researcher is expected to give more practical contribution for the research in describing the phenomenon of feminism found in the novel "Women talking". The researcher also expects this research can be continued in conducting another feminism topic.

1.7. Definition of Key Terms

Feminism: A movement for granting women political, social and economic equality with men

Women's oppression: The inequitable use of authority, law, or physical force to prevent others from being free or equal.

Struggle: A social or professional position, condition, or standing to which varying degrees of responsibility, privilege, and esteem.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature