

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Since a long time ago, some people think that men are more superior to women. Some women know that they are weak, but that cannot be the reason why women always under men. In some places, women mostly portrayed as inferior to men and sometimes receive different treatment in social life. When men are set as strong, rational, decisive, and protective, on the other hand, women are set as weak, irrational, submissive, and nurturing, this is known as traditional gender roles (Tyson, *Critical Theory Today A User Friendly Guide: Third Edition*. 2015, 81). This role is still a problem that often arises in social life. For example, this traditional gender role usually occurs in the workplace, school, public transportation, and so on. Another example is men usually higher paid than women, or women cannot take any access to leadership or making a decision in the family because men known as the head of the family.

Since the late 19th century, there are so many movements that demand justice between men and women, one of the examples is feminist movements. Feminists are people who fight for equality between men and women, so they receive fair treatment. Feminist critics the oppression of women in economic, social, psychological, political, and so on (Tyson, *Critical Theory Today A User Friendly Guide: Third Edition*. 2015, 79). This issue occurs in all circles not only in the lower classes but also in the upper classes. Feminism is a field that feminists can show the ways their thinking to oppose the traditional tendency to

believe that there is a single best point of view (Tyson, *Critical Theory Today A User Friendly Guide: Third Edition*. 2015, 79). The feminist movements are divided into three: the first wave in the late 19th and 20th which they have aims to fight for women to had a right to vote in the elections. The second wave that happened between the 1960s and 1970s asked for women to be equal at workplace, in school, and in health care or in another public service. The third wave of feminist movement happened in the past couple of decades and still happens until now that are pushed women to have social equality (Manson 2019).

Even though not all feminist are women, but most of them are women and they fight for their rights to gains gender equality. Therefore, the bond between one and the other women usually called sisterhood. Sisterhood arises when there is a second wave of feminism around 1960s and 1970s. Hudson-Weems (Hudson-Weems 2004, 65) stated that sisterhood as “a reciprocal(bond) ... in which each gives and receives equally ... demonstrating a tremendous sense of responsibility for each other ...”. This novel is the latest work by Jojo Moyes who lifts the story of five women that has job horse-riding librarians.

*The Giver of Stars*, one of the novel written by Jojo Moyes in the 2019. This novel is about the journey of five extraordinary women through the mountains of Kentucky (Moyes 2019). The setting of this novel is set in small town of Kentucky in Depression-era America. This novel tells about the story of five women who become traveling librarians, delivering books to people who need it. Thus, the aims of this project are can bring knowledge and learning back to the rural lives. The story begins with the follow of Alice Wright, an English

woman who married to a handsome American man, Bennett. She decided to join a group of traveling librarians because there is a problems in her marriage. Another character to make the story more live is Margery O'Hare, one of Alice friend and she seen as the "other" in the town. Other in here means O'Hare comes from a bad family, her father was the biggest crimes in Kentucky. Another people in the club is Beth Pinker, a freckled girl with snub nose. Then, there is Izzy, a small girl who has a problem with her leg. Last but not least, Kathleen, a single mother who decided to joined the club because she need to fulfill time to forget her died husband. Actually there is another woman named Sophia, she is colored people but her job just stay in the library to compile books.

The setting of the story was set in the depression era. This situation in the depression era was the worst economic loss in industrial history that happened from 1929 until 1939. When this happens almost 15 million Americans were lost their job (History 2019). People lose their jobs will lose their homes too because they could not pay their debts. This situation is to make higher rate of unemployment, increase rates of poverty and homelessness, and rising prices in everyday needs. There is several factors influence the great depression era: first, the stock market crash of 1929. It was one of the major causes of the great depression era, even by 1930 the stock market began to increase but that is just not enough. The second is bank failures, during this situation over 9000 banks failed. Thus makes people stopped having new loans in the bank and the situation makes the economy more down. The third is decreased international lending and tariffs. To save the economy, the government created the Smooth Tariffs but due

to high tax, thus actually causes a reduction of trade between America and foreign countries (Duignan 2019).

Losses their jobs make another issue in the house, because there was not enough money to buy food or even groceries, they also cannot pay insurance for their health. A lot of people were poor and hungry, almost every day there are a bunch of people stood in the bread line at community kitchens to get free foods. Gail Collins said that “The average family income dropped 40 percent between 1929 until 1933, and while men took second jobs ... most of their [middle-class] wives stayed at home ... At the bottom of the middleclass, women worried about losing their homes and falling back into the class of renters.” (Collins 2007, 353). Every aspect in America was affected, not only in a big city but also in a small town was impacted by the stock market and this makes poverty and unemployment grew higher (Flanery 2010). Throughout this crisis, there are so many ways taken to increase the American economy. One of the examples is to let women do the work but paid less. The National Recovery Administration set twenty-five percent lower minimum wages for women by doing the same jobs as men. In 1937, the wages for men \$1.027, while for women \$525 (Remy 2015).

