

**BLACK WOMEN OPPRESSION IN TONI MORRISON'S *GOD HELP***

***THE CHILD***

**THESIS**

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**UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM**

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THE CHILD***

**THESIS**

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I state that the thesis entitled “**Black Women Oppression in Toni Morrison’s *God Help the Child***” is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those ones that are cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is an objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

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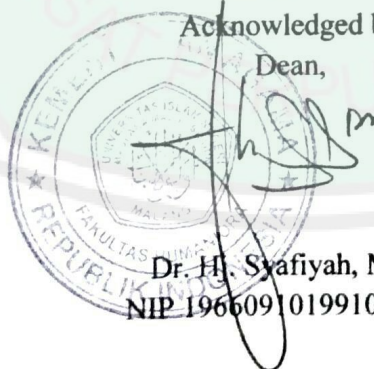
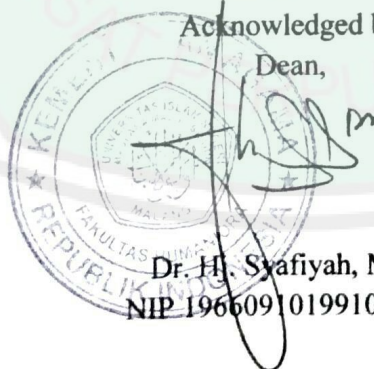


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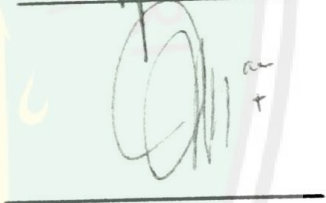
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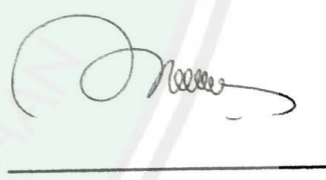
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## MOTTO

*“We die. That may be the meaning of life. But we do language. That may be the measure of our lives.” – Toni Morrison*



## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is presented to:

My Beloved parents,

Mas'ud Syarief

Siti Choirin Aninah

My beloved brother,

Robby Fahmi Aulal Hidayat

Aditiya Ahmad Amiril Hidayat

My advisor:

Dr. Hj. Isti'adah, M.A.

And also special thanks to all people who support and accompany me in struggle,

give me prays and support to finish this thesis in any ways:

My friends in English Literature 2015

and many more that I can't mention all of them.

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Finally, I acknowledge that this thesis is still having some deficiencies. Therefore, I need constructive criticism and suggestion from the readers to make it better. I hope this thesis can render inspiration to the readers and being a reference for conducting better analysis in other realms..

Malang, 11 November 2019

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## ABSTRACT

Hidayati, Vina Hartsa A'yuni. 2019. **Black Women Oppression in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child***. Undergraduate Thesis. English Literature Department, Humanities Faculty, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.

Advisor : Dr. Hj. Isti'adah, M.A.

Keywords : Oppression, Exploitation, Marginalization, Powerlessness, Cultural Imperialism, Violence, Womanism

This research aims to answer the questions: a. What are forms of oppression experienced by Bride and Sweetness in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*? b. How do Bride and Sweetness struggle to fight against oppression in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*?

The researcher uses two theories - oppression theory by Iris Marion Young to determine the forms of oppression experienced by Bride and Sweetness, major characters who are selected by the researcher to be the focus of this research, and Walker's womanism in analyzing Bride and Sweetness's struggle to fight against oppression. This research applies feminist literary criticism to analyze women oppression in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*. Since it observes black women, the researcher uses black feminism to discover the social phenomena of black women oppression and struggle in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*.

The result mentions that there are five forms of oppression experienced by Bride and Sweetness in different conditions. The forms are exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence. Firstly, exploitation occurs only to Sweetness. Her status as the poor leads her to be exploited by others. Secondly, Brides and Sweetness are marginalized in different situations. Bride is marginalized at work because of lacking educational status and her skin color, whereas, Sweetness's marginalization leads to the separation of facilities and services for black people. Thirdly, two reasons cause Bride and Sweetness to feel powerless. Those are the capitalist power and the absence of acceptance. In a joint situation, both are controlled by Mr. Leight's power since he is their apartment owner. Also, in a different situation, both lose the acceptance. Sweetness is rejected by her husband from giving birth to a black baby, whereas, Bride needs acceptance, either from her family or society. Fourthly, Bride is stereotyped by her family and society as the form of cultural imperialism she experiences. The stereotypes direct to the negative prejudices towards her black skin. Lastly, Bride suffers violence of psychological and physical. Bride becomes the victim of the insult and school bullying by people around her as the form of her psychological violence. Also, she suffers physical losses and ongoing trauma from her mother's hard punishment. Another result is about Bride and Sweetness's struggle to fight against their oppression. As they experience their own oppression, they have different effort. The struggle in Bride's version is to be accepted by her family and society. Meanwhile, Sweetness chooses to hide her true identity as black so she can avoid problems from society. Both successfully liberate themselves. Bride finally overcomes her trauma and accepts her past, whereas, until the end, people don't know Sweetness's blackness since she never revealed it.

## ABSTRAK

Hidayati, Vina Hartsa A'yuni. 2019. **Black Women Oppression in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child***. Skripsi Jurusan Sastra Inggris Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang.

Dosen pembimbing : Dr. Hj. Isti'adah, M.A.

Keywords : Opresi, Eksploitasi, Marginalisasi, Ketidakberdayaan, Imperialisme Budaya, Kekerasan, Womanisme

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjawab pertanyaan: a. Apa bentuk opresi yang dialami oleh Bride dan Sweetness dalam novel *God Help the Child* karya Toni Morrison? b. Bagaimana keduanya berjuang melawan opresi mereka dalam novel *God Help the Child* karya Toni Morrison?

Peneliti mengaplikasikan teori opresi menurut Iris Marion Young untuk menentukan bentuk-bentuk opresi yang terjadi pada karakter Bride dan Sweetness, yang dipilih oleh peneliti sebagai fokus dalam penelitian ini. Peneliti juga menggunakan teori womanisme milik Alice Walker dalam menganalisis usaha perjuangan keduanya dalam melawan opresi mereka. Penelitian ini menerapkan kritik sastra feminis untuk menganalisis masalah perempuan dalam *God Help the Child* karya Toni Morrison. Mengamati dengan fokus perempuan kulit hitam, peneliti menggunakan feminisme kulit hitam untuk menemukan fenomena sosial penindasan dan perjuangan perempuan kulit hitam dalam *God Help the Child* karya Toni Morrison.

