

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Literature is a form of human creativity in passing information, opinion, or idea and also expressing feeling and thought. It takes many roles in our lives especially in our social lives. Literature is classified into two categories, namely fiction and nonfiction. Fiction has two main genres which are novel and short story.

Like a short story, a novel is essentially the product of a writer's imagination and sometimes taken from writer's experiences, usually about the experiences of a central character. Most of story in the novel present an everyday life and has a close relation with the reader experiences. Hawthorn (2001:9) states that a novel is concerned with "the real life at the past or present time".

Since the novel often reflect an everyday life, most story in the novel may raise issues that are relevant to our real life. The issues of women oppression may become one of the issues that the author wants to portray in this research. As we all know, in recent years the awareness of issues about women has been increasing. Women are starting to question their role and position in the society. For centuries, the image of weak, useless and irrational were had been labeled to women. Women had been regarded to be inferior to men physically and intellectually. Women only placed in the kitchen to cook and their future cannot

develop except to be housewives serving their husband and nurturing their children.

Women are the second after men –this is a general assumption which prevails about the position of women in society (cited in Diani 2006). In the society, women are usually considered as the less fortunate creature, for example many of them could not get an education as high as a man. And because of that women could not work in the same field and could not have the same degree as man. It is shown by jobs sexually shared in the society, in which the main role of women is in domestic sphere and the main role of men is in public sphere. From that condition, we can say that we are living in the patriarchal society. The patriarchal society has become a universal issue in the world.

This issue becomes the main concern of feminism. It is because in the view of feminists, there are no differences between men and women. In other words, men and women are equal. For whatever reason, men and women are equal in the term of intelligence, rights, duties, except in the term of biological aspect. (Subhan, 2004)

This phenomenon may also appear in the novel. Therefore it is reasonable if such a novel is analyzed from feminism and feminist literary criticism perspective. There are several kinds of feminism. One of them is liberal feminism. Liberal feminism believes that all people are created equal; education is a significant means to change. Oppression of women is not a structural feature of capitalist economic system, and women's liberation can be attained through legislative measures. (Cited in Alwan, 2008)

Wood (cited in Azizah, 2006) states that liberal feminism maintains that women and men are alike in important respect and women should have the same economic, political, professional, as men. Furthermore, liberal feminism wants to liberate women from an oppressive gender role that is from the roles which used as reasons to give lower positions, or not at all, to women both academy and society. (Tong 1998)

The novel chosen as the subject of the research is “I Don’t Know How She Does It” by Allison Pearson. It deals with the issue of working mother and presents many aspects that can be learned and interpreted. The novel is very interesting to read and analyze. The writer is interested in investigating the main character—in this case the working mother—that becomes the central character in the novel, especially in what she does toward her life. The writer also wants to analyze what roles the main character has in the novel.

The novel illustrates how the main character, Kate Reddy who is a wife and a mother of two that works as an investment banker trying to strike the impossible balances between work and family in the patriarchal society. She was being pushed to the breaking point as she tried to do two jobs, the day and the 24-hour jobs.

The novel *I Don’t Know How She Does It* presents the story of a working mother that have to struggle for getting the equal treatment in her working life and in the society. It also shows the fact that women not only have a traditional role in her life, but also a place in the society. So that women deserve to be equal with men and to have the superior status, which is previously dominated by men. The

analysis committed in this research is tightly related with the issue of liberal feminism perspective, which focuses on the gender equality between men and women.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

1.2.1. Character and Characterization

Hawthorne (1985) mention that character refers to a person, an animal and an initiate object of group representing a unique approach to handle the problem in the story.

Meanwhile, Klarer (1998) categorized typified characters in a text in two parts, they are:

1. Flat character; refers to a character which dominated by one specific trait. A flat character (also known as a type or a two dimensional character) is defined by a single quality without much individualizing detail.
2. Round character; usually shows a person with more complex and differentiated features. A round character is a complex individual incapable of being easily defined.

In defining characterization, Hornby (2000) states that characterization is the way that a writer makes characters in a book or play seem real. Characterization has an important role as its function to developing a character and to help the writer to establish the theme in the story. In line with that, Kelly (cited in Azizah, 2006) states that characterization is the process by which the writer creates characters which tend to be real for readers. Moreover, Kelly also

states that there are several steps to characterize a character. Steps are; (1) showing the appearance of character, (2) displaying the action of characters, (3) interpreting the way of characters thought, (4) analyzing the character's utterances, (5) noticing the reactions of other characters.

1.2.2. Stereotypes of Women

Simone de Beauvoir as cited in Tong (1998), one of feminist thinkers from France, argues that men have perpetuated their superiority upon women, economically and socially. Besides, she also argues that gender stereotypes between men and women are framed by men. One of the most significant gender stereotypes is bonding reproduction. Pregnancy, childbirth and menstruation reduce women capacity to work and make them at times wholly dependent upon men for protection and food. As a result, men's superiority occurs in many life's sectors along with the development of human civilization. Hence, it creates gender-stereotypes between men and women.

