

## CHAPTER 1

### 1.1 Background of the study

Racism is one of the important issue in contemporary sociology, and now several theories about of racism are very complicated because racism has different concept between inflated and deflated. The concept of racism in the sociology of the race and ethnicity has arrived to involve the social phenomena, inequality issue, discrimination group, stereotypes idea, and racial habits. Several researcher have different concepts about “racism” because comprehensive and also inconsistent meant for the concerning about the race (Wilson 1987:12). After the researchers found a concept to determine the meaning of word racism, they found that the concept existed in racial ethics and their conclusion, this is to prevent wider users for the language used is more precise and accurate. (Byrd 2011:1013). In this case we can explain that racism has a wide meaning and to explain the meaning of the racism we must see at phenomena that occur in social life so that we can find the right meaning for the racism.

Racism often occurs in social life, one of example is in the United States because it has many ethnicities and race that live there. The phenomenon of racism in the United States has begun to be seen during adolescence because for many African American teenagers who live there, race becoming prominent and they have begun to consider the issue of their racial membership in social relations and their daily life (e.g., Spencer & Markstorm-Adams, 1990). Adolescence can already feel the phenomenon of racism because at this age, they are looking for their identity in social life. In the school context, racism is an important issue for discussed to know how the process of racial identity among black adolescents, this is related to the experiences and beliefs for black youth in achieving motivation and academic achievement outcomes (DeCuir-Gunby, 2009; O’Connor, 1999; Oyserman, Harrison, & Bybee, 2001). African American teenagers feel insecure to socializing because of their racial identity so that it can affect their academics.

According to a study by Chambers & Tabron, 2013; Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton, 2000; Thompson & Gregory, 2011, the effect racism for black teenagers usually get a challenging experience because of the value of their racial identity in school, such as discrimination in school and context of friendship. We can concluded that this racism can make it difficult for black teenagers to interact with other races because of the issue racial identity that makes feel like they are being discrimination by their peers outside races.

Racism has an impact on the psychology of black teenagers, on June 6, 2015, the case of Kalief Browder, a 22 year old African American gained worldwide attention for having committed suicide in prison when he went into his bedroom by turning off the air conditioner in his bedroom and then pushing himself out through the hole with a rope around his neck. He was imprisoned for alleged crime when he was 16 years old and he has already served more than 3 years in prison (A. Gibson, 2015; Gonnerman, 2015). Just a few weeks prior, a study published in JAMA Pediatrics (bridge et al., 2015) it has been reported that the suicide rate for black adolescence has more than doubled since the early 1990s, this has led to increased mental health concerns for the black adolescence in order to reduce the suicide rate that has occurred to date (Tavernise, 2015). The mental health problems for black teenagers experienced are caused by the discrimination they face while they imprisoned or encounter in their live. Even discrimination makes them feel unfair in their social environment.

Recent statistics and some empirical evidence describing the mental health of black youth indicate that more than a third of black children experience poverty in their lifetime (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, & smith, 2014), this is one of the factors causing poor mental health of black children. According to a study from U.S. Department of Education, office of Civil Rights, 2014, revealed that the average deferral rate for preschool children (48%) nearly tripled for the representation of African-American children enrolled as students (18%). The difficulty in getting an education makes they have difficult to get a job when they are adults, so they have no hope for their future so it can interfere with the mental health of black children.

From recent study according by Wilson,2009, African-American children have always been one of the populations with high mental needs, this includes black youth in prison and foster children. This study proves that impact of prison and the foster children makes their mental health needs become higher because of the discrimination they encounter environment and their psychology become disturbed. In this case, they have difficult to survive and interact socially. This case makes it difficult to improve their mental health because of the racism, discrimination and stereotypes inherent in their race.

The racism that occurs makes many book writers concern about the issue of racism. They write about the issue racism through their books. One of which is a children literature because of the impact when children read it. Children literature can be a place to facilitate them in important conversation, and encourage someone to know that there is a power from meaning of their life.

In another reason why children literature have impact for their life is according by Bargiel et al.1997; Dutro 2008, literature is a powerful method for dealing with difficult topic who can read and responding to literature has been identified. One of the books that raises the issue of racism is *Ghost Boy* by Jewell Parker Rhoades which tells the story of child named Jerome who was killed by a white police officer. In searching for data sources in children's books related to the issue of racism, the author reads three books including *Black All Around*, *The Stone Thrower*, and *Ghost Boy*. After reading the three books, the author chose the children's book *Ghost Boy* as a data source in raising the issue of racism because in the story there are many things that contain issues of racism that are happening at this time.

## **1.2 Research Question**

How is bullying as racial discrimination portrayed in *Ghost Boy* children's story book?

## **1.3 Purpose of The Study**

The study is being discussed to reach the purpose below

To reveal racial discrimination portrayed in *Ghost Boy* children's story book

#### **1.4 Scope of The Study**

The study focuses on analyzing the main characters. They are all black people who mostly undergo racial discrimination.

#### **1.5 Significances of The Study**

The result of the study will provide the information regarding racism cases in children literature. The comparison on racism cases in social life and children literature will show the use of a stereotype which will later reveal the ideology or opinion of a country towards a community.

The significance studies of the research are also useful for some are shown below:

1. English Literature students, especially in analyzing children literature and research studies.
2. Readers, to be more aware to the racism.