Hasil menjelaskan ada lima bentuk opresi yang dialami oleh Bride and Sweetness dalam kondisi berbeda, yaitu eksploitasi, marginalisasi, ketidakberdayaan, imperialisme budaya, dan kekerasan. Pertama, eksploitasi hanya terjadi pada Sweetness. Statusnya sebagai orang miskin alah alasan dia dieksploitasi oleh orang lain. Kedua, Bride dan Sweetness terpinggirkan dalam situasi yang berbeda. Bride dipinggirkan di tempat kerja karena status pendidikan yang rendah dan warna kulitnya, sedangkan, marginalisasi Sweetness mengarah pada pemisahan fasilitas dan layanan bagi orang kulit hitam. Ketiga, dua alasan menyebabkan baik Bride maupun Sweetness merasa tidak berdaya. Alasan-alasan tersebut adalah kekuatan kapitalis dan tidak adanya penerimaan. Dalam situasi bersama, keduanya dikendalikan oleh kekuasaan Mr. Leight karena ia adalah pemilik apartemen mereka. Tidak hanya itu, dalam situasi yang berbeda, keduanya kehilangan penerimaan. Sweetness ditolak oleh suaminya karena melahirkan bayi hitam, sementara itu, Bride menginginkan penerimaan, baik dari keluarga atau masyarakat. Keempat, Bride distereotip oleh keluarga dan masyarakatnya sebagai bentuk imperialisme budaya yang ia alami. Stereotip mengarah kepada prasangka negatif terhadap kulit hitamnya. Terakhir, Bride menderita kekerasan yang diklasifikasikan menjadi kekerasan psikologis dan fisik. Dia menjadi korban penghinaan dan pembuluan di sekolah oleh orang-orang disekitarnya sebagai bentuk kekerasan psikologisnya. Selain itu, ia juga menderita kerusakan fisik dan trauma yang berkelanjutan akibat hukuman yang keras dari ibunya.

Hasil lainnya adalah perjuangan Bride dan Sweetness dalam melawan penindasan mereka. Keduanya memiliki pengalaman penindasan mereka sendiri maka usaha mereka tentunya berbeda. Perjuangan dalam versi Bride bertujuan untuk mendapat penerimaan dari keluarga dan masyarakatnya. Sementara itu, Sweetness memilih untuk menyembunyikan identitas aslinya sebagai orang kulit hitam sehingga ia dapat menghindari masalah dengan masyarakat. Keduanya sama-sama berhasil membebaskan diri. Bride akhirnya mengatasi trauma dan menerima masa lalunya, di sisi lain, orang-orang tidak mengetahui identitas Sweetness yang sebenarnya sebagai orang kulit hitam karena dia tidak pernah mengungkapkannya hingga akhir.

## المخلص

هداية, فينا حرت أعيون. 2019. الظلم لإمرأة سوداء في " الله يساعد الطفل" عن طاني موريسان (Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*). البحث العلمي. قسم الأدب الإنجليزية, كلية الإنسانية, جامعة مولانا مالك إبراهيم الإسلامية الحكومية مالانج. المشرفة: الدكتور الحاج إستعادة الماجستير. الكلمات المفتاحات: الظلم, الاستغلال, التهميش, العجز, الإمبريالية الثقافية, العنف, النسوية

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الإجابة على الأسئلة: أ. ما هو شكل القمع الذي تختبره العروس والحلاوة في رواية "الله يساعد الطفل" عن طاني موريسان (Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*)؟ ب. كيف تحارب الاثنان لأن يناقوا الظلم في رواية "الله يساعد الطفل" عن طاني موريسان (Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*)؟

تطبق الباحثة نظرية لإريس ماريون Iris Marion Young لتحديد أشكال القمع التي تحدث في شخصية برد و سويتنس (Bride dan Sweetness)، والتي اختارها الباحثة لتكون محور هذه الدراسة. تستخدم الباحثة أيضاً نظرية أليس ووكر حول النسوية في تحليل جهود الاثنان في أن يناقوا الظلمهما. تطبق هذه الدراسة النقد الأدبي النسوي لتحليل مشاكل المرأة في توني موريسون إله ساعد الطفل. ملاحظة مع التركيز على النساء السوداوات، تستخدم الباحثة النسوية السوداء لاكتشاف الظاهرة الاجتماعية للقمع وكفاح النساء السوداوات في رواية "الله يساعد الطفل" عن طاني موريسان (Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*).

توضح النتائج أن هناك خمسة أشكال من القمع الذي تعاني منه برد و سويتنس (Bride dan Sweetness) في ظل ظروف مختلفة، وهن الاستغلال، التهميش، العجز، الإمبريالية الثقافية، العنف. أولاً، الاستغلال يحدث فقط في سويتنس (Sweetness). وضعه كشخص فقير هو سبب استغلاله من قبل الآخرين. ثانياً، يتم تهميش برد و سويتنس (Bride dan Sweetness) في مواقف مختلفة. تم تهميش العروس في العمل بسبب وضعها التعليمي المنخفض ولون بشرتها، في حين أدى تهميش الحلاوة إلى فصل المرافق والخدمات عن السود. ثالثاً، هناك سببان يجعل كل من برد و سويتنس (Bride dan Sweetness) تشعران بالعجز. هذه الأسباب هي القوة الرأسمالية وعدم القبول. في حالة مشتركة، يتم التحكم في كلاهما بقوة السيد لايت (Mr. Leight) لأنه مالك شقتهم. ليس هذا فقط، في حالات مختلفة، فقد كلاهما القبول. ورفض زوجها سويتنس (Sweetness) بسبب ولادتها لطفل أسود، في غضون ذلك، أرادت العروس قبولها، سواء من الأسرة أو المجتمع. رابعاً، برد (Bride)

مقولة بشكل نمطي من قبل أسرتها ومجتمعها كشكل من أشكال الإمبريالية الثقافية التي تواجهها. تؤدي القوالب النمطية إلى تحيز سلبي على جلده الأسود. وأخيراً ، تعاني برد (Bride) من عنف يصنف على أنه عنف نفسي وجسدي. أصبح ضحية للإذلال والتسلط في المدرسة من قبل الناس من حوله كشكل من أشكال العنف النفسي. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، عانى أيضاً من أضرار جسدية وصدمة مستمرة بسبب العقوبة القاسية من أمه.

النتيجة الأخرى هي نضال برد و سويتنس (Bride dan Sweetness) في محاربة اضطهادهما. كان لكل منهما تجارب القمع الخاصة بهما لذلك كانت جهودهما مختلفة بالتأكيد. يهدف الصراع في نسخة برد (Bride) العروس إلى الحصول على قبول من عائلتها ومجتمعها. ولكن ، اختارت سويتنس (Sweetness) إخفاء هويتها الحقيقية كشخص أسود حتى تتمكن من تجنب المشاكل مع المجتمع. تمكن كلاهما من التحرر. وأخيراً تغلبت برد (Bride) على الصدمة وقبلت ماضيه ، من ناحية أخرى ، لم يعرف الناس هوية سويتنس (Sweetness) الحقيقية كشخص أسود لأنه لم يكشف عنها أبداً حتى النهاية.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **A. Research Background**

The issues about black women are still arise and complicated to be discussed. Many black feminists do research with the aim to speak the voices of black women in order to achieve equality. One of the interesting issue is the oppressions of black women. Since the 15th amendment of US constitution, the slavery and separation of church, transportation, law, civil rights, schools and others that were previously applied to black women have been abolished. Even so, the majority of people do not care and still treat them unfairly. The reasons mostly develop into irrational and without motives. They only take opportunities to hurt black women. Visibly, Black women become a decent object of oppression and are compared with white women. Stereotypes confirm black women to be marginalized. The ideology of dominant clearly classifies black women to be inferior and submissive who are controlled and forced to submit to the dominant, the whites (Acuff, 2018).