The similar idea is also stated by Wood (cited in Azizah, 2006). She explains that there are four stereotypes of women. They are:

Sex objects. This kind of stereotype characterizes women in terms of their sex or sexuality. It means that the actions and appearance of women should reflect femininity. Women appearance and performance are more important to be seen in society than their competence.

Mother. This is one of the stereotypes that cannot be avoided by every woman everywhere. In this case a mother is expected to be a person who give

support and nurture kids. The role of a mother concerns expectations that women will listen to, supportive and help others.

The women as mother stereotype also categorized as “not serious professionals.” Because mothering is consistent with establish images of women, the role overshadows perceptions of women’s professional skills. Therefore working women often times stereotyped as less committed to work and they are being put aside from training and promotion.

Child. This stereotype sees women as less mature, competent, and capable of making decisions than man. This kind of stereotype could limit women’s opportunities. And because of that, they can hardly show their abilities to become professional.

Iron Maiden. This last stereotype defines a woman as not womanly. She is unfeminine manly. This stereotype reflects the thought that is unfeminine to be independent, ambitious, directive, competitive and tough.

1.2.3. Women in Patriarchal Society

“Male over female; female for male” is the pattern found in patriarchal societies (Elshstain cited in Tong, 1998:133). In such societies it appears that women’s role is to serve men. Similarly, Prambasmoro’s (2006) believes that, as in marriage rituals, females are constructed to serve male in social and sexual spheres without economic, class or seniority. It means that even the wife has higher salary than her husband; most of them are frequently controlled by her husband. Their role in society is also lower than men. They are the second sex

(Beauvoir, 1949). They have to be submissive and obey men's rule. Patriarchy makes them dependent on male.

Patriarchy according to Millet as cited in Tong, (1998), exaggerates biological differentiation between men and women, and determinates that men have dominant and masculine role. On the contrary, women have subordinate and feminine role (Tong, 1998). This condition creates a situation where women are potential to be subordinated, marginalized, exploited, and oppressed.

Further, Tong believed that patriarchy is a source of oppression over women. In a patriarchal society, most women are intimidated. Women are associated with nature as one of their roles is reproduction. They are powerless. As Sugihastuti and Suharto (2002) stated, in so many things, women are subordinated. Female's physical condition commonly becomes a reason to subordinate the women. Furthermore Tong (1998) believed that female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and called public world. Because society has the false belief that women are by nature less intellectually and physically capable than men, it excludes women from the academy, the forum, and market place.

Family is one of the institutions where patriarchy system practiced. In this case, man becomes the head of the family, who has authority as a decision maker and breadwinner. Meanwhile, woman is subordinated. She has limited activities and social interactions. After women get married, they owned by their husband. This is in line with Millet (as cited in Tong, 1998) that stated patriarchy legalizes husband as the owner of his wife and children. Marriages and parenthood bought

women new responsibilities. As wives, they must do their roles, which deal with domestic duties, such as keeping the household and taking care of children and husband.

Since, the emergences of feminism movement that struggled for the equality opportunities in all aspect of human life, the roles are gradually had changed. Children rearing and home management are no longer women sole duty. Taylor (cited in Tong 1998) stated that women had a third option, namely adding a carrier or occupation to her domestic and maternal roles and responsibilities. Furthermore, Taylor asserted a married woman cannot be truly equal to her husband unless she has the contribution in supporting materially in her family. Taylor also inserted that it is psychologically vital for every women to work.

In line with Taylor, Friedan (as cited in Tong; 1998) explains that contemporary women have to get a meaningful job in public sectors because women with outside their house will become independent. With just a bit of help, any women, like any man, can meet all of her personal obligations, leaving her free to assume significant roles and responsibilities in public world. Similarly, Beauvoir (cited in Tong, 1998) also stated that women can work because by working women can provide possibilities to thing and by working she can decide her own destiny.

1.2.4. Liberal Feminism

Liberal Feminist believes that all people are created equally by god and deserve equal right. These types of feminist believe that domination exist because the way in which men and women are socialized, which support patriarchy and keeps men in power positions. Liberal feminist believe that women have the same mental capacity as their male counterparts and should be given the same opportunities in political, economic and social spheres.

Liberal feminists create and support acts of legislation that remove the barriers for women. These acts of legislation demand equal opportunities and right for women, including equal access to jobs and equal pay. Liberal feminist believe that removing these barriers directly challenges the ideology of patriarchy, as well as liberates women.

Tong (1998) states that liberal feminism is basically aimed at achieving equality in any aspects of life, education, politics, economy, prosperity. It highlight that gender equality forces us to make fair rules of games and to establish that no one will be systematically disadvantaged in the society. This becomes the general aim of liberal feminism which is to create a just and caring society where freedom can be developed.

