

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided by some matters that deal with the research, including the background of problem, statement of problem, research objective, research significance, and definition of key terms.

### 1.1 Background

In this sub chapter the researcher describes some matters that undergird the research including the issue of women, women's writing, gynocritics, *The Awakening* novel, American's women's life in 19<sup>th</sup> century, and some previous studies.

The issue of women is never stop to be discussed. This issue extends to the surface because women are always underestimated by men in every aspect of life. Moreover, men also judge the women as "the other". Men consider themselves as the keeper of autonomy while women become a subordinate part which their existence always depended on men. Thus, the autonomy of women are considered low because of that the process of marginalization or even violence against women in the domestic or public sphere are occurred. Therefore, nowadays women try to get their freedom in every aspect of life. Women try to show their existence socially, economically, or even politically and consider themselves as an equal with the men.

One of the ways that is taken by women to get their freedom or to show themselves are through writing. Women try to express what themselves need and want in their own life. Absolutely, this kind of writing is very unique cause women also have a unique experience likes they are oppressed, underestimated, and be the angel of home without any power to against men. They are infuriated under the patriarchal system of society. Therefore, women's writing will different from men's. It has also different method to analyze the woman's writing, it is called as gynocritics.

Gynocritics is a method introduced firstly by Elaine Showalter. This method is used to analyze the literary work that is written by woman. According to Showalter (2010:186-187) in gynocritic studies there are some aspects in woman's writing presently make use of four model different including the body, language, psyche, and culture. Actually, those aspects are different between women and men. Biologically, women and men have different physical matters. The men always consider the women as the weaker sex because they lack of penis (as a symbol of power). Psychologically, both of them are also different. The women which are oppressed by men will have a different psychological condition and it will influence to their life. As well as the language and the culture, women's language is different from men's. Women are oppressed by men and they are has their own language, an oppressive language. Besides that, women are also has a different experiences in their life and it will influence culturally. Therefore, those aspects also influence to their writing. Those are the reasons why the writer interested to choose the topic.

Moreover, *The Awakening* is one of the novel by Kate Chopin published in 1899 and show the effort of the woman in getting the independence in her life. Through the main character of Edna Pontellier, Chopin writes about how woman endeavors to get what she exactly wants and needs in her own life, how woman feels the oppression of the patriarchal system, and how woman want to get the freedom within her life. Furthermore, this novel is interesting to be analyzed because *The Awakening* is one of the earliest American novel that talk about the woman's freedom issue.

Related to the issue, in early 19th century American women were viewed as "subordinate to males". Because of the male dominated organization of society, women frequently did not have legal rights, such as the ability to vote or to own property. Middle- and upper-class American women were generally remained home, caring for children and running the household while lower-class women often did work outside the home, but usually as poorly-

paid domestic servants or laborers in factories and mills. Because of that, culturally women is placed in the background or viewed unequal by men. Moreover, they are also had limited educational opportunities. It means that psychologically, they are weak and powerless.

However, toward civil war the roles of American women socially, politically, and economically began to change. According to Hoffberger (2015:2), in this period, women's clothing became more fashionable, not only for working-class women but also for rural class women. Their clothing began to display and demonstrate women's figures toward the desire and ability of women to remove themselves from the shackle of patriarchal society. Although the majority of married women still running the household. It means that biologically women's body are still measured by men because their body are still prisoned at home. It also affected to the women's language because of men as the owner of the authority, in this era the men are also the owner of language. Therefore, women are never be heard in every aspect of life in America. Furthermore, through this paper might present how those models of gynocritics is showed in *The Awakening* novel and explain how woman's efforts in getting the independence.

In addition, there are some previous studies related to the woman's writing discussion and gynocritic studies. The first previous study is an undergraduate thesis from Ade Rohman entitled *Woman's Narration: A Gynocritic Studies on Jane Austen's Northanger Abbey and Anne Bronte's Agnes Grey* in the year 2003. This paper discusses about narration in the novel which is written by woman and through gynocritics Ade Rohman proves that women's narration are different from men's. This undergraduate thesis linked to the research cause both of them are talking about gynocritic studies but there is also the difference, if Ade Rohman discusses about the narration in this paper the researcher might discuss about every models of woman's writing that make the writing different from men's including body, language, psyche, and culture.

While the second is also an undergraduate thesis from Lia Marliawati entitled *The Woman Oppression as The Effect of Patriarchal System in Kate Chopin's The Awakening* in the year 2013. This undergraduate thesis is related to the research because it has the same object about *The Awakening* novel. In this reasearch, Lia Marliawati asserts that the oppression of woman changes the woman's act to patriarchal system including disobedient of woman to a husband, dishonest and rebellion.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

From the background above, because of *The Awakening* tells about the woman's issue, the researcher might focus on the woman's writing and focus on the way woman get the independence within the novel. Those problems can formulate into following questions below:

- 1.2.1 How is woman's writing models presented in *The Awakening* novel?
- 1.2.2 How is woman's efforts in getting the independence in *The Awakening* novel?

## **1.3 Research Objective**

The objective of the research are mentioned as followings:

- 1.3.1 To explore how the woman's writing models presented in the woman's writing especially in *The Awakening* novel.
- 1.3.2 To explain how the way woman survive in patriarchal system and get the equal right as a form of independence in *The Awakening* novel.

## **1.4 Research Significance**

Theoretically, this research strengthen the existing theory about woman's writing and it is also be used as a starting point in further research in order to obtain a more perfect results of woman's writing research. Moreover, practically this research also can ease the reader in understanding women's life in patriarchal system including how women survive and get the equal right with the men. This research is also significant to the reader for becoming the reference in feminism discussion.

## 1.5 Definitions of the Key Terms

There are some key terms that should be understood related to the research in order to avoid any misunderstanding to the readers. The definition of these key terms are as follows:

**1.5.1 Gynocriticism** : A criticism which is conducted by Elaine Showalter, concerns and deals with works that is written by women, is all aspect of their production, motivation, analysis, and interpretation is all literary forms, including journal and letters. (M.H. Abrams : 1999)

**1.5.2 Woman's Writing Models** : The models of women's writing including the biological, linguistic, psychoanalytic, and cultural. These models considers as the common way women write. (Showalter : 2010)

**1.5.3 Woman Effort** : Some certain process that woman takes in achieving what she want her life.

**1.5.4 Woman Independence** : The concept of liberation woman in patriarchal system. The goal of this concept is achieving the equal right between men and women in life.



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