

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Feminism is a movement aimed at defining, recognizing, and defending equal financial, political, and human rights. In other words, feminism also insists on getting equality between men and women right, not only for good equality but also for breaking up the patriarchal system that considered discrimination toward women. Feminism was developed from the small until the wide circle. The smallest circle of feminism is family. Feminism that developed in the family is the first enemy that should be eliminated. Family is considered the first source of inequality, especially between the husband and wife's rights and duty. Women often place in weak positions in the institutional family.

Marriage is an equal partnership between man and woman that loved each other. It is blessed if people could marry their loved ones because happiness would come to them. However, some statements said that married life with beloved ones always runs happily. Some researchers tried to find the answer to it through research titled post secret, and one of them found a statement that said: "since they got married and bought a house, he and his wife have not laughed much anymore." The author of the book *American Hookup* and a Professor at Accidental College, Lisa Wade, said that disclosure of this post secret is a part of problems that is called paradox decreasing female happiness.

Based on research by *business insiders*, women have more rights and opportunities in married life in recent decades, even though they are less unhappy than before. It was measured by their relationship with society and another man except for their family. There is a term called heterosexual marriage. It is an unequal institution women of overage do more social and low-value work in the household than their husbands. They work more every day, and they are fully aware of this imbalance. In this case, the writer found several problems that could be the example of heterosexual marriage, such as decision-making, family finances management, and parenting.

There is a tendency to think that women are more likely to sacrifice pleasure and career goals for marriage. Some women lose their half happiness after marriage because they should focus more on their husbands and children. No matter what happens, people think that all of the things about family are women's responsibilities. Thus, some women feel less happy after being married; however, they married their beloved ones. On the other hand, their husbands would be happy because they live with their beloved ones.

If we compared women and men, women are less eager to marry. Because they know that after being married, they could not be themselves as well, they would be a wife that should serve their husband no matter what happens. While before marriage, a woman has the freedom to do various kinds of activities that she wants, such as traveling around the world without worry, buying favorite stuff, and eating their favorite food at the restaurant. She is free to do anything, free to decide for herself what

time she will sleep and what time she will wake up. She is free to determine which dress to wear and what food menu to cook every day. After getting married, she could no longer be herself as well. There is a husband who must be cared for and served. To do anything such as travel, shopping, etc., she must conform to her husband before because her family has rights.

To conduct this study, the writer chooses to analyze one of the Kate Chopin short stories entitled *A Pair of Silk Stockings*, published by Vogue in 1987. This short story told about Mrs. Sommer's sacrifice; she is a good wife and mother that always puts her family first. One day, she unexpectedly became an owner of fifteen dollars. It appeared to her a substantial sum of money. At that time, she was shocked and did not know what to do, but she got ideas during the night's quiet hours. She thought that a dollar could be paid for her daughter's shoes, Janie.

Moreover, the other could be paid for her boy's shirt and Mag's dress. Moreover, it still would be enough to buy new stockings. After putting her family first, buying some things for them, preparing their food, and cleaning up the house, she prepared herself to go shopping. After arriving at the department store, she bought everything she wants, ate some food at the restaurant, and bought some expensive magazines. She treats herself nicely with forgotten all of her obligations and focuses on her happiness.

A story about women who gains oppression in the family and society is quite interesting to the writer. Therefore, the writer took this story as their material for

analysis; she was conducting her study entitled WomanOppressions as Feminism Study Reflected in *A Pair of Silk Stockings*.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Based on the background of the study above, the writer found several problems that would be discussed in this study:

1. Why does gender inequality happen in *A Pair of Silk Stockings*?
2. What kinds of oppression does Mrs. Sommers get?
3. What are the impacts of gender inequality toward Mrs. Sommers reflected in *A Pair of Silk Stockings*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Every study must contain the study's objective; it is essential because it can help the writer complete the study quickly. Moreover, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out the reasons for gender inequality in *A Pair of Silk Stockings*.
2. To find out the kinds of oppression that was gained of Mrs. Sommers.
3. To find out the impacts of gender inequality toward Mrs. Sommers reflected in the story.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This research focuses on three things: to find out the reasons for gender inequality that happens in the story titled *A Pair of Silk Stockings*, to describe the kind

of oppression that Mrs. Sommers gains, and to find out the impact of gender inequality toward Mrs. Sommers reflected in the story. The research uses Kate Millet's theory of feminism and is limited to the three focuses mentioned before. Using the theory of feminism, the researcher ignores any other possibility of interpretation from another perspective or theory.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study's result is intended to be useful for the readers, especially the scholars of the literature, who are interested in studying further feminism. Hopefully, the study's outcome could become a reference for those who conducted a study about feminism and give a new insight to the reader of Kate Chopin's *A Pair of Silk Stockings*. This study's findings will also directly benefit the writer since it helps the writer implement the theory and the things learned in the university.

1.6 Approach to the Study

To conduct this study, the writer will use the feminism approach. A feminism approach is an approach that emphasizes the feminism aspect in literary work. Based on the statement of the problems, which have been stated, the writer applied Kate Millett's theory of feminism found in her book titled "Sexual Politics."

In order to collect the data, the writer uses a qualitative study. "A qualitative study is characterized as an inquiry process of understanding a social human or issue,

holistic picture, structure with words, announcing detailed views of informants, and directed in a natural setting.” (Cresswell; 1994).

In collecting data, the writer uses some steps as follows:

1. Reading the short story and comprehend it.
2. Identifying the data based on the problems which the writer found.
3. Analyzing the data, with the feminism theory that the writer had chosen.
4. Interpreting the data that has been analyzed, and conclude the study.

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This study is divided into five chapters, The first chapter is an introduction, including background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, the scope of the study, significance of the study, and approach to the study. The second chapter consists of a discussion of the synopsis of the work and biography of the author. The third chapter discusses review related literature. The fourth chapter contains analysis and discussion. The last chapter is the conclusion and suggestion.