

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background, the problems, the objectives, the significance and limitation of study.

1.1 Background of the Study

The traditional roles of men and women were established to ensure the power of the head of household. Historically speaking, head of household was always male. In the society, men are usually the heads of families who have the highest position, strong, brave and dominating. Men are required leadership, heterosexuality and authority (Hodges and Budig, 2010, p. 717). As a consequence of the society's consideration that put them in a higher position than women.

According to Blood and Wolfe (1960, p. 47-52) there are two patterns of sexual division of labor, namely traditional pattern and contemporary pattern. The first is a traditional concept; there is a condition which is working women defined as women who only does work in the household job, such as sweeping, mopping, and cleaning the house. The second is a contemporary concept; which is a condition that the need for cooperation between husband and wife in a household. The purpose of women seems to be only to get married and build a family where throughout the life only revolve around the affairs in the household. This condition causes women become dependent only to a man economically because women's work at house does not generate money or salary. In addition, it is caused by the view of the society that a man have dominant position and has more opportunities which is desired.

As pointed out by Rohrbaugh that housework is for women only. Regardless of how busy his wife may be with a paid job, the husband rarely takes on any of the household chores (Rohrbaugh, 1981, p. 80). Men in general are totally out of the house and women in subordinate positions in patriarchal society. Therefore, as a result, women are identical with matters inside the house and men are identical with public roles outside the house. Women are mothers of their children who are always at home. This condition takes place continuously in the society. The division of tasks between men and women is attached to the physical image of both of them, for example an identical woman has a feminine physique such as smooth skin, curved eyelashes and a tiny nose. Then women in a culture are considered suitable for doing housework. In contrast to the masculine identity of men described as a figure who has a straight, strong and dominating. In a culture of men behavior is considered very suitable for working in the public sector (Salviana, 2010, p. 8).

However the traditional view of the male as breadwinner and the female as homemaker has shifted over time (Lease, 2003, p. 244-258). A few decades ago, men were seen as leaders and protectors. Today, a lot of the discussion is centered on gender equality, women are starting to change the ancient habits making them only as a housewife who indirectly limit their abilities and expertise. Unfortunately, sometimes when women decide that they do not want to fulfill their role, many men and sometimes women look down on them with disapproval. This is like being attached to the community's view that women who work outside the house and leave their children are a bad thing because a woman should only focus at home and does not have to work like a man. Throughout the book "To the Lighthouse" Virginia Woolf (1927, p. 275) uncovered the difference between the traditional and modern roles of women and today women around the world are struggling to ensure their rights are respected. They want equality between men and women that they also have the same right to work and become career women. It seems that the role of men is shifting and is no longer in

the position it should be. Even more, the number of dads living at home has increased significantly.

This phenomenon makes gender equality excessive. It's no longer the same but women make it higher than men where women are no longer in positions as housewives who only stay at home, but now women have a shining career compared to men. A woman can currently work in politics, engineering, industry and banking. Almost all fields of work that used to be only men who can do it now are no longer the same, it turns out women also have the ability and can do the work that men do. Now women can prove their career achievements that exceed their husbands.

One of novel capturing this social phenomenon is *Little Children* by Tom Perrotta. The story told about a family lived in America. Todd was a husband of a woman named Kathy and had a son named Aaron. He was a man who graduated from law school. However, he had failed the lawyer exam twice. So, he was only at house with his son, accompanying him to play in the park and did another activities together. His wife, a women who had a career as a filmmaker. Todd and his son went to the park every few weeks. In this park, he met a woman named Sarah, a housewife who had a daughter named Lucy and usually accompanied her daughter to play in the park. Todd and Sarah had a close relationship. Todd felt that Sarah could fulfill his ego as a man because Todd could not be a leader in his household. It was because of her wife was more dominating, working and earning income. This made his ego hurt. He was unable to fulfill his wife's wishes to become a lawyer. A job that was valued in the community was very riveting and charismatic. Sarah, who was just a housewife, could understood him and made it comfortable. They often did activities outside together, such as went to the swimming pool and playground with their children. From the comforted with Sarah, he could be more opened about his life. It made him attracted to Sarah then ended with having affair. With her, Todd felt valued, made him more domineered as a man and made his

confidence increase. The affair as a form to show off the dominant side as a man who should be more in control and strong.

In this study, the researcher will show social phenomena of a man in the household based on the novel *Little Children*. The story that the man does not work and only at home with his son and then the woman who should be at home but instead she works outside as a filmmaker which is usually the dominant job done by men attracts the researcher to analyze it. However over the time, the position is changing in the household ensued, when women are out and in control and a man who should be more dominant but at home taking care of his son. Based on this phenomena, the researcher is very interested in analyzing the novel *Little Children* to catch and reveal the social phenomena happening lately.

1.2 Problems of the study

1. How does Todd show his masculine identity as a man in novel *Little Children*?
2. What is the masculinity concept revealed in the novel *Little Children*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To show the masculine of Todd as a man in the novel *Little Children*.
2. To show the masculinity concept in the novel *Little Children*.

1.4 Limitation of the study

To analyze this study according to the objective and significance, the researcher needed to limit the study. This study discussed the problem by using the masculinity theory. The researcher limited only the main character of the masculine side of Todd. It did only focus on matters relating to the masculinism of Todd and how he showed his masculine side and how he expressed it in the novel.

1.5 Significance of the study

This study is expected to give more information about masculinity of men especially in the novel *Little Children* by using John Beynon's masculinity theory. Hopefully this research will be a beneficial reference for the next researcher who are interested in analyzing masculinity depicted in a literary work, especially novel. The researcher also expect that the reader can know the social phenomena in society that the feminist movement has gone too far and must be stopped. A man's position should be back to its proper position as a leader both in the family and society.