

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses some aspects that deal with the topic of the research. They are background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, method of the study and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Literature is a part of writing that uses words to express an imagination to make it more appealing to the reader. The writings most often refer to the works of creative imagination, including works of poetry, drama, fiction and non-fiction. Literature includes essays, novels, poems and short stories.

Literary criticism is one person's view or opinion in interpreting the meaning of an essay. It is the meaning found by the reader in the literature authors. Literary criticism is the evaluation, analysis, description, or interpretation of literary works. (Pathfinders, February 11, 2014).

One of the literary criticisms is feminism. Feminism is the belief that women are human beings. In terms of women's lives by having the same degree as men and not be constrained by legal culture and even becomes a subordinate role. According to Estelle Freedman (2004: 07), feminism is belief that although

Women and men are inherently of equal worth, most society's privilege men as a group. As a result, social movements are necessary to achieve political equality between women and men, with the understanding that gender always intersects with other social hierarchies.

The topic of women's rights has attracted some literary writers. This is supported by the works of literature written by women authors. These papers are usually made in the form of a novel. Novel is a prose narrative text that is long and has a couple of fictional characters and events. Novel has intrinsic elements and extrinsic element. The intrinsic element in the novel is plot, characterization, setting, and theme viewpoint. Abrams states that the term "novel" is now applied to a great variety of writings that have in common only the attribute of being extended works of fiction written in prose (1999: 190).

As we know the American author of short stories and novels is Kate Chopin, now she is considered a pioneer of feminist authors of the 20th century. Most of her work focuses on the lives of women. One of most famous novel is *The Awakening* that first published in 1899; this novel is one of the first American novels that focus on women's issues without condescension. *The Awakening* explores one woman's desire to find and live fully within her true self. Her loyalty to that purpose causes quarrel with her friends, family and conflict with the dominant values of her time. In his novel she tells a story about a married woman who struggle to realize his own personality and abilities.

In this thesis, the thesis writer is interested in analyzing one of the Kate Chopin's novels, *The Awakening*. The writer chose *The Awakening* of Kate Chopin because this novel has a good story and inspired by the true story of a

woman's News Orleans famous French Quarter. As we know that character is one of the important aspects of a novel. There are many characters in *The Awakening*. There are characters of Edna Pontellier, Leonce Pontellier, Mademoiselle Reisz, Adele Ratignole, Alcee Arobin, and Robert Lebrun. Character is Edna Pontellier is a wife of a businessman in New Orleans and a mother of two kids. She is emotional woman, not satisfied and concerned with their own desires encouragement. She suddenly felt dissatisfied with his life. She wants to find herself separated from her husband and her children. Leonce Pontellier was the husband of Edna; he is a man who loves his wife and his children. He is a success businessman who is not aware of his wife's happiness. Mademoiselle Reisz is faithful and talented woman in playing the piano. She is a quiet woman who is an expert in playing the piano. Mademoiselle Reisz Edna look like an unpleasant person, his lifestyle makes Edna envy but Mademoiselle Reisz was the inspiration for Edna. Adele Ratignole was friends Edna; she is faithful women and feminine. She is a woman who is very dear to her husband and her children. Alcee Arobin is an interesting man and likes to tease a married woman. And she had a brief relationship with Edna when Robert was away. Robert Lebrun is man loving and funny and he fall in love with Edna, but he cannot have it. It is some character in *The Awakening* that the writer explained.

The Awakening is about life of woman, probably in her 30s or older who is married to a successful financier and has two charming children. At one point she felt she had wasted his youth and dreams are not satisfied with the life that is now becoming a wife and mother. She wanted to free herself. Finally she has decided to take back the dream of her youth and left her husband and children. She enjoys

her freedom and became a painter. But in the end the story is Edna Pontellier looks tragic and is not responsible for the awakening itself.

Finally, this thesis intends to analyze a topic about feminism in the novel. *The Awakening* is a novel about a woman's struggle to reconcile his views on femininity and motherhood with no social attitudes. This novel was also named as one of novel that focuses on women's issues without condescension. So, it is the emergence of novel initially getting some criticism from readers.

1.2 Statement of the problem

After reading the novel *The Awakening* based on the background of the study above. There are several questions in the study. Those questions can be formulated as follows:

- 1.2.1 What are the characters of Edna Pontellier in *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin?
- 1.2.2 How does Edna Pontellier's character in *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin reflect in feminism?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

In the point, the thesis writer has several purposes that she wants to show the reader. The purposes of the study are:

- 1.3.1 To explain the character of Edna Pontellier in *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

1.3.2 To describe the Edna Pontellier's character in *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin seen for in feminism

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is to deepen or to enrich literary studies especially in literature through a novel. Another significance of this analysis is to understand about feminism portrayed in the lives of women who should have as a woman with their instincts and carry out their duties as a woman who was all there in the novel *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin.

The writer hopes that readers will learn and understand more about Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*. The readers can appreciate this novel and could have a better perception of the idea of feminism. The writer also hopes that this thesis will be useful to readers or people who need this thesis as a reference.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope and limitation of the study is one the discussion in Kate Chopin's novel *The Awakening* which have theme women's issues without condescension. The thesis writer just focuses on feminism especially liberal feminism which reflected to the main character Edna Pontellier, this is describe the characterization of Edna Pontellier.

In the novel *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin, there is the character of Edna Pontellier is a woman. She is the main character in the novel. Then, in this novel Edna Pontellier is a female character that there is feminism. Character depicted in

a married woman and had two children. Which his behavior has affected his character as a wife and a mother. And that's what makes the conflict in this novel.

1.6 Definition of Key Term

1.6.1 Character

The Actions of the characters is portrayed in a story as the narrative. According to Robert Sweetland, character is the mental, emotional, and social qualities to distinguish one entity from another (people, animals, automatons, pieces of furniture, and other animated objects). (May 14, 2014)

1.6.2 Characterization

Characterization is how the author describes every character in that story. How the author describes about personality of character. Characterization in literature refers the step by step process wherein an author introduces and then describes a character. The character can be described directly by the author or indirectly through the actions, thoughts, and speech of the character. (Literary Devices: March, 13 2014)

1.6.3 Feminism

Feminism is literary criticism that discusses about women's lives. This describes the behavior and movement of women's rights in society. According to Estelle Freedman (2004: 07), feminism is belief that although women and men are inherently of equal worth, most societies privilege men as a group. As a result, social movements are necessary to achieve political equality between women and

men, with the understanding that gender always intersects with other social hierarchies.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This thesis that has titled *An Analysis of Feminism in Kate Chopin's Novel the Awakening as Reflected through Edna Pontellier's Character* consists of five chapters. First is introduction that includes background of the study, statement of the problems, purpose of the study, significant of the study, scope and limitation of the study, definition of special terms, and organization of the study.

The second chapter, it includes about definitions, comments, ideas or insights of literature, prose, character, and feminism. It can help to explain the analyzing in the prose in the next chapter. In addition in the third chapter, it explains about the method of the study. It includes the nature of the research, the source of the data, and the selection of the data, the data, and the steps of the data analysis.

The fourth chapter will include the analyzing of the data. Here, the writer will analyze the data based on the theory on chapter two. The data will be analyzed one by one by giving the details explanations of each data. Then, it continues with giving conclusion of this research. It will be explained in the fifth chapter. After that, the writer will add the appendixes and bibliography of the author of the prose.