

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL APPROACH AND FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, the writer applies some theories which have correlation with feminism issue. At first, there is Feminism. It means that the writer wants to explain about the real meaning of feminism. And some theories from the experts are given there. The second is the Historical approach. The writer needs to give more explanation for the readers, to understand about history of third wave feminism.

A. Feminism

Feminism is a belief that women were treated unfairly in the society formed to prioritize men's perspective and interest. Feminism is also a movement that is always dynamic and diverse measures. Generally, feminism categorized as a struggle to improve the opportunities for women to gain equality in the male-dominated culture. (Gamble, 2004:2). Feminist theory see the world from female perspective. Feminist theory is a common notion system with comprehensive coverage of social life and human experience that develops from women centered perspective. (Ritzer & Goodman, 2011:18). Feminist movements have campaigned and continue to campaign for women's rights, including the right to vote, to hold public office, to work, to earn fair wages or equal pay, to own property, to receive education, to enter contracts, to have equal rights within marriage, and to have maternity leave.

Feminists have also worked to promote bodily autonomy and integrity, and to protect women and girls from rape, sexual harassment, and domestic violence (Alice Echols, 1989:18).

Feminism appears because there is an unfair treatment toward women in society. The basic assumption of feminism is a movement that starts from the women's awareness to be free from discrimination, oppression, exploitation, and to try to end these treatments. Feminism is a women's movement to be free from oppressions, discriminations, and to get the same rights and dignity with men. Feminism believes that women have the same right as men. They have the rights and freedom to do whatever they want. Women are born free and equal to men in the sense of human rights. Unfortunately, in this male-dominated world, women's right are not fully appreciated, because what women do is restricted due to their sex. There is a belief in patriarchal society that men are superior and women are inferior. The misconception of women stereotyping that women are weak, dependent, passive, submissive, and receptive makes women seen as inferior to men. It is clear that from time to time people assume that women are nothing compared to men because people themselves believe it and do not want to try breaking that assumption about women. (Humm, 1992:15). The basic goal of feminist movement is to correct the misconception of women stereotyping and to get the equality toward men.

I. Feminism Values

Based on the explanation above, related with feminism as a movement and ideas of women equality in a male dominated culture (Patriarchy), Hélène Cixous

said that women should show their feminine with bolder, showing uniqueness as a woman who is not influenced by the authority of men (masculinity) , and see femininity as a strength and self –intact. According to her, there are two values that are important for women. The values will be explained below.

a. Writing as A Revolutionary Act

Hélène Cixous encourage women to dare devote all their secret desires and imagination on a piece of paper, means writing. By daring to write it means that women have a right to be fully him-self. According to her, by writing means women rule over his body and mind back again, that his mind was no longer dominated by men. Women thought I should be able to determine their own lives through the text they wrote .This implies feminism into the area to always question wherever the authority appear , it includes how women produce (write) and consume (read) the text , because the text of the women was able to form its own language (1976:875).

Cixous has two objectives to be delivered and fought in the invitation for women to write, that freed women from the tyranny of rationality and liberate women from cultural view against them (Jacobus, 1992:2) these two things clearly can be achieved if women's writing. In *Écriture féminine* , Cixous explains that there are a number of advantages and significance if the woman wrote.

The world's language is a man's world. Language, without realizing it, have been arranged by the mindset of rational men. Not only the language, but in fact almost all the world's mindset is the mindset of rational men. To show its existence,

women would have to use the mindset of this man. Nonetheless, Cixous invites women to not get stuck on what has been regulated by the masculine mindset. Cixous says that women write with white ink, while men with black ink.

According to Cixous, writing masculine is always considered better than the feminine article will certainly change. When women write about herself, indirectly binary opposition built by man during this logic (logocentrism) contained in the text and are constructed in society will be deleted. When women write, all passive and negative sides attached to her will change. By writing, women will be the subject of writing. Passive predicate ascribed to women will be lost due to the writing of women would do the active and made herself a subject not an object like what is constructed in the society (Cixous, 1975:6).