Basically, both white and black women face the same oppression because of their gender that they are considered as weak creatures. However, black women receive double oppression. They do not only face the oppression through their gender but also because of their race and class. People treat black women unfairly because of their skin color. The cases of racial



discrimination and exploitation towards black women, never end as time goes by, show the oppression problem of black women needs to be concerned.

The dominant ideology classifies black women to be superior and submissive. This assumption is used by white women to treat black women arbitrarily. White women control the image and spread negative myths about black women (Collins, 2009). However, the real reason behind the oppression of black women in America is because they are part of a minority ethnic.

From the gender perspective, women are considered as weak creatures and inferior. The image of women that are more feminine, soft-hearted, and less power than man has subjected them to get violence and be objected. Unfortunately, they are forced to submit male domination and become submissive. Male domination can control women about their behavior and right. For this reason, black women are automatically marginalized and excluded not to challenge men's power which can limit women's movement (Husna, 2013).

As the dominant ideology rejects women's emancipation, women who work outside the home are assumed less feminine, competing with their husbands and staying away from their children. Womens participation in contributing positively to the nation and the state is threatening men to be overthrown. As stated that the duty of women should stay at home and keep the household, women's progress has been denied and their rights are restricted (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2004). Although many trainings and scholarships have been offered to women today, this perspective is still

developed by the majority of society, especially men. Intimidation and imprisonment of freedom against women is their own satisfaction. For a long time, the majority of black women worked as domestic keepers and jobs that involved caregiving (for example, babysitters) so they are considered inexperienced and uneducated. Therefore, the struggle of black women to develop their energy and strength requires more effort to speak their voices and liberate from the oppression.

Moreover, black women in the lower class also have to struggle their right. Not only white women or men, pitifully they can be oppressed by the higher class of black women although they are in the same race. They have to suffer and degraded because of their economical status. Labor's exploitation and discrimination never stop happening to them. Black women are underestimated and oppressed by the higher class in using their energy of producing a benefit. Here, black women have been treated as machine mules. They are materially controlled by the higher class (Collins, 2009).

In America, a condition of how black women continue to be poor and unable to improve their economic status is visible. Black women are difficult to find a job that can improve their status, self-esteem, and dignity. Widely open opportunities are jobs as a maid and which is related to parenting ability such as babysitters, nurses in nursing home, and others. It is due to low education levels and lacking experiences so that black women are limited in their development. Moreover, their job provides low-paid salaries which do

not fulfill their needs. Politically, the majority of black women are in the lower capitalist class (Jones, 1985).

In explaining the role of black women oppression in literary works, many black female writers write literature using black female characters as the story focus on the aim to speak the voices of black women to achieve equality. They want readers to know that the oppression of black women is a real phenomenon in human life expressed in the form of writing. The expectation is public become aware pay attention to the racism problem that continues till today so that the emancipation of black women can be achieved. It is because the voice of black women is rarely airing in public.

Another reason is to reveal the process of colonization and decolonization of black women. Since the history of black women in the world, it shows that they are the victim of colonization, black women are marginalized. White supremacy colonizes and makes them be the lowest class in social status. Visibly, white people consider black women as a decent object to be oppressed. Thus, the emphasis of black women's struggle to the oppression in black literature is needed (Gates, 2016).

Related to this study, Morrison's works are considered as valuable writing and deserve to get honors, the researcher has picked out *God Help the Child* novel (2015) written by Toni Morrison as the object of the research. Despite her age, Morrison still writes a fresh, adventurous and vigorous work, *God Help the Child*. It is the noble prizewinner with rich tale of a young woman struggles against shadism and parental neglect. Morrison gives an

understanding of the inter-black prejudice to dark skin tones which is rarely public airing (Evaristo, 2015).

In *God Help the Child*, the narrations often express individual voices as if it is the improvised solo such as the voice of Brooklyn, Sofia, and Rain. The voices are present to add the color tone of the donation to Bride's narration and Morrison theme. Like Bride, the three characters (Brooklyn, Sofia, and Rain) expose a burdensome childhood and a bad relationship with their mother. Besides, Booker's voice about his anger over the world's injustice towards his brother (Adam) is the most successful part of arousing the emotions of the reader. After realizing that Adam's death is a complicated burden, Booker runs away because he is unable to accept the reality and then hurt Bride. Morrison has built the aesthetic of prose, formal and imaginative risk-taking and intellectual prowess through a fiction about crimes and weaknesses that affect someone's emotional abilities. Taking the title *God Help the Child* is appropriate because the majority of children's characters can be free from the shackles of the past. Morrison has made art from the rhythm of human grief (Muyumba, 2015).

On the other hand, *God Help the Child* portrays the main character Bride, who is a noble character but having many shortages. The Bride is a successful executive in a cosmetics company, making money, running over the kind people but she harbors a hidden identity on purpose. Since the beginning, Morrison gives readers a difficult question to judge what should be appropriate for helpless children. Bride doesn't realize her beauty or how to

use it. She tends to receive punishments for the color of her skin. Even though her mother (Sweetness) knows what she should do, unfortunately, her choices are shaped by the reality of being black in the white community. Bride's dignity does not stop her to commit a lie so that she will receive a little attention from her mother. In fixing the past mistakes, Bride knows the process does not always go to the plan (Roxane, 2015).

There are many studies which have examined this novel in various aspect. However, no one has analyzed about oppression yet, despite the majority of characters talk about their suffering to the point of having ongoing trauma and experience oppression. Thus, this research is the first study that discusses the oppression experienced by black women in *God Help the Child* novel written by Toni Morrison. The researcher focuses on two black female characters (Bride and Sweetness), including the form of oppressions and how female characters struggle against their oppression. As the researcher considers these women characters are major and receive hard oppression, they are selected to be discussed.

One of the studies is *What You Do to Children Matters: Toxic Motherhood in Toni Morrison's God Help the Child* by Manula Lopez (2015). She states that Morrison in her latest work *God Help the Child* (2015) talks about the issue of the post-colonialism aspect. She describes the damaging effect of motherhood racism and toxic mothering towards children. She shows us the image of a mother who is toxic for her children. The description of character Sweetness who is cold, arrogant and ignorant towards her child (Bride)

pictures her irresponsible and carelessness. Children need mother's attention and protection to live within their pride. In contrast, *God Help the Child* provides mothers who may reject their child's existence and avoid to raise a black baby so that black children lose the proud of being black and could not defend themselves towards other's bad deeds. Actually, mothers are just afraid to be abandoned. Here, Morrison derives the idea of racism committed by mothers. However, she exposes a blissful life for children who suffer and then overcome their trauma despite of the toxic mother and motherhood (Lopez, 2015).

Another study is *Childhood Trauma in Toni Morrison's God Help the Child* by Sarah Ramtani (2015). In psychology studies of Judith Herman's perspective, the result reveals *God Help the Child* adopts a theme of childhood trauma. It reveals that children have suffered because of the irresponsible behavior of the adult. The fact that their shortcomings shows the incompetence to speak their voice in order to protect their life so that adults utilize them for their interests. Their past painful causes ongoing trauma that commits intrusion and personality disorder showed by the way of thinking and behavior. They have haunted by nightmares, rejected the past or existence and are not able to enjoy their life. They are afraid of possibly being hurt by others. The suffering is neglect and sexual abuse. Thus, Morrison derives the idea of children become the victims (Ramtani, 2015).

