

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter elaborates the methodology of the research being discussed. It covers method of research, source of the data, technique of data collection, technique of data analysis, synopsis of the novel, clarification of key terms, and data representation.

#### **3.1. Method of Research**

To explain the phenomenon of racism set in Kathryn Stockett's *The Help*, a qualitative research is applied. Jones (1997) explains that qualitative research is associated with interpretive approaches. Moreover, qualitative methodologies permit the cognitive and affective components to be explored in a deeper and more detail analysis than quantitative methodologies do. It also helps the researcher to avoid a prejudgment and gives an in-depth analysis since it allows the researcher to see the subject of the research from various angles.

Descriptive method is also used to answer the research questions. It is used to describe the data from the novels. Khan (1990, p.96) asserts that descriptive method is concerned about the present and attempts to determine the status on the phenomenon under investigation. It means that descriptive method is used in order to provide a description of a situation or condition of phenomenon as factual and

accurate as possible. Thus, these methods are suitable to answer the question which is connected to racism and anti racism set in *The Help*.

Another approach which is used in the research is textual analysis. Truex (1996) said that textual analysis allows the text to stand alone and the words or idiomatic expression to speak its meaning. Thus, the textual evidence in the novel can be interpreted to answer the research questions in chapter 1.

### **3.2. Source of Data**

The source of the data is a novel written by Kathryn Stockett, *The Help*, which was firstly published in 2009. The novel portrays the life of the black society in a little town in Mississippi, Jackson around 1960s. The novel presents the racism and anti racism towards the blacks.

### **3.3. Technique of Data Collection**

The data that will be collected in this research are words, phrases, or sentences containing racism and anti-racism issue towards the blacks. Thus, close reading is suitable to define the textual evidence which portrays the issue. Clifton (2008) defines close reading as paying especially close attention to what is printed on the page. This strategy involves reader's insightful attention to the source of the data.

Besides close reading, content analysis is also applied in this research. Truex (1996) argues that content analysis is aimed at searching structures and patterns in the data from words and phrases. Content analysis is also contributed in gathering and

analyzing the context of the text. Afterward, the data findings are then classified and assessed in accordance with the issue of the research.

### **3.4. Technique of Data Analysis**

In analyzing the data, several steps are taken. After reading *The Help* repeatedly, some textual evidences which are related to the research questions are collected. To identify the racism and anti-racism issue portrayed in the novel, the portrayal of the issue based on the hostile behavior is applied to bind the data. Afterwards, theory of power is used to answer the second research question which concerns the power interplays in racist actions. After those steps are completed, the next step is presenting the data analysis in the form of narration. Finally, the last step is drawing conclusion and suggestions based on the findings of the research.

### **3.5 Synopsis of the Novel**

*The Help* covers the life of three women in Jackson, Mississippi. They are a twenty-three-year old white writer, Eugenia “Skeeter” Phelan, and two black maids named Aibileen and Minny Jackson. Their lives are bound by the difference of social status in racist environment.

After finishing her study and going back to her home town, Skeeter starts to recognize the situation in Jackson. She notices how her friends treat their black maids. Elizabeth Leefolt always tries to speak nicely to her maid, Aibileen, as if she

talks to a child. Hilly Holbrook even tends to be sarcastic by calling Minny a thief. Hilly also proposes her idea to build a separated bathroom for the black maids.

Hilly's racist idea makes Skeeter realize that it is unfair for the black maids to get such discrimination. Thus, she decides to change the situation by writing a book about the blacks' feeling living under the whites' power. From the black maids' story, it is revealed how they are treated by the whites. Some receive bad treatment such as terror, criminal accusation, and physical abuse. Interestingly, it also shows that some whites display courage, care, and love to the blacks as what Celia Rae Foote does to her black maid, Minny.

