

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the study

Literary works are part of the literature that contains about images, thoughts, or stories composed of words that are arranged to form a meaning (Abdessalami 2). In the literary works, words are the main key because the reader can know and understand the intent and the purpose of the author through the words. Literary works have a close relationship with society. According to Arjun Dubey, literary work is a reflection from the condition of the society because "what happens in a society is reflected in literary works in one form or another" (84). In creating a literary work the author needs an idea or topic that will be discussed in it. The idea or topic is usually taken from a phenomenon or problem that exists and develop in society.

There are various kinds of issues that develop in society that can be raised as a topic in literary works. The issue about discrimination is one of the issues that often raised in literary works. John F. Dovidio et al explains that discrimination is defined as the worst attitude which contains actions that hurtful and provide direct detriment for other groups. The form of discrimination is not a belief, but the application of that belief into action. Discrimination is a negative action carried out by members of a group against members of other groups. Discrimination is a reflection of an attitude or action that tends to favor a particular group (9).

There are many targets of discrimination. As stated in the journal of the National Action Plan that the target of discrimination are “race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language or birth” (6). Racial discrimination is one of the type of discrimination that gives different behaviors to the others depending on “race or ethnicity” (Pager & Shepherd 182). In racial discrimination, every race or ethnic has a different position in society. Race or ethnicity is categorized into several groups to determine their level of equality. For racial or ethnic groups that considered equal will be treated fairly, while racial or ethnic groups that considered unequal or different will be treated differently and discriminated.

The emergence of racial discrimination in society can be triggered by several factors. Based on Fiske (2010) quoted in Sabrina Keene the root or the causes of the emergence of discrimination against race are the existence of prejudice and stereotype of the race (2). According to Allport, prejudice towards race is a feeling of hatred against a particular racial group or against someone because he/she is a part of that racial group. This feeling grows due to the oversimplification of the image or the idea of the particular race (qtd. in Brown 6).

While the definition of racial stereotypes as explained by The University Counseling Center of Notre Dame is refer to descriptions of an image or particular feature of a particular group that is formed and appears automatically in our minds when we are thinking about a particular group (1). Another opinion regarding the factors that led to the emergence of racial discrimination came from the Office of

the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). According to OHCHR and UNESCO racial discrimination arises as a result of the existence of the differences among racial groups which include skin color, attire, body features, national or ethnic origin, ancestry or descent, and religion (25).

The problem of racial discrimination does not only occur in a country but occurs in various countries around the world. The target of racial discrimination are countries that have race or ethnic diversity. Usually racial discrimination is carried out by the majority group against the inferior minorities group. Afghanistan is one of the countries that become the target of racial discrimination because this country is a country that has a diversity of race and ethnicity in it. There are groups of Tajiks, Pashtuns, Uzbeks, Hazaras, Baluchi, and Turkoman. This diversity in Afghanistan is the beginning of the emergence of racial discrimination in Afghanistan.

Akram Sadat Hosseini and Esmail Zohdi states:

..."majority" refers to the extensive number of Pashtuns in Afghanistan, it also implies their power, influence, and wealth in this society. In contrast, while the term "minority" discloses the low number of hazaras, it also reveals lack of the economic, political, and social power and influence faced by certain groups (Hazaras)... (36).

In Afghanistan Pashtun is an ethnic majority while Hazaras is classified as minority ethnic group. Pashtuns hold full power in various fields. While Hazara as a weak

minority group rather than Pashtun does not have power in any field. With its position as race and ethnic majority, the Pashtun tends to take advantage of their position as the powerful group to discriminate the Hazara and limits the role of Hazara in various fields. This act of discrimination is carried out by the Pashtun to maintain their position and identity in the community.

The Kite Runner novel is one of the literary works that provides an overview of the acts of racial discrimination committed by the Pashtuns as the ethnic majority against the Hazaras. In this novel is told that the Pashtuns are the heirs and descendants of native Afghans while the Hazaras are Mongol descent so that Hazaras' face looks different from Afghans in general. The racial discrimination act experienced by the Hazaras in this novel is shown through the life story of a young Hazara boy named Hassan and his family. They come from Hazara ethnic group and embrace Shi'a beliefs. Hassan and his father "Ali" worked at Pashtuns's house since Hassan was child, and they lived in a muddy hut behind his employer's luxurious house.

As the Hazaras, living among the Pashtun society is not an easy thing for Hassan and his father. They always encounter difficult times in their lives caused by the racial discrimination performed by the Pashtuns against the Hazaras in Afghanistan. Their days are filled with many obstacles and challenges. They are discriminated, vilified, differentiated, and excommunicated among Pashtuns community. They also have to accept every mockery, insults, bad thinking, as well as inhumane treatment performed by Pashtuns until their end of life.

The Kite Runner is a novel that the story is inspired by a true story that experienced by the author, Khaled Hosseini. The novel raises a serious problem in Afghanistan regarding racial discrimination. Through the story written in it, this novel is able to provide a clear and real picture of the racial discrimination action experienced by the Hazaras. In addition, the novel is also able to provide clear and definitive explanations and illustrations of the causes of racial discrimination against the Hazaras.

B. Problem Formulation

The discussion on this study presented in the following problem:

1. How are the depictions of racial discrimination experienced by the Hazaras in the novel *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini?
2. What are the causes of the emergence of racial discrimination towards the Hazaras in the novel *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini?

C. Limitation of the Study

This study discussed about the racial discrimination in *The Kite Runner* novel by Khaled Hosseini. The concern of this study is to analyze the depiction of racial discrimination action committed towards the Hazaras and the causes of the emergence of racial discrimination towards the Hazaras in the *The Kite Runner* novel by Khaled Hosseini.

D. Objectives of the Study

From the problem formulation above, this study presented in the following objectives:

1. To analyze the racial discrimination experienced by the Hazaras which is described in *The Kite Runner* novel by Khaled Hosseini
2. To identify the causes of the emergence of racial discrimination towards the Hazaras in the novel *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini.

E. Significance of the Study

In analyzing the depiction of racial discrimination experienced by the Hazaras and the causes of the emergence of racial discrimination towards the Hazaras in *The Kite Runner* novel, the writer hopes that the result of this study give some benefits:

1. This study hopefully can help people to understand the theory of racial discrimination.
2. This study hopefully can help people to understand the causes of the emergence of racial discrimination.

F. Organization of the Study

In order to represent clear discription about the study to the reader, this study represents a systematic organization as follows:

Chapter 1 is the introduction that contains of background of the study, problem formulation, limitation of the study, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and organization of the study.

Chapter II talks about synopsis of *The Kite Runner* novel and related theories namely the definition of racial discrimination, and the causes of the emergence of racial discrimination.

Chapter III discusses about method of investigation which consists of types of research, data organizing, data collecting method, types of the data, and analyzing the data.

Chapter IV is findings and discussion. This chapter provides the answer of the problem formulation. It contains of the quotation from the reference connected to the discussion, the evidence from the novel, and the explanation of the analysis.

Chapter V provides conclusion of this study and also suggestion for the readers about the process of writing experience in this study. The conclusion contains of the result and the resume of the discussion in chapter 4.