

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The final chapter provides the conclusions of the study entitled “The Concept of Beauty: Women’s Body Image in Cherie Bennett’s *Life in the Fat Lane*“. The suggestions for further studies are also presented in this chapter.

5.1 Conclusions

The study attempts to investigate how women portray themselves in terms of industrial body image in one of a young adult novel entitled *Life in the Fat Lane* by Cherie Bennett. After analyzing the character and characterization of the novel, it is found that there are some portrayals of women in terms of industrial body image in the novel. It is discovered that the desirable women’s body image is being slender which portrays women as beautiful, popular, confident, desirable by men and adorable. On the contrary, the undesirable women’s body image is fat and this includes the portrayal of women as ugly, unpopular, insecure, undesirable by men and oppressed.

The findings also show that in perceiving their body, women in this novel are influenced by the culture. Culture shapes women’s perception towards the idea of an ideal body that women must possess which is being slender. This standardization of

beauty concept for women often lead them to the other issues such as *eating disorders, diet, fitness, plastic surgery* and *the false solution* in order to attain the desirable body image. In addition, these cultural forces around women which shape their point of view about body image are illustrated through the family, friends or peers, social events and mass media.

Upon the analysis in the study, it reveals that body image is one of the main concerns for the industry which forms what people's likes and dislikes for the industry's benefit. Industry gives a contribution in defining an ideal body for woman which is always associated with slenderness. This novel clearly describes the issue that often pervades young women in relation to the concept of beauty (Younger, 2009). This idea illustrates throughout the character's point of view and plot in the novel which suggests that slender character is more powerful than the fat. However, at the end of the story the main character can deal with her body image disregarding the other influences around her. Therefore, by revealing the portrayal of women in terms of industrial body image, hopefully the study can give some contribution in promoting a positive body image to women since literature usually portrays the condition of the society.

5.2 Suggestions

This study has tried to draw the portrayal of women in terms of industrial body image. For further investigation the writer suggests the following:

1. This study has analyzed a novel written by woman writer. For further investigation of the women's body image issue, the future research can analyze some of the young adult novels written by women and men.

2. Body image for women changes from time to time. It is interesting to see the development which portrays women and beauty in the literary works. Perhaps by comparing the novel from a different era with the same issue can make this study broader.

Additional:

3. For students who study literature, the writer recommends that they should develop critical thinking towards literature which portrays the concept of beauty for women. It is because the representation of women in literary works needs a more critical re-reading for the positive self image of women.

4. In relation to the above, for the teachers who teach literature, the writer suggests that they should be able to select the kind of literary works which can promote the positive body image for the students.

5. Finally, for people in the mass media, the writer suggests that they should not support the concept of beauty which promotes negative images for women. Further, they should contribute in supporting the positive women's concept of beauty which not merely associates with their physical appearance but also their intelligence. This way, women will be able to love themselves more positively.