

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the general description of the study, including background of the study, scope of the study, research questions, aims of the study, methodology, clarification of terms and organization of the paper. Those points are presented in the following sequences.

I.2 Background

Learning literature can enlarge our understanding towards life because it is full of ideas, imagination, needs, passions, feelings, spirits, beliefs, knowledge, reflection, moral values, enlightenment and entertainment. Horatius (cited in *Membaca Sastra*, 2002) states that literature, with its beautiful and imaginative elements, is not only used as entertainment but also guidance for people to know how to live in the right way.

The definition of literature is always changing and developing through the time. According to William F Irmischer (1975:2) literature is an art expressed in words. Literature may be either written or spoken. The word "literature" also is frequently used in very general sense to refer to the whole body of writing in a culture, regardless of its purpose. In this sense, both non-imaginative and imaginative writing clearly belong to literature. In a restricted sense, however, literature has come to be identified particularly with artistic forms of verbal expression, especially fiction, drama, poetry and kinds of prose that reveal an imaginative mind at work. Essays, articles, biographies, autobiographies and letters may be differentiated from prose that is

designed primarily for explanation and persuasion-what we commonly call expository prose. Thus, not much journalistic prose, for example, has gained literary status, and seldom does technical, scholarly, and text book writing achieve such status.

Reading a kind of literary works may lead readers to figure out its certain purposes. A great work is indeed created by the author with several purposes such as social, politic, economy, moral and education (Ratna; 2005, p.321)

Literary works frequently deal with the life of society. Readers may see the reflection of a society at a certain time and place with its certain issue, for instance, by reading a text in *Cermin* column of Tabloid *Wanita Indonesia*, readers will get an intense images and recent issues about women in Indonesia.

The issue of women invites interesting discussions in Indonesia. The discussions mostly talk about the inequality of role and position of women compared to men in political, economic and social spheres in Indonesian society. For example, while Ratu Atut Chosiyah elected as the governor of Banten, there were debates exposed by some media about women leadership. Those issues also discussed in tabloid *Wanita Indonesia* (edition 892); Ratu Atut Chosiyah was considered by the contra communities inappropriate to be a leader because she is a woman. They argued that a man was appropriate to be a leader in a family, social, economic and politic because that status was clearly emphasized in religion certainty. Men are primarily engaged in public sectors because they are responsible for earning a living. This job division leads women to have fewer oppotunities compared to men in education, social, economics, and other field. The fewer opportunities in education happens because there is an assumption that women will ultimately handle the household after they get married, no matter how high their education level is.

Frequently, we can see the portrayal of women depicted in some media productions. For example, in the serial of electronic cinemas entitled *Cahaya*, *Intan* and the movie entitled *Berbagi Suami*, women are portrayed as housewives who take care of their husbands and their children, and most of them do not have jobs or careers. In those films, the characteristics of Indonesian women are patient, dependent, weak, sensitive, lovable, abide by their husbands, careful etc.

The main role of a woman as depicted in some media is considered as a mother who takes care of her husband and children. Their main position likely makes them have fewer opportunities in another field of life and put them as subordinates at once. According to Simone de Beauvoir, in *The Second Sex* (1949), women have been *made* inferiors and the oppression has been compounded by men's belief that women *are* inferiors by nature.

Women's roles and activities are rarely mentioned in history, most of historian only focused on war, politics, or law. The similar circumstance is also seen since the old English period to the Victorian age while women were not allowed to be an author. Mary Ann Evans, the author of *Silas Marner* in the Victorian Age, decided to change her name to be George Elliot because women was not considered as an author. To avoid this situation, feminist decided to release women from all kinds of oppressions and limitations that exist because of the way in which men and women are socialized moreover supports patriarchy and keeps men in power positions.

Considering some cases mentioned above, the writer would like to conduct a research on how Indonesian women are portrayed in tabloid *Wanita Indonesia*. The investigation does not only focus on the characteristics of typical Indonesian women but also the Indonesian women's roles and positions in Indonesian society as portrayed in tabloid *Wanita Indonesia*. The

expectation of the writer is the research can inspire the writer and the readers of this research paper to be as successful as the Indonesian women as depicted in tabloid *Wanita Indonesia* and bring the writer to be familiar with journalistic writing because the writer is eager to work in media production as journalist.