Moreover, Dr. S. Horizon Prasanna Kumar (2018) conducts *Domestic Violence in Toni Morrison's God Help the Child*. The result is about racism

and family problems discussed within *God Help the Child* that asserts the idea of domestic violence. Black people often become the victim. Black women who are mostly household workers are under their white master. Also, the unluckiness of husbands will affect them. Besides, black children are possibly harassed in their home and mocked by others. Black family will suffer more. However, Morrison seems to explore a chance to be free from domestic violence. Despite the experience of physical violence, arbitrary orders, sexual harassment, ect., domestic violence could be in a surge in violence and women emancipation challenges for their freedom. Women have a bigger opportunity to liberate themselves rather children because they are more experienced and able to speak their voice. Meanwhile, children often become the victim of domestic incompetence. Thus, *God Help the Child* gives hope for happiness for all family and who overcome their past pain, accept the bitterness and continue their life (Kumar, 2018).

From the explanation above, the researcher conducts a research entitled *Black Women Oppression in Toni Morrison's God Help the Child*.

## **B. Research Problem**

Based on the research background above, research problem are formulated into two problems, as follows:

1. What are forms of oppression experienced by Bride and Sweetness in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*?

2. How do Bride and Sweetness struggle against oppressions in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*?

### **C. Research Objective**

Related to the research problem, research objectives are as follows:

1. To describe forms of oppression experienced by Bride and Sweetness in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*
2. To describe Bride and Sweetness's struggle against oppressions in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*

### **D. Scope and Limitation**

In defining the research scope, this research focuses on describing women oppressions experienced by black women in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*. The researcher only talks about the oppressions that are experienced by Bride and Sweetness as they are the major characters of black women who receive hard oppression. Furthermore, this research is limited in answering the research problems which are the forms of oppression experienced by Bride and Sweetness, and their struggle to fight against oppression as included in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*.

### **E. Research Significance**

By conducting this research, the researcher theoretically expects to give a contribution in the form of concept and theory to the theoretical basis of



literary works to understand and develop feminist literary criticism, especially black feminism. Besides, practically, the researcher expects to contribute in increasing the appreciation of a literary work in conducting feminist literary criticism which is connected with the text or literary work. Moreover, this research is expected to contribute and enrich information into further analysis or research of feminist literary criticism.

## **F. Research Method**

In the research method, the researcher presents research design, data and data source, data collection and data analysis of this research to point out what the researcher does in this research.

### **1. Research Design**

This research is feminist literary criticism, ultimately on black feminism. In analyzing, interpreting and evaluating the literary work, the researcher uses literary criticism. This research focuses on Bride and Sweetness's oppressive condition as black women in *God Help the Child* novel. The researcher uses two theories, oppression theory by Iris Marion Young to reveal the forms of oppression experienced by Bride and Sweetness, and Walker's womanism to view their struggle against oppression.

## 2. Data and Data Source

The data source is the literary work itself, Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*. All data forms are words, phrases, sentences and dialogues inside the novel that indicate what the researcher tries to find out in research problem. *God Help the Child* (2015) with 101 pages was published in the United States by Alfred A. Knopf, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, New York.

## 3. Data Collection

To collect the data, the researcher does some steps, as follows:

- a. Doing the first reading of Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child* to understand the whole story;
- b. Doing the close reading of Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child* to get a deep understanding of the novel. The researcher reads the most important part to identify the possible topic and data for the research;
- c. Highlighting the most important phrases, sentences, conversations and other shreds of evidence based on Young's theory;
- d. Evaluating and arranging systematically the appropriate data and determining the related theory to the data.

#### 4. Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzes the data by using several steps. First, the researcher classifies the data to the forms of oppression experienced by black women character and their struggle against the oppression. Secondly, the researcher analyzes and interprets the selective data based on Young theory. The last, the researcher draws a conclusion based on the finding.

#### G. Previous Studies

To support the analysis, the researcher provides some previous studies in the same object and theory. In the same object, there is three previous study used in this research.

The first study is done by Maneula Lopez in 2015, entitled *What You Do to Children Matters: Toxic Motherhood in Toni Morrison's God Help the Child*. This is a published journal by Univerity of Valencia, Spain. In this study, Lopez does psychology criticism and describes the damaged effect of a motherhood racism and toxic mothering towards children. She gives us the picture of toxic mother that is carelessness and disrespectful to culturally build good mental and identity of a child. The arrogant mothers do not nurse and raise their child so that child's proud of pretty black and self-defense towards the world of racism are absence. Otherwise, the painful memories of Bride's (main character) abuse displays a better hopeful life from childhood abuse experience through the narrator.

The second study is *Childhood Trauma in Toni Morrison's God Help the Child* conducted by Sarah Ramtani in 2015. This is a published dissertation for Master Degree in English Language, Literature and Civilization of Abdurrahman Mira University of Bejaia, Algeria. This study is again in psychology criticism. The researcher focuses on children character told in the novel. Using Judith Herman's perspective, she describes *God Help the Child* reveals that children may have ongoing trauma in which adults harass and commit abuse them. They take advantage of their incompetence who are difficult to speak their voice to others. Their irresponsible behaviour make children suffer. Next, she finds children have faced neglect and sexual abuse. From their past pain, children's trauma commit intrusion and Borderline Personality Disorder that affect their mindset and behavior.

The third study comes from Prasanna in 2018, entitled *Domestic Violence in Toni Morrison's God Help the Child*. It is a published journal of Annamalai University. In this study, the researcher concerns racism and family problem. she describes *God Help the Child* that asserts the idea of domestic violence is given and often happen to black people by the whites, whether they are men or women, and adults or children. As black and women, black women have two burden under their white master and bear their husband's unluckiness. Besides black children is possibly harassed in their home and mocked by others. These condition makes black family consider that they suffer bad lucks. Here, the researcher finds that the family domestic experiences a surge in violence and women's emancipation through their domestic abuse. Women have a bigger

opportunity to liberate themselves rather than children because they are more experienced and able to speak their voice. However, she finds that some victims possibly gain their freedom and live happier.

The next previous study employs the same theory. The researcher uses two studies which are in the discussion of oppression by Iris Marion Young and Walker's womanism.

Lisa Heldke in 2011 write a book review entitled *Oppression Privilege And Resistance Theoretical Perspectives On Racism Sexism And Heterosexism*. The book is published by Oxford University Press, Oxford, England. Heldke writes a review of oppression theory by Iris Marion Young. In her review, Young states there are five forms of oppression. Those are exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence. Each form is related and strengthened by many ideologies and phobias in society such as racism, classism, homophobia, heterosexism, xenophobia, ageism and others. It is a picture of what people need to develop from racism and how this picture intersects with class, gender and other social status divisions. Heldke concludes that the condition and experience of someone's oppression influence how they struggles to reach their goal and the joint struggle to creates a different kind of society which is open-minded and democratic.