Not only give a big impact on the economic field but also there is another impact of the depression era which is a lot of people loss their chance to learn in school. During 1930 a lot of schools was closed because the budget was decreased, which is make reductions in school hours, lower teachers' salaries, and increased class sizes. Back at time, the student did not attend school for nine months in a year as students do these days. The teacher is forces to teach all grade

levels in a single classroom (Koning 2015). Thus statement is one of the reasons why traveling librarians was made.

This story is based on the true story with the named of the group is The Works Progress Administration Packhorse Librarians of Kentucky consist of women. The WPA was created by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on May 6, 1935. This club was made is to decrease the unemployment that happened during the great depression. Later on, in late 1938, more than 3.3 million people working in the WPA. This club distributed books to people who lived in the eastern part of Kentucky. Not only that the WPA also built more than 4,000 new school buildings and planted 24 million trees. Almost 31 percent of people who lived in Eastern Kentucky could not read at that time. Despite many obstacles, this club strives for everyone to read and increase the number of reading awareness in society. The Works Progress Administration Packhorse Library ended in 1943 (McGraw 2017).

Sisterhood is a terms that refers to women who have the same goals even with different backgrounds, usually women struggles. Bell Hooks explains in one of her books said that "...women were acknowledging helplessness and powerlessness as well as a need for support..." (Hooks 2015, 62).

In the depression era, as explained in the above is the biggest economic losses during that time. It makes a lot of people cannot have a chance to learn in school. This situation makes some people have the initiative for delivering books to people who in need. That WPA program consists of five women with different backgrounds but have the same goals. Not a lot of people know what sisterhood

is, and those is the issue of this analysis. This study using a feminism study, that will analyze using the theory of sisterhood by Bell Hooks. There is no previous study about this novel, but there are some reviews about this novel.

There are few related studies with the same issue that will be discussed in this novel analysis, the first is *Sisterhood Stands Against Patriarchy in Anita Diamant's The Red Tent* by Maria Angelia. This journal talked about the pivotal role of sisterhood in the Anita Diamant works (Angelia 2017, 1-30). Then, there is another previous study *The Portrayal of Sisterhood in Liane Moriarty's Big Little Lies* novel by Irma Noor Fitriastari. This thesis is about the portrayal of sisterhood with patriarchal dominance (Fitriastari 2018, 2-27). The third related study is *Racism and Feminism: a Schism in the Sisterhood* by Margaret A. Simons. This journal is about the experiences of minority women in everyday sectors of women's movement through several women writers (A.Simons 1979, 384-401). For the analysis, the writer of this study will be searching for other journals with the same topic or issue.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

This analysis will be focusing on the portrayal of the women presented in *The Giver of Stars* novel by Jojo Moyes. The writer of this study will use this question to elaborate on the analysis:

- How do women in *The Giver of Stars* create sisterhood to fights against patriarchy with sisterhood?

### 1.3 Objective of the Study

Concerning to the statement of the problem, the aim of the thesis is:

- To show how women characters in *The Giver of Stars* use sisterhood to fight against patriarchy.

### 1.4 Significance of the Study

This thesis raises the issue of sisterhood and this issue always related to feminism. Sisterhood usually experienced by several women who have the same goals. The aim of this study is to see how the characters in the novel can face all the problems when their sending books all over the town. The writer of this study has the big hopes to increase the knowledge of the people towards the issue that be discussed and can be useful for anyone that take the related or similar topic in the future. Besides that, the writer also wants this study would become a worthy addition among all the studies about *The Giver of Stars* novel by Jojo Moyes.

### 1.5 Definition of Key Terms

Feminist criticism: examines the ways in which literatures (or other cultural productions) support or undermines the political, economic, psychological, and social oppression of women (Tyson, *Critical Theory Today A User Friendly Guide: Third Edition*. 2015, 79).

Oppression: the abuse power by one group or more to the others that weaker, so the dominance group look inferior to the others (Icarus 2018).

Patriarchy: an ideology which arose out of men's power to exchange woen between kinship groups; as a symbolic male principle; and as the power

of the father... It has also been used to express men's control over women's sexuality and fertility; and to describe the insitutional structure of male domination (Rowbotham 1983, 208).

Sisterhood: a group of women; that when come together can develop strategies to overcome prejudices, fears, competitiveness, resentments, etc (Hooks 2015, 63).

Solidarity: the degree of social cohesion in a group or society whereby individuals, because of various motivations, are willing to serve and promote the collective interest of the group or of society (Meulen 2017, 227).