b. Acting as A Real Action

Hélène Cixous was a feminist who most emphasized that women should write. According to her, a woman is not enough if only write, women must perform because writing is private thing, while perform is public (Jacobus, 1999:187). Perform as same as possibility. As Cixous (1981) mentioned “Writing is the very possibility of change, the space that can serve as a springboard for subversive thought, the precursory movement of a transformation of social and cultural structures” (Turner, 1999:198). According to her, writing is an impulse and performing is a real action. Women will not be separated from the focus on her body. Therefore Cixous emphasizes that women should writes with their body. This way also is the women way to perform and make her entry into the public sphere. Cixous

mentioned: “*Women can only write with their bodies because feminine language cannot be separated from feminine being if it’s to remain in the hands of women*” (Turner, 1999:190)

Appearance certainly cannot be separated from the role and acting. So that women can perform in the public domain then she should be acting. In fact, acting is a social system that is defined by men, but women as an actor is not something new. According to Cixous, women are social actors who play the role of which is determined by man through desire. Women like always in *masquerade*, always with a false representation, full of acting and seductive. Women have always had a symbolic imagery that is not her.

Cixous more encouraging women to be a performer than actor. The reason, the performer can only be established as and through herself, so she remained in the same self. On the other hand, the actor plays a role through the body. The woman's body has become a means for men to define the role of women. Cixous insistence is expected to develop female body functions that were previously only be a passive stage, become an active viewer of herself. Additionally, Cixous added that in addition to being a performer, women should also be a spectator. By the time she was watching, she can absorb the lessons of how to be feminine than women and can apply in their lives.

B. The History of Third Wave Feminism

Third wave feminism started in the late 1980's early 1990's it followed up on some of the failings of second wave feminism; it was also a backlash against

movements and initiatives created by the second wave. The third wave of feminism essentially started in 1991 when Anita Hill accused Clarence Thomas a man nominated to the US senate of sexual harassment, the vote went against Hill 48-50 in the house. In response to this act a woman called Rebecca Walker published a book called "becoming the third wave" which really sparked off "the third wave" (Lynch, 2012:1).

Based on the setting of time and according to Rebecca Walker, the movement arose partially as a response to the perceived failures of and backlash against initiatives and movements created by second wave feminism during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, and the perception that women are of "many colors, ethnicities, nationalities, religions, and cultural backgrounds".

The third wave of was informed by post-colonial and post-modern thinking. In this phase many constructs were destabilized, including the notions of "universal womanhood," body, gender, sexuality and heteronormativity. An aspect of third wave feminism that mystified the mothers of the earlier feminist movement was the readoption by young feminists of the very lip-stick, high-heels, and cleavage proudly exposed by low cut necklines that the first two phases of the movement identified with male oppression. Pinkfloor expressed this new position when she said that it's possible to have a push-up bra and a brain at the same time (Rampton, 2015:25)

From the explanation above, we know that the third-wave feminism clearly responds to the conditions of postmodernity, and as backlash of second wave movement that deemed to have failed.

I. Third Wave Feminism Goals

Third-wave feminism continues the efforts of second-wave feminism to create conditions of freedom, equality, justice, and self-actualization for all people by focusing on gender-related issues in particular, even as it offers a different set of tactics for achieving those goals. (Jervis, 2006a).

Third-wave feminism is multicultural in nature and sexually diverse as well, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual perspectives. Third-wave feminism recognizes the “interlocking nature of identity—that gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality and class never function in isolation but always work as interconnected categories of oppression and privileged” (Henry, 2004:32). Some theorists observe that the third wave is “a movement that contains elements of second wave critique of beauty culture, sexual abuse, and power structures while it also acknowledges and makes use of the pleasure, danger, and defining power of those structures” (Heywood & Drake, 1997:2–3).

Third Wave feminists like Rebecca Walker and Shannon Liss (Cofounders of the Third Wave Direct Action Committee) completely disagree. Feminism has always been a struggle against patriarchy, the Second Wave fought against patriarchy

embodied by political constraints while the Third struggled with patriarchy embodied by societal constraints and labels.