### 3.6 Clarification of Key Terms

The research contains some terms that probably will cause misunderstanding. Thus, defining several terms is needed in order to revoke different perceptions about the terms. Those terms are explained below:

1. **Racism:** racism is defined as a set of actions that basically derive from superiority (Yancy, 2002). Yet, in this research racism is also examined as the result of disregard or ill-will which is reflected in hostile behaviors (Glasgow, 2009).
2. **Racist:** racist is those who take actions of racism (Rattansi, 2009)

3. **Anti Racism:** anti racism is any opposite of racist actions. Since racism is basically dealing with hatred which is reflected in hostile behaviors, then, anti racism can be investigated in the respectful attitudes (Glasgow, 2009).
4. **Characters:** characters are the persons presented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are “interpreted by the reader as being endowed with moral and dispositional qualities that are expressed in what they say - the dialogue - and what they do - the action” (Abraham, 1981)
5. **Characterization:** characterization is the process by which the writer reveals the personality of a character
6. **Prejudice:** prejudice is an attitude that derives from ignorance and fear. It is all because of the limited knowledge related to the prejudiced society (Rosado, 2012)
7. **Stereotype:** stereotype is a set of an irrational generalization about a targeted group of people (Rosado, 2012)

### 3. 7 Data Representation

The categorized data are then presented in a form of table. The followings are the samples of table containing the categorization of the data.

### 3. 7. 1 The Representation of Racism

No.	Kinds of Racism	Textual evidence	Remarks
1.	Prejudice	<p>“it would be nice,” Miss Leefolt say, taking a little puff a her cigarette, <b>“not having her use the one in the house. I bid three spades.”</b></p> <p><b>“that’s exactly why I’ve designed the home Help Sanitation Initiative,”</b> Miss Hilly say. <b>“As a disease-preventative measure.”</b> (p.9)</p>	<p>These evidences show that Hilly and Elizabeth Leefoltt are racist because they see the black maids as dangerous people. It can be seen when Elizabeth expresses contentment when Hilly says her idea to make a separated bathroom for the black maids. Elizabeth words sound more polite than Hilly, however, she tries to avoid to use the same bathroom where Aibileen goes to.</p>
2.	Discrimination	<p>I put baby Girl’s yellow bikini on. “you got to keep you top on, now. <b>They don’t let no nekkid babies swim at the country club.”</b> Nor <b>Negroes nor Jews. I used to work for the Gold-mans. The Jackson Jews got to</b></p>	<p>From the evidence above, it is told where the blacks belong to, the margin side. They are marginalized by the policy that the white has created. They cannot go to the swimming pool because it is the white’s area.</p>

		swim at the colonial Country Club, the negroes, in May's Lake. (p.205)	
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### 3. 7. 2 The Representation of Anti Racism

No.	Anti Racism	Textual Evidence	Remarks
1.	No prejudice	<b>She laughs and the crazy woman goes to hug me</b> , but is step back a little, let her know that's not the kind of things I do. (p.36)	Celia's response which hugs Minny, shows that Celia sees Minny not as the black woman who comes from lower social status. Instead, she sees Minny as ordinary woman who looks for job in her house. The laugh also indicates that there is no any prejudice and hatred as other white person usually has when it comes to the blacks as Hilly does.
2.	Care and love	And while <b>Miss Celia's grinning and "good morning" and "glad to see"-ing me</b> , I'm wondering how did she get this far in life without knowing where the lines are drawn? I mean, a floozy calling the society ladies is bad enough. <b>Bu she</b>	The textual evidence reveals that Celia does not make problem out of the skin color and status of Minny. It is a very uncommon situation in Jackson to stay in the same room with the black maid, and Minny has become accustomed to be treated that

	<p><b>has sat down and eaten lunch with me every single day since I started working here.</b> I don't mean in the same room, <b>I mean at the same table.</b> (p. 220)</p>	<p>way. Yet, Celia resolves to take Minny as she is, not as a black maid. By sitting in the same table with Minny, Celia signs equality and wipes away the racism which is commonly held by another white people.</p>
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### 1. 7.3 The Interplay of Power

No.	Interplay of power	Evidence	Remarks
1.	To impose and maintain racism	<p>“you know, Mister Holbrook arranged for that bathroom, Aibleen. Sent the boys over and the equipment, too.” Hilly smiled.</p> <p>Aibleen just stood there and I wished I wasn't on the room. <i>Please</i>, I thought, <i>please don't say thank you.</i></p> <p>“yes, ma'am.” Aibleen opened a drawer and</p>	<p>When Hilly confirms about the separated bathroom, Aibleen tries to negotiate the power in her silent resistance. She refuses to agree with Hilly's words straightforwardly by delaying saying thank you for the bathroom. However, in the end, she realizes that she does not have power to fight Hilly. Hilly's attitude reflects tension and abhorrence of being resisted</p>