Moreover, in the view of liberalism, right should be put as a priority, higher than goodness. In other word, the whole system of individual right might be regulated. It is because the makes a basic frame of work for all of us to choose what are good and bad for us, as long as we do not violate other people's right. (Jagger as cited in Tong 1998)

Liberal Feminism is a form feminism which argues that the liberal principles of equality, freedom and equality of opportunity must be fully extended to women. This form feminism does not call for specific structural changes to society.

1.3. The Aims of the Research

This research paper is aimed to reveal how the working mother is portrayed in Allison Pearson's novel in the perspective of liberal feminism.

1.4. Research Questions

The research attempted to address this question:

1. How is working mother portrayed in Allison Pearson's novel *I Don't Know How She Does It* in the perspective of liberal feminism?

1.5. The Scope of the Research

The writer limits the research around the analysis of main character—Kate Reddy—in Allison Pearson novel entitled *I Don't Know How She Does It* using liberal feminist literary criticism point of view, which focuses on gender equality between men and women.

1.6. Research Methodology

This research is employed through qualitative approach and descriptive method. The qualitative approach gave the writer some advantages. According to Nazir (1983), descriptive method is a method used in the researches of an object, a set of condition, a system of thought and even that takes place in the present. One of the advantages of qualitative approach is that we can provide the result on the study using many different perspectives. The data will be presented as result of the analysis. It is concerned with the subjective point of view and it will be close to the data. The writer use a novel written by Allison Pearson entitled *I Don't Know How She Does it*.

1.6.1. Research Procedure

The first step of doing the research was determining the subject that is the novel *I Don't Know How She Does It*. Then the writer read the whole part of it repeatedly and thoroughly in order to gain comprehensive understanding. After that, the writer decided the core issue that is the issue of working mother. The next step was taking note of the textual evidences regarding the issue to develop tentative perceptions. Then, the writer formulated research questions regarding the portrayal of working mother in Person's novel and chooses the textual evidences that are relevant to the formulated research questions. After that, the writer undertook library research by searching out, collecting, and comprehending the references regard to the issue of working motherhood and liberal feminism. Then, the writer reanalyzed and interprets the data gained by means of feminist

literary criticism, notably liberal feminism. Finally, the conclusions and suggestions were given based on the findings.

1.6.2. Subject of Research

The novel *I Don't Know How She Does It* written by Allison Pearson is the subject of this study. The novel chosen to be analyzed because this novel mostly reveals the problem faced by working mother that have to struggle for getting the equal treatment in her working life and in the society. This novel also shows the fact that women not only have a traditional role in her life, but also a place in the society. The novel itself reflects the reality of working mother's life.

1.6.3. Data Collection

The data collected in the form of textual evidences which identify the portrayal of working mother in Pearson's novel which will be based on its characterization. Those data are derived from some utterances, expression, attitude, thought, etc. The data then classified in accordance with the portrayal of working mother. The novel as document of the study is the main sources from which the data could answer the proposed research question.

1.6.4. Data Analysis

Liberal feminist perspective as one of the part of feminist literary criticism will be used as the framework to analyze the data in this research. Findings that

related to the research questions are connected to other sources from which inferences are taken.

The characterization of main woman character in the novel will be analyzed first. The analysis of main woman character is used to gain the valid information about the novel and enable the writer to comprehend the author wants to extend. The way of analyzing the main woman character is by revealing her characterizations and her descriptions based on textual evidences found in the novel. Afterwards, the findings in the form of textual evidences will be analyzed by using feminist literary criticism which will be focused on liberal feminist perspective. The result of the analysis is discussed in the next chapter along with the interpretation of the data.

1.7. Clarification of Terms

- a. Portrayal** refers to the act of showing or describing somebody or something in a picture (Hornby, 2000)
- b. Novel** is a fictitious prose narrative or tale of considerable length (now usually one long enough to fill one or more volumes) in which characters and actions representatives of the real life of past or present are portrayed in a plot or more or less complexity (Oxford English Dictionary)
- c. Patriarchy** refers to the systems of male ideology and social structures that were created by masculine individuals. (Wood, 1994)
- d. Liberal Feminism** maintains the women and men are alike in important respect and women should have the same economic, political,

professional, and civic opportunities and right as men. (Wood as cited in Azizah, 2006)

1.8. Organization of the Paper

This paper will be presented into three chapters as follows:

Chapter I

This chapter contains the background of the research, the framework of the research, the aims of the research, the research questions, the scope of the research, research methodology, research procedures, data collection, data analysis, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II

This chapter recounts the findings and discussions which illustrates the description of the portrayal of working mother and also provides the result of the data analysis. The result includes the portrayal of working mother in the novel viewed from a liberal feminism perspective.

Chapter III

This chapter describes the conclusions and suggestions of the research related to the research.