I.3 Reason for Choosing the Topic

There are several reasons for the writer to choose this topic. The first reason is that the writer attempts to find out the portrayal of Indonesian women in tabloid *Wanita Indonesia*. The second reason is that the writer assumes tabloid *Wanita Indonesia* is different from others. The content of tabloid *Wanita Indonesia* entirely discuss about women in all spheres while other media such as *Nova*, *Aura* etc are mostly discuss about artists. The *Cermin* column in tabloid *Wanita Indonesia* presents the profile of Indonesian women in all spheres. This column not only attempts to give the depiction of Indonesian women but also can be able to encourage or to inspire all women in Indonesia. The writer assumes that this column is able to portray Indonesian women since the object of the profile is Indonesian woman, written by a woman and read by women. Consequently, the writer argues that *Cermin* column in tabloid *Wanita Indonesia* can reflect the conditions of Indonesian women in reality.

The writer employs the theory of Marxist feminist literary theory to reveal the portrayal of Indonesian women in tabloid *Wanita Indonesia*. The theory is considered to be relevant to the present study since it focuses on the idea of division of labor and material aspects which are existed in the capitalist system. Marxist feminism states that capitalism, which gives rise to economic inequality, dependence, political confusion and ultimately unhealthy social relations between men and women, is the root of women's oppression in the current social context.

Friedrich Engels (1972 in Tong 1998) assumes that to be truly liberated from men's oppression, women should be economically independent by working outside the household. By adopting this theory, the writer will investigate the equality of roles, positions and characteristics of women compared to men in political, economic and social spheres in Indonesia society, as evidenced in tabloid *Wanita Indonesia*.

I.4 Scope of the Study

This scope of the study will be limited only to analyze the portrayal of Indonesian women in terms of their characteristics, their positions and their roles in Indonesian society as evidenced in *Cermin* columns of tabloid *Wanita Indonesia* in 2007. The data are taken from fifty two *Cermin* columns in tabloid *Wanita Indonesia* that are published in 2007 (891- 942 edition).

I.5 Research Questions

The research conducted by the writer is designed to answer the following questions:

1. How does *Cermin* column in tabloid *Wanita Indonesia* portrays Indonesian women?
2. How are the portrayals seen from Marxist feminist point of view?

I.6 Aims of the Study

Given to the above research questions, the aims of study are:

1. To reveal the portrayal of Indonesian women in tabloid *Wanita Indonesia*.

2. To investigate the portrayal of Indonesian women in tabloid *Wanita Indonesia* in the perspective of Marxist feminist criticism?

I.7 Research Method

In this research, the writer uses qualitative descriptive method and employs descriptive approach in order to achieve the aims of study. According to Suyatna (2002) descriptive approach involves the accumulation of basic data for the purpose of describing existing condition. Qualitative method aims to gather an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons that govern human behavior. This method is appropriate because it can describe or present existing phenomena related to women's characteristics, positions and roles evidenced in tabloid *Wanita Indonesia*. The instrument of this research consists of four different lists covering the figures found out in the tabloid, their characteristics, their educations, and their careers.

As the source of data is *Cermin* columns of tabloid *Wanita Indonesia*, the writer uses textual analysis. The writer employs close reading strategies by noting down relevant textual evidence or highlighting key words and phrases (as the evidence) to answer the proposed research questions. After looking for patterns in the things the writer has noticed about the text then the data are analyzed and investigated by applying the relevant theories.

I.8 Clarification of Terms

Tabloid is a [newspaper](http://en.wikipedia.org) industry term which refers to a smaller [newspaper](http://en.wikipedia.org) format per spread; to a weekly or semi-weekly alternative newspaper that focuses on local-interest stories and entertainment, often distributed for free (often in a smaller, tabloid-sized newspaper format).
(<http://en.wikipedia.org>)

Patriarchy (father-centered concept) describes “the structuring of society on the basis family units, in which fathers have primary responsibility for the welfare of these units” and act as representatives via public office. (<http://en.wikipedia.org>)

Cermin is a column in Tabloid *Wanita Indonesia* that portrays Indonesian women who are successful in various subjects. The word *Cermin* is chosen as representation of self-reflection so you can see yourself as Indonesian women when you look in it. (Aien Riyadi, *red.*)

Column is an article in a newspaper, magazine or other publication that gives opinions or perspective. Columns are written by columnists. (<http://en.wikipedia.org>)

I.9 Organization of the Paper

The research will be presented into five chapters. Chapter I presents the introduction of this paper. This chapter encompasses background of the study, reasons for choosing the topic, scope of the study, research questions, aims of the study, research method and the organization of the paper.

Chapter II is theoretical foundations. This chapter provides theoretical framework of the study which are relevant to be used in conducting the research.

Chapter III presents research methodology. This chapter discusses the methodology used to conduct the research.

Chapter IV is findings and discussions. This chapter deals with the result of the research which consists of findings (data presentation)

In the last chapter, there is conclusion and suggestion of the study.

