

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the base and the starting point of the research. This chapter divides into four parts namely background of research, statement of problem, purpose, and significance of the research.

1.1. Background of the Research

In the daily life or daily social life, there are many impacts of culture, start from the economy, ideology, lifestyle, and also entertainment. A wide variety of entertainment serving in front of our eyes never missed from the influence of the culture neither it is western or eastern. The impact of the culture itself also spreads to the literary work, especially to the Novel. The novel is kind of the form fiction which has longer structure than a short story. That is why novel can show the development of the story, plot and each character inside the novel. There are many novels which adopted the social life of the writer or the environment around the writer to be the main story of the novel. Besides as an entertainment novel also expresses the thought of the writer, the critical about social circumstance and the political issues. One of the novels which inspired by political issues is Leila Aboulela's *Minaret*

Leila Aboulela is a Sudanese-born writer who writes her work in English. She has received critical acclaim, high-profile and publicity for her exploration of identity, migration and Islamic spirituality. She is highlighting her work on the challenges facing Muslims in Europe and telling the stories of complex characters

who struggle to make choices using Muslim logic. Aboulela's work explored significant political issues. Her faith and the move, in her mid-twenties from Sudan to Scotland become the major influence on her work. The journey of Aboulela somehow makes her realize the difficulty for Imigran especially women because of the differences culture between east world and western world and the limited access for women in some country.

Aboulela's *Minaret* Published in 2005 and is nominated for the Orange Prize¹ and the IMPAC Dublin Award². Among all of her works, *Minaret* has drawn more readers and critical attention compared to the other projects. *Minaret* makes her as one of the influential authors of the new wave of British Muslim writers.

Well known that Leila Aboulela as the author of *Minaret* is a woman. When talking about Gender especially about a woman, sometimes it directly related to the feminist ideology or feminism. Feminism tries to break the authority of the which assumes that woman is second sex, feminism also demands that the world must equal for everybody, it means that there is no discrimination between men and women in case of education, politics, classes in society, and also in gender. Through feminism, the researcher tries to represent the power, ability, chance of women in public sphere and also the strength of women against all of the ideology of the society which makes women inferior to men and accepted as much as men in society.

¹ The Orange Prize is one of the United Kingdom's most prestigious literary prizes. It is awarded annually to a female author of any nationality for the best original full-length novel written in English and published in the United Kingdom in the preceding year.

² IMPAC Dublin Award is an international literary award, awarded each year for a novel written in English or translated into English and the nominations are submitted by the public libraries worldwide

Through these literary work written by Leila Aboulela called *Minaret*, the researcher tries to representing the ability or the power of woman through the characters inside. In the other hand, the researcher also wants to put the strong woman character against the thought of traditional gender roles, which consider that woman always inferior to men and always described as the irrational creature and emotionally than man.

"Traditional gender roles cast men as rational, strong, protective, and decisive; they cast women as emotional (irrational), weak, nurturing, and submissive. These gender roles have been used very successfully to justify inequities, which still occur today, such as excluding women from equal access to leadership and decision-making positions (in the family as well as in politics, academia, and the corporate world), paying men higher wages than women for doing the same job (if women are even able to obtain the job), and convincing women that they are not fit for careers in such areas as mathematics and engineering." (Tyson, 2006, p. 85).

This research will take patriarchy issue and explain how the researcher tries to present the gender equality through the characters in *Minaret* and their efforts against the man superiority and also patriarchy system, which well known that patriarchal system makes a woman inferior. As the power holder, men are dominant the rule, the economy, the politics and also the society. If one takes the patriarchal government to be the institution whereby that half of the populace which is female is controlled by that half which is male, the principles of patriarchy appear to be twofold: male shall dominate female, elder male shall dominate younger (Millet, 2000, p. 25).

The researcher chooses the Leila Aboulela's *Minaret* because it has a unique and exciting story about a woman. In this novel, Islam plays a major role in the story, and it becomes interesting when considering that this novel took a

young Muslim woman as the main character. Well known that Muslim did not much appear in international literary work. Then through *Minaret* the writer want to present how a woman tries to survive against the gender equality in her flees to London and how she finally found her strength.

Some researchers with the different object have done the similar research. The first research has been done by Evi (2013) entitled *The Portrayal of Woman in Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice* and Abidah El-Khalieqy's *Perempuan Berkalung Sorban*. The result of the research describes how the representation of the woman in that novel and how the struggle of a woman against the equality of gender in the society.

The second research has been done by Khofiya (2016) entitled *The Portrayal of Woman in Veronica Roth's Divergent*. The result of the research that is research describe how the ways of feminism portrayal through the main woman character in the Roth's *Divergent*.

Astuti has been done the third research (2013) entitled *Representasi Perempuan Dalam Film 7 Hati 7 Cinta 7 Wanita Karya Robby Ertanto*. The result of the research describes how a woman moves to against all obstacles in her life to reach her goals in a movie titled *7 Hati 7 Cinta 7 Wanita*

The last research has been done by Utami (2013) entitled *Woman Representation in Tangled Film*. The result of the research describes the ways women represented through the main woman character in the "Tangled" film and how the meaning of those characters can make the representation of woman character in the movie.

Based on the previous study above, through The Representation of Gender Equality in *Minaret* the researcher want to focus on women's problem and want to describe how the gender equality present in *Minaret* and also describe how women's effort against the patriarchal system.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The problems that will study in this research are;

1. How is the representation of gender equality described in Aboulela's *Minaret*?
2. How does Aboulela present the women's effort to gain gender equality in *Minaret*?

1.3. Research Objective

This research aimed at;

1. To know how the representation gender equality describes in Aboulela's *Minaret*.
2. To identify how Aboulela presents the women's effort to gain gender equality in *Minaret*.

1.4. Research Significance

This research will give the reader better understanding of the hidden message inside Leila Aboulela's *Minaret*, especially in the feminist theory and the perspective of the gender equality. Also, it can be a benefit for the readers who have interesting in literature field especially in feminist and gender equality field.

1.5. Definition of Key Term

To avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation the researcher explains essential terms which are related to this research, there are:

- Representation: The act of presenting somebody or something in a particular way; something that shows or describes something.
- Gender: The fact of being male or female: issues of class, race, and gender
- Equality: The fact of being equal in rights, status, advantages, such as racial/ social/ sexual equality
- Effort: The physical or mental energy that people need to do something; something that takes much energy.
- Character: Strong personal qualities such as the ability to deal with difficult or dangerous situations.

1.6. Organization of Writing

The research based on the Leila Aboulela's *Minaret*. The arrangement of this research divided into five chapters there are:

- Chapter I: This chapter deals with the background of research, statement of the problem, research objective, research significant, And the organization of writing.
- Chapter II: The theoretical approach, this chapter describes some theories related to the research; gender equality, and feminist theory.

Chapter III: This chapter elaborates methodology of this research. It begins with the method of the research, the data, and source of the data, technique collecting data and ends with the art of analyzing data.

Chapter IV: Is a discussion or analyzing data.

Chapter V: This chapter involves conclusion and suggestion.