Furthermore, Izgarjan & Markov from University of Novi Sad in 2016 conduct a scientific essay entitled *Alice Walker Womanism: Perspectives Past and Present*. Like its title, the writers provide the use of womanism term by

Alice Walker in the past and present. They also discuss about the history of womanism in America. They conclude that womanism becomes an alternative to bridge the communication between women in all of group, and between women and men. Through womanism, the role of black women start to be recognized. Women give their own contribution in the dynamics of social life that provides benefits.

#### **H. Definition of Key Terms**

In this research, the researcher uses some key terms and delivers the definition of key terms that can help us to understand the concept or content of the research.

- **Oppression**

Oppression does not occur in an open and democratic society but a condition of being oppressed whether the oppressor is in a liberal or democratic society. Oppression does not have to be a part of the intended policy or practice in particular nation. It can be habitual action that has been woven into the relations of economic, political or cultural institutions.

- **Exploitation**

Exploitation is power and inequality relation which lead the oppressed continues to be the subordinated one. Systematically, exploitation makes the poor is continuously poor since they are expelled to build power, status and wealth from their job.

- **Marginalization**

Marginalization is an exclusion process which limits individual or group's movement so they become the peripheral society. Marginalization involves material seizure and annihilation so it can be very dangerous.

- **Powerlessness**

Those who feel powerless considered is not having power and controlled by others. It is possible for the powerless to suppress themselves since they lose confidence and feel insecure.

- **Cultural Imperialism**

The culture can take position to be the colonial which can control people in actions, behaviors and attitudes since it becomes a legal norm in a certain area or country. Those who are oppressed by cultural imperialism is marked with the stereotype which make them to be invisible.

- **Violence**

Violence is the most visible form of oppression. The victim of violence can be women or men, child or adult, and individual or group.

- **Womanism**

Womanism specifically discusses about black women's struggle to liberate themselves from sexist and racist oppression. It involves the cooperation between black women with black men or other racial group of women in the process to do struggles.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### A. Feminist literary criticism

Talking about women, feminist literary criticism refers to a criticism that views literature with a special awareness of the existence of sex associated with culture, literature, and human life (Sugihastuti & Suharto, 2005). The analysis focus of feminist literary criticism is on gender injustice. Jonathan Culler broadly determines feminist literary criticism as reading as a woman. By “reading as a woman”, feminist literary criticism can test the defence consistency of women, as well as dismantles gender prejudices and androcentric or patriarchal ideology of male power which is assumed to have mastered many literary writers and readers (Peck & Coyle, 2002).

Feminist literary criticism originates from feminist desires to examine the work of women writers in the past and to show the women’s image in the works of male writers. Male writers mostly portray women as creatures in various ways which are suppressed, misinterpreted, and underestimated by the dominant patriarchal tradition. Both desires present various ways of criticizing which is sometimes integrated. For example, in examining the women’s image in the work of women writers, the attention focuses on the writer’s ways to express oppressions suffered by female characters. Because the work has absorbed patriarchal values, female writer possibly creates female characters with stereotypes meet the requirements of patriarchal society. On the other



hand, women studies in men's writings show strong female figures and possibly support feminist values. Also, both desires have similarity in the terms of the literary canon. Both desires doubt the validity of old literary canon. It is since the canon presents stereotypical female figures and shows the hatred and suspicion towards women, and their writings are abandoned (Djajanegara, 2000).

Starting from women's movement in the 1960s, feminist literary criticism has developed and expanded to a wider group of women. Not only individual woman's freedom, it widely discusses the branched group of women in a colonized society who experience racial discrimination and stereotype. Importantly, an awareness that women also have the same authority and coherence as men in society is needed (Bary, 2002). Apart from women's description in society, women are also able to examine the characteristics of politics and intervene to express creative ideas for the development of the world.

Joseph Denovan's idea about the theory of women in the 20th century states that many literary works write women as an object who attracted to men's attention. Women have to serve and entertain men with the beauty of their bodies. Giving birth, bearing child and doing domestic work are an obligation for a woman. It cannot be denied that women are a temptation and to satisfy male lusts. This understanding has alienated women's presence and position in society intrinsically (Newton, 1988).

The aim of feminist literary criticism is to reinterpret literature from women's viewpoint. Some feminist critics interpret the works of male writers to give attention to the female character, in order to explore moral, political and social boundaries that women face traditionally. The others analyze the works of female writers who are previously ignored by male critics. Another feminist literary criticism aim is to provide a critical response to the opinion manifested in literary works given by their culture. Thus, questioning the relationship between text, power, and sexuality is expressed in the text.

Also, feminist literary criticism successfully reclaims the lost of women's literature and documented their sources. It has managed the attention to the tradition of women's intellectuals. Many early works on female writers before the 1960s usually focus on women's literary traditions. Here it is necessary to show the difference between "female" and "feminist" positions in literary studies. Toril Moi in *Feminist Literary Criticism* defines feminist criticism as a certain type of political discourse, critical and theoretical practice carried out to struggle against patriarchy and sexism (Napikoski, 2017).

## **B. Black Feminism**

One of the theories of modern feminism is black feminism. This theory focuses on the issues of feminism in black women or Afro-American women. Black feminists such as Patricia Hill Collins, Barbara Smith, Iris Marion Young and others created theories about helping black women mobilize their problems to fill the needs of black women since the problem considered have

a direct impact on black women overall quality of life. The theory of black feminism looks at the limits of femininity with white feminism to fully deal with the contradictions that are closely related to gender, race and class in the context of racist society (Dayeshell, 2014).

In America, the history of feminism can explain better the gap between white feminism and other coloured skin. Early Western feminists emphasize on individuality who wants greater equality in patriarchal socio-political structures for women. This perspective circulates among Native American women and underlies their struggle to achieve gender equality.

American feminism history mentions the upper and middle-class women demand a vote for white women. They think that they don't need other coloured women to pursue democracy. As a result, Native American women do not care about the oppression of other marginalized subcultures or "ethnic minorities", for example, the impact of US colonization that changes their traditional lifestyles or limited access in the patriarchal sociopolitical system for Native Americans. Feminists in the early days and more effectively focus on the challenges of sexism and male chauvinistic behaviour in general, towards women in the mainstream population. Unlike black women, the majority of them are well-educated and married to the middle class (Setiono, 2017).

Black women or "coloured women" like Toni Cade, Angela Davies, Toni Morrison, June Jordan, Audrey Lorde and Alice Walker began the efforts by "break the silence" in the 1970s. Then, it followed by African-American

women in the 1980s and 1990s developed a 'voice' which refers to a perspective of collectively determined black women independence. They use this perspective to "talk again" about the representation of black women in dominant discourses. Their struggle successfully reaches the visibility for the ideas and experiences of African-American women which is previously unthinkable.

African American women use the term "black feminist" to examine how the constellations of certain issues affecting black women in the United States. It becomes a part of the problem or the struggle for women's emancipation. In the context of feminism as a global political movement for women's rights and emancipation, feminist knowledge and political patterns encountered by African-American women in the United States represent a rather narrow segment which is refracted through racial politics of white supremacy dichotomy in the United States. Most of US media describe feminism as a movement, the movement of "only for white people". White women have accepted this American apartheid view leads to separate institutions for all types, including feminist organizations, cause feminism is often seen by black and white as belongs to the culture of white women (Sa'diyah, 2008).