		<p>reached inside, but <b>Hilly kept looking at her. It was so obvious what she wanted.</b></p> <p><b>Another second passes with no one moving. Hilly cleared her throat and finally Aibeleen lowered her head. “Thank you, ma’am,” she whispered.</b> She walked back into the kitchen. It’s no wonder she doesn’t want to talk to me. (p.114)</p>	<p>which is related to her power as the powerful white.</p>
2.	the white resistance	<p>Miss Skeeter, she frowning at Miss Hilly. She set her cards down and face up and say real matter-a-fact, <b>“maybe we ought to just build you a bathroom outside, Hilly.”</b></p> <p>And Law, do that room get quiet.</p> <p><b>Miss Hilly say, “ I don’t think you out to be joking</b></p>	<p>The evidence shows that Skeeter attempts to negotiate Hilly’s power. It is possible for Skeeter to negotiate the power because she also has power since she is white. The big difference appears when it comes to deciding the purpose of the power. Hilly decides to use her power to keep the distance between the whites and the</p>

		<p><b>around about the colored situation. Not if you want to stay on as editor of the League, Skeeter Phelan.”</b></p> <p>Miss Skeeter kins a laugh, but I can tell she don't think it's funny. <b>“what, you'd... kick me out? For disagreeing with you?”</b></p> <p><b>Miss Hilly raise a eyebrow. “I will do whatever I have to do to protect our town. Your lead, Mama.” (p.9)</b></p>	<p>blacks while Skeeter uses it to erase the differences.</p>
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### 1.8 Data Analysis

Aibileen is a black maid who has raised sixteen white children by the time she is working for Elizabeth Leefolt family. Aibileen take cares of Miss Leefolt's baby girl, Mae Mobley, with her big love hoping someday when Mae Mobley grows up she does not see the line between whites and blacks like her mother does.

For the sake of separated but equal, Aibileen faces a reality that she has to use the separated bathroom in Miss Leefolt's house, out in the garage. The reason is obvious: that as a black person, she, and every black one, is considered dangerous

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and carries harmful diseases because of the darker skin tone. This bathroom-separation idea is proposed by Hilly who is a socialite in Jackson. She says that:

*Hilly Holbrook introduces the Home Help Sanitation Initiative. A disease preventative measure Low-cost bathroom installation in your garage or shed, for homes without such an important fixture.*

*Ladies, did you know that:*

- *99% of all colored diseases are carried in the urine*
- *Whites can become permanently disable by nearly all of these diseases because we lack of immunities coloreds carry in their darker pigmentation*
- *Some germs carried by whites can also be harmful to coloreds too*

*Protect yourself. Protect your children. Protect your help.*

*From the Holbrook, we say, You're welcome! (p.161)*

Yet, as a maid, Aibileen cannot help but receive the condition bitterly. The same feeling is experienced by Aibileen's friend, Minny. Hilly makes Minny loses her only job; a job that feeds her whole family. For days, Minny cannot find a new one because of Hilly's lies telling that Minny steals the silver wares while working for her mom. Fortunately, with Aibileen's help, Minny finds a new job in Celia Rae Foote's house. Minny's perspective about the white changes; she realizes that not all the whites are as bad as Hilly. Minny finds that Celia does not feel awkward when she sits in a same table with Minny in the kitchen; she even says Minny is her friend.

Those biased situations encourage a white socialite Eugenia "Skeeter" Phelan to do something worth that can change the people's thought about the black fellows forever. As a writer, she decides to write a book entitled *The Help* depicting the black maids' thought about working for a white family. After recruiting some black maids

to take participation in her book, Skeeter finds that some stories are beyond imagination. Once, Cellie whose hair is grey but still in her uniform says that:

When Miss Margaret die of the lady problems thirty years later, I go to the funeral. Her husband hug me, cry on my shoulder. When it's over, he give me an envelope. Inside a letter from Miss Margaret reading, " thank you. For making my baby stop hurting, I never forgot it." (p. 266)

Those friendship and affection are what the racist people in Jackson cannot imagine, that the skin color which distinguishes people means nothing. And by the time the book is published, the society realizes that the black maids also have their own perspective about the white. The book has also guided Aibileen, Minny and Skeeter to find their new lives.