These women and others like them grew up with the expectation of achievement and examples of female success as well as an awareness of the barriers presented by sexism, racism, and classism. They chose to battle such obstacles by inverting sexist, racist, and classist symbols, fighting patriarchy with irony, answering violence with stories of survival, and combating continued exclusion with grassroots activism and radical democracy. Rather than becoming part of the “machine,” third wavers began both sabotaging and rebuilding the machine itself. In expressing their concerns, third-wave feminists actively subverted, co-opted, and played on seemingly sexist images and symbols. This was evident in the double entendre and irony of the language commonly adopted by people in their self-presentations (Walker, 2016:11).

a. The Main Issues of Third Wave Feminism

Based on the history and what actually third wave feminism wants and fought, the writer only focus on the two main issues.

1) Girl Power

Girl Power encompasses a host of cultural phenomena for young women. The term of *Girl Power* is refers to female empowerment, independence, and self-sureness. *Girl Power* became the central message of third-wave feminism, the idea

that women could be powerful while still being *girly*, a backlash against older feminist arguments that such stereotypes perpetuated women's inequality and were purely a symptom of patriarchal society. Consumerism became a method by which to link Girl Power with purchasing power, recognising the changing position of women in society from domestic dependents to financially self-reliant, independent consumers. (Cristina Stasia, 2004:65)

An alternative origin of the concept "Girl Power" has been put forth by Laurel Gilbert and Crystal Kile, the authors of *Surfer Grrrls* (1996). They suggest that the idea of Girl Power came out of the phrase "You go, girl," which was popularized by young African American women as a statement of encouragement to each other in the late 1980s. Other suggest that it was not the white punk music scene rather black Hip Hop music that spawned and continues to support the changing modes of femininity understood as Girl Power. Some have also claimed that Girl Power as a movement began much earlier than the 1980s or 1990s, in the call and response rhythms of the girl group of the 1960s. (Claudia A. Mitchell & Jacqueline Reid-Walsh, 2007:52) From this perspective, it seems that the Girl Power phenomenon owes its longevity to a long history of relations between black and white women, particularly in music.

Girl power seeks to reclaim the feminine and mark it as culturally valued. It is most often represented as the idea that girls can do anything they choose - especially on a personal level. In popular culture sites of girl power, 'power' encompasses two key concepts: (1) the ability to influence others and the surrounding world through

independence, intelligence, and agency, and (2) the mental and physical strength that males typically claim. Grafting these concepts onto the idea of the 'girl' suggests that 'feminine' and 'empowered' are not antonyms: Girls can make their own decisions, speak their minds, raise their voices, and be aggressive, while engaging in the production of normative femininity. (Rebecca Hains, 2014:35)

2) Rape Culture

Rape culture is a term was coined by feminists in the United States in the 1970's. It is a setting in which rape is pervasive and normalized due to societal attitudes about gender and sexuality (Sharna, 2009:25). Many feminists have provided great definitions of what rape culture is and how it plays out every day. Emilie Buchwald, *author of Transforming a Rape Culture*, describes that when society normalizes sexualized violence, it accepts and creates rape culture. In her book she defines rape culture as a complex set of beliefs that encourage male sexual aggression and supports violence against women. It is a society where violence is seen as sexy and sexuality as violent. In a rape culture, women perceive a continuing of threatened violence that ranges from sexual remarks to sexual touching to rape itself. A rape culture condones physical and emotional terrorism against women as the norm. In a rape culture both men and women assume that sexual violence is a fact of life, inevitable. However, much of what we accept as inevitable is in fact the expression of values and attitudes that can change. (1994)

3) The Problems of Patriarchy

Feminist theory defines patriarchy as an unjust social system that enforces gender roles and is oppressive to both men and women (Richards, 2015:10). It often includes any social mechanism that evokes male dominance over women. Feminist theory typically characterizes patriarchy as a social construction, which can be overcome by revealing and critically analyzing its manifestations. (Tickner, 2001:23). Many feminists (especially scholars and activists) have called for culture repositioning as a method for deconstructing patriarchy. Culture repositioning relates to culture change. It involves the reconstruction of the cultural concept of a society. (Chigbu,Uchendu Eugene, 2015:22) Prior to the widespread use of "patriarchy", feminists used the terms "male chauvinism" and "sexism" to refer roughly to the same phenomenon. Author bell hooks argues that the new term identifies the ideological system itself (that men are inherently dominant or superior to women) that can be believed and acted upon by either men or women, whereas the earlier terms imply only men act as oppressors of women. (Hooks & Bell, 2004:59)