African-American women fight against this exclusive feminism and participate in the appearance of special white feminist activities. Indeed, the others directly challenge racism in these feminist organizations that are controlled by white women by prioritizing their race, class and gender, for example, Sojourner Truths' oration on "*And Ain't I A Woman*". In this self-

actualization speech, she first has to deal with the exclusion of skin colour, race, and then followed by the class, before she begins to discuss the problem of the absurdity of female conquest, which is her initial intention when she goes to the all-white convention in Akron, Ohio in 1951 (Rochmawati, 2007).

The term of “black feminism” uses in literary criticism disrupts racism which is inherent in presenting feminism as an ideology and a special political movement for white people. Incorporating the adjective “black”, it has challenged white assumption about feminism and interferes the universally false of this term for white and black women. Most white women think black women lack of feminist awareness. Because of this viewpoint, the term of “black women” highlights the underlying contradictions that feminism assumes and function to remind white women that they are not the only or normative “feminist”.

The gap of term application of “black feminism” also makes many African-American women feel uncomfortable because they are challenged to face their views about the oppression of sexist women. Although the majority of African-American women may support some ideas that form the basis of feminism, many of them reject the use of the term “feminism” because of their relationship with white people. Many of them also see feminism exclusively operates in terms of “whites and Americans” and opposes to be a “black and American”. When black women is given these two constricting choices, they routinely choose the question of race rather than “gender”. In this situation,

black women who identify by using feminism is considered as non-black or less authentic black (Collins, 2009).

Moreover, the term of “black feminists” also disrupts long-standing dependence and is largely unquestioned in black racial solidarity as a strong root in black political philosophy, especially in the framework of black nationalism and cultural pluralism. Using family rhetoric that views the black family community, race and nation as a series of nesting boxes, each of which gets meaning from another that certain rules apply to all levels of this “family” organization. Just as families have given natural internalization hierarchies, for example, the authority of older siblings over younger or male over women, groups that define themselves as race families apply the same rules. In the African-American community, one such rule is that black women will unconditionally support black men (Rochmawati, 2007).

Although after the end of the world war, American amendment declared freedom and granting citizenship for black people, the case of racial discrimination and exploitation against black people still occur and even become common happen towards the adult community but also children. Their identity of black people is inherent in each individual. They are considered as a collection of people who are criminal, lazy and uneducated. Thus, they become humiliated and offended.

People’s unfair treatment towards black people indicates the hatred and ridicule for their blackness. As a result, black children lose their self-image and acceptance because black parents do not teach them to build confidence

and pride for being a black so that many of them also hate their identities (Collins, 2006). Supported by Naomi Wolf's concept of the beauty myth, black women were excluded from the real definition of woman's beauty. Her concept states white physic perfect the ideal proportion picture of woman's body: tall, white skin, slim and blonde hair. This concept rejects the black aesthetic (Mardhani, 2013). In this case, black women are attacked physically and psychologically by putting them into feeling inappropriate and uncomfortable.

All group of American women experience strange situations that are responsible for reproducing the nation-state population, passing down American national culture, and accepting the role written with the same national culture. However, in the matrix US dominance, the whole process is racialized, organized in class-specific ways, and has different effects and advantages on women. Women are evaluated differently based on perceived values to give birth to the right children, pass on the values of the right American family, and become a symbol of a decent country. Black women, white women, Latin women, Native American women, and Asian-American women overall occupy different positions in gender, class, race, and nation as a crossing system of power (Collins, 2006).

### **C. The Oppression**

Young defines oppression as a condition in which society treats individuals or groups inhumanely. Oppression does not occur in an open and

democratic society but a condition of being oppressed whether the oppressor is in a liberal or democratic society. Oppression does not have to be a part of the intended policy or practice in particular nation. It can be habitual action that has been woven into the relations of economic, political or cultural institutions (Young, 2011).

Humans are divided into the structure of domination and oppression. The oppressed is considered to be a part of a defined group based on particular characteristic including race, class, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, nationality, age, abilities, etc. This group is labelled with special attributes, stereotypes and its associated norms. The dominant arbitrarily judges, determine the strength and forms a hierarchy. For example, the patriarchal system that places women under men, masculinity plays a role as a central norm and sign for regulating the symbolism of society, giving the privilege of accessing power for men (Heldke, 2011).

Gender perspective considers women as the object of oppression under male domination. Robin and Wolfrey argue that women suffer injustice and their rights are not equal to men. Male domination confirms the assumption that women are inferior and weak creatures. Meanwhile, men are considered far better and capable (Husna, 2013).

In the case of a narrower group of women, black women experience double oppression because they are oppressed for their race, class and gender. Black women become the most prominent victim of racism in the world. Supported by the existence of a genetic division of racial groups, the dominant



ideology determines black women as the inferior and submissive. On the contrary, white people as the dominant can control their image and spread negative myths about them (Collins, 2009).

Furthermore, the term “gender” separates the roles between men and women in society. The circulating belief is women should stay at home and bear their husband and children. As a result, women’s activities are limited. Not only that, the symbol “gender” which refers to male and female organizations determines the identity of masculinity and femininity. Women’s femininity causes obstacles to women’s involvement in community participation. In other words, women who work outside the home are considered un-feminine and compete with men (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2004).

Moreover, social capitalism which prioritizes the rich interests also marginalizes black women in the lower class. Those who are poor are forced to realize their material incompetence so they must submit towards the ruling class. In this case, black women made the possible oppressive condition from the fellows. Especially, if they are not in a higher level of education, they are easily underestimated by people (Collins, 2009).

#### **D. The Form of Oppression**

In *Justice and Politic Difference*, Young (2011) divides the oppression into five forms which are exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence (Heldke, 2011). The detail explanation is discussed as follows:

## 1. Exploitation

Exploitation is any actions of certain individual or group who perceive themselves to be dominant by utilizing human power to produce benefits for their own needs without giving fair compensation to the controlled. It relates to Marxist capitalist whose function is to explain the existence of the structure of human classes based on political-economic conditions that domination has right to take the potential and outcome of others' works and legally determine their superiority over their inability in labour (Young, 2011).

Young defines exploitation as a relationship between power and inequality that maintains the exploited in a position of subordination. Exploitation usually involves menial, erratic, unskilled, low-paid and lacking in autonomy. The capitalist class can transfer power to take advantage of the workers. Workers have suffered from material shortages and lost control, including self-esteem. Systematically, the poor are continuously expelled to maintain and increase their strength, status and wealth. This relationship stably places the exploited workers in the capitalist lower-class. Thus, exploitation is often presented in class oppression (Asumah & Nagel, 2014).

In sexist oppression, gender exploitation experienced by women has two aspects; transferring the outcome of work materials to men and giving the nurturing energy and sexuality to men. Exploitation does not include domestic work at home because women do it for their husbands who are

their breadwinner. However, for example, women do a job by producing material outcomes (clothes, raw materials, crafts, etc.) which are then distributed to the market by men with inadequate compensation. On the other hand, women provide emotional care for their husbands and children. They also provide sexual satisfaction to men in bed (Hinson & Bradley, 2013).

Feminists explore how the role of the capitalist economy towards women's work. Gender exploitation patriarchally restricts women in the workplace. Many opportunities are opened for feminine work that requires caregiving (for example, babysitters or nursing home nurses) and sexual skills. Women's energy has been expended from a job that enhances their status, power, wealth; or like helping the country and entertaining others. It means gender exploitation reveals that the majority of women are wage workers with low salaries (Asumah & Nagel, 2014).

Furthermore, racist exploitation puts black people work under the control of their white masters. Black women mostly move from one to other white houses to do more work as domestic housekeepers. Meanwhile, their husbands are vulnerable to commit dismissal because they are not skilled and educated so the opportunities are loosely given to white men. Here, black women also have to bear the burden of suffering because of the loss of their husband's job, which of course reduces the fulfilment of their family's living expenses (Heldke, 2011).

In the United States, Most of the rich white men use to control the government and industry so public policies give more benefit to this group. In other words, despite the commitment of the US Constitution which states equality for all American citizens, heretically, the different treatment against US blacks, women, working-class and other subordinate groups means that the United States operates as a disproportionate nation-state that prospers prosperous white men. As this group is capable to master schools, news media, and other social institutions that legitimize what is perceived as truth, they have an authority to obscure their strength and restore their special interests as national interests. In response to this situation, US blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Rican, Native Americans, and other similar groups often embrace the nationalist ideology. Because such ideas emphasize solidarity and resistance, such ideologies have been used effectively in challenging US state policies. Politically black activities are exploited (Collins, 2009).

US history mentions black women in the United States in the 18th century may move out as household services from some private homes. The others could only work as a nursing home assistant, babysitter, dry cleaning or fast food worker. To open the opportunity of job vacancy for black women, the US government provides training and scholarships of parenting ability. Thus, black women are mostly incompetence and uneducated so they are expelled from the job which increases their status, power and wealth. Also, as slavery and Southern urbanization exist, many

black women were immigrated or urbanized to be enslaved in domestic work. They are not kept away from their family but they have to suffer racial discrimination committed by their white master. Such condition describes black women have been treated inhumanely like a machine mule and made into a scenic object.

On the other hand, their husbands are vulnerable to be fired from their jobs because they are incompetent and unwell-educated. So, black women indirectly have to take responsibility to fulfil their living needs. They have no choice but to live with these conditions. Even if they combine their salaries, their money is often not enough. In this case, black families systematically continue to be poor and are politically exploited (Jones, 1985).

## **2. Marginalization**

Marginalization is a series of actions that reduce or limit individuals or groups to be the peripheral society. It means the exclusion process. Marginalization may be most dangerous because it involves severe material seizure and even annihilation. Injustice in the seizure of material provides payment and welfare services as a step to overcome marginalization, in fact, it cannot eliminate or reduce its damages. On the contrary, these efforts generate new injustices because it deprives the rights and freedoms of who depends on it (Yusuf, 2016).

Liberalism has traditionally demanded equal citizenship rights. Weak people such as the poor, single mothers, disabled or insane people and children take protection to social institutions. Indirectly, depending on protection to them confirms the authority rights while social institutions may be arbitrary and invasive. They also enforce their own rules that must be obeyed or do not support for their conditions. In meeting the marginalized, they know what must be given but should not claim what is best for the served. Thus, the dependency suspends the need for basic rights of privacy, respect and unfair individual choices.

On the gender perspective, marginalization limits women's experience in determining their life choices. Women may face discrimination in the household. They are considered as domestic creatures who are required to stay at home and care for their children. Working outside the home means that they challenge their husbands to compete. This stereotype erases women's rights to develop, get proper education and contribute to improving the welfare of society (Heldke, 2011).

The cases of US racial oppression occur more in the form of marginalization than exploitation. Not only black people, the other colours who are Indian Americans, Alaskan Natives, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, Oceanian Americans, and other racial groups are also experienced marginalization. Someone who loses his job and does not find a new one, oldsters, women, single mothers, disability children, lesbians

and mental or physical disabilities have their portions in the experience of facing marginalization (Hinson & Bradley, 2013).

The US history of black people in the 18th century mentions black people experience Southern urbanization and separation in church, school, employment, transportation, community service and others. Giving a special Bible for black people at the blessing ceremony of their marriage racially provided unfair treatment and as proof of their identity. Here, their nationality could not save them. Besides, black children were not permitted to make choices for their school. They had to go to school to black school that might not provide a good education or facility. Although such treatment has been abolished from the US law in the 15th amendment of 1870, many people still apply the authority's right to establish their hierarchy towards black women (Collins, 2006).

### **3. Powerlessness**

The idea of dominant justifies unfair treatment to whom has no power. It divides people into groups that have power and are powerless. Powerlessness is also related to Marxist capitalists. The powerless are controlled by the authorities to do the orders. The authorities prevent them from increasing their capacity and strength. Powerlessness does not neglect the social division that also applies to the middle class and working class.

Powerlessness expresses the difficulties for those who are not confident to speak their voice. In the United States, the powerless does not participate in the basic process of democracy. Exactly, they do not participate in the decision of making process. They assume that they are not able or their participation do not give any contribution. Powerlessness allows a person to oppress himself. The insecure because of the assumption of being incompetence and powerless makes him suffer. Often the powerless do not realize that they have been oppressed and treated unfairly (Hinson & Bradley, 2013).

Freire (2004) creates the idea of a culture of silence which is a common example of powerlessness. Someone who greatly suffers because of the unfair treatments may unconsciously experience oppression. Meanwhile, for example, the slaves know that they are never able to voice their powerless even if they want to. Both are equally forbidden to talk about how their terrible situation. They are forced to be silent. Regardless of they want to reveal the truth or not, the opportunity can find the possibility for the change.

Through indoctrination, the powerless naturally believe that they are in the lowest class of the ruler. Despite their refusal, they will recognize that the authorities are easy to control and take advantage of them. The only way is to instil awareness to generate and develop power through education, literacy and self-reflection. The awareness that their existence in this world must have a function and strength can free themselves from



negative doctrines and then bring up the efforts to eliminate their oppression (Hill, 2009).

#### **4. Cultural Imperialism**

Discussing the next face of oppression, Young assumes that cultural imperialism involves how western culture takes power and establishes it as a norm which is naturally applied and imitated by society. Western culture serves as a dominant which can control society in the actions, behaviours and attitudes. It has the power to regulate how people interpret and communicate. Therefore, a belief is formed to spread and express the experiences, values, goals and achievements of certain groups which is then applied to certain society to fulfil its needs. American culture adheres to a Jewish Christian belief system that is combined with Anglo British culture that glorifies the whites. As a result, America fundamentally applies white beliefs and values to their society, especially America has no official language so English becomes the dominant language above other languages (Heldke, 2011).

Sexuality is a common example of cultural imperialism that occurs throughout the world. Heterosexuals take a position as the dominant group, while other sexuality groups are inferior or abnormal. The education and cultural system reinforce the assumption that heterosexuals are normal and better. This assumption is called “heteronormy” which forces various other sexuality (bisexual and homosexual) to become

heterosexual. Therefore, lesbians are rejected and considered exit of cultural norms. Because belief is inherent and justified in the norms, the human mind is unconsciously acquired and sometimes poisoned. While heterosexual raises a system of authority for men, patriarchal culture separates and oppresses women. Irresponsibly, cultural imperialism that develops day by day brings women to be increasingly cornered and marginalized (Asumah & Nagel, 2014).

In recognizing a culture-dominated society, the stereotype is a mark that cultural imperialism oppresses certain group to make them invisible. It determines what they can and cannot do. It simultaneously distinguishes who are unable to have separate identities. For example, white men have the power to poss different identities and become individual so that they can control the power to order other groups who are oppressed and experience stereotypes. In America, the majority of government officials are filled by white men. It shows that white culture indirectly acts as the dominant. Of course, white men do not miss the opportunity to prosper and meet the needs of their groups by utilizing the separated (Hinson & Bradley, 2013).

## **5. Violence**

According to Young, violence is the most obvious and visible form of oppression. The oppressed instinctively have prepared themselves from the threat of random assaults to them and their property. These assaults

may not have a clear motive but are precisely aimed to ruin, humiliate or destroy the victims. Violence can have a negative effect attached to the victims such as collective and ongoing trauma so that they visibly experience the endless suffering (Yusuf, 2016). In America, women, blacks, Asians, Arabians, gays, lesbians and children live with a fear of getting violence that may happen to them. Sexual violence and racial crime are common examples of oppression. Actually, violence is a direct result of xenophobia -- intense and irrational fear of people, ideas or habits that seem odd or strange (Young, 2011).

There are four forms of violence suffered by women: economical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence and physical violence.

Economical violence involves financial control, forbidding the wife for working outside or allowing the wife to work to endure family's living expenses, denying access to health care, and discrimination about inheritance, ownership rights and the use of customary land. At work, women receive unequal wages for a job having an equal value to men. Economic violence is a very real form of harassment and can have a lifetime impact on the victim, even after a violent relationship ends.

Sexual violence is any form of sexual actions by using coercion, either sexual assault or similar actions leading to sexuality in any situation. The attackers usually use physical violence, make threats or take advantage of the victims. The direct reaction includes shocks, fears and disbelief. Also, the victim experiences long-term symptoms and psychological trauma

such as anxiety, fear and post-traumatic stress disorder. Until now, various cases of sexual harassment and rape to children and women has no end in many countries. The world that continues to grow today even allows for gay-bashing and obsession phone calls (Yusuf, 2016).

Psychological violence or can be called emotional abuse forms harsh words or body language that aims to insult, curse and mock. It can reduce the victim's sense of identity, dignity and self-esteem. Although no injuries were seen, the impact can destroy the brotherly relations of all involved. Overall, children, teens and adults are the victims of psychological violence. In America, black people cannot avoid people's hatred of their skin colour. Even rejection does not only come from outsiders but their parents. Being black seems to bring bad luck and bear shame.

Physical violence is all forms of actions that damage victim's physic either involving a direct contact, using tools or similar actions which harm physically. It can be a slap, punch or locking the victim in a small and darkroom. In this case, Freedom is dramatically deprived and dignity is systematically violated. Children tend to easily become the victims of physical violence by their parents. Parents do not hesitate to do physical punishment if children do not obey the rules and principles. The majority of children who experience physical violence experience ongoing trauma and lasting physical losses (Dhinnoor, 2016).

## **E. Womanism**

Womanism or womanist theory is a conceptual framework that includes black women history, breadth, continuity, and diversity in the pursuing solidarity and social justice. Womanism examines black women's direct communication experience, which considers important situations and ideological positions of African-American or black women. Alice Walker assumes the term "womanist" in womanism embodies certain characteristics of women: a choice of female culture, love for herself and other women, and commitment to the struggle and survival for all people - both women and men. Womanism provides a more culturally appropriate alternative to the term "feminist", which alienates black women, daily activists and academics. Being a womanist means to position herself and her academic knowledge in the global struggle for women emancipation, including the problem of women's economic status, sexuality, political rights, violence against women, marital and family status and rights, and rights affecting black women in the United States and the world. Womanism is also seen as a philosophical perspective. It is a way to think, act, and be in the world - an epistemology, or a way to get to know black women. (Izgarjan & Markov, 2016).

Key teachings of womanism include various dangers, direct experiences as a way to recognize and make meaning about the world, and a culture of resistance. Dangers refer to black women's way in driving conflict between interrelated oppressions (eg racism, sexism, classicism), and interdependent identities (for example: blacks, women, working class). Black woman's

knowledge and sensibility make meaning rooted in their direct experience. The experiential aspects of knowledge and meaning form everyday theories about black women and are often regarded as counter-instincts for Western epistemology. A cultural resistance historically has opposed and shaped black women communication. It marks the personal and shared struggle of black women against racism, patriarchy, and other forms of oppression while developing ways towards more humanly self-liberation and social order (Handayani, 2013).

Using the term “womanism”, Walker explains that a woman may love another woman sexually or non-sexually. Such use raises ambivalence in the race, gender and sexuality relations for black women, in this case, forms taboo sexuality of lesbianism. However, such use also has a positive impact on the development of the visibility of black women's voices because of involving the cooperation between women in their struggle. As a result, womanism grows a new visionary movement that encourages race and gender pluralism for all groups of women which projects the main vision of feminism in general - justice for women.

Womanism also encourages black solidarity overall since it allows the cooperation with black men in black women's struggles. Black women and men have the same racist problem which supports black men to cooperates with black women to pursuing democracy. In this case, the cases of discrimination and oppression towards black women sexually can be decreased. Black women use womanism to provide much-needed space for

dialogue between black women, black men, and black women and men. Also, black women have good opportunities in the process of building a community through heterogeneity and not equality (Collins, 1996).



### CHAPTER III

#### FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the researcher answers the questions in research problems: a. What are forms of oppression experienced by Bride and Sweetness in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*? b. How do Bride and Sweetness struggle against oppression in Toni Morrison's *God Help the Child*?

##### A. The Oppressions Experienced by Bride and Sweetness

Morrison in *God Help the Child* creates the main character "Bride" in quaint problems and unfair treatment that was received by black people, exactly for the black women. It is being Morrison's way to express her critic about women in the aspect of postcolonialism and dismantles their decolonization process. While many colored people stay and live in America, black women have been marginalized and humiliated because their skin color is considered as the lower racial group. Morrison in this novel opposes the belief forms a hierarchy of human classes, such as American patriarchy which rejects African-American racial identity which makes them face racism, sexism, and classism. Her fiction reveals an understanding to admire black aesthetic which is racialized by American society and supports black solidarity.

The second black female character, Sweetness, who widely told in *God Help the Child*, supports possible oppression of the fellows as blacks and



women. However, she as a mother also mainly gives huge influences on Bride's pain and suffering in the past (she did oppression towards her daughter). Despite she keeps hiding her identity, she cannot avoid the oppression as a black woman.

Using the victim side story and elaborating it with Young's oppression theory, the researcher finds all five forms of oppression: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence - happen to both Bride and Sweetness in their own condition. Both experience similar oppression because of their race, class, and gender. The discussion about each oppression is explained in detail as follow:

### **1. Exploitation**

According to Young, exploitation is power and inequality relationship involving a condition when the exploited is continuously in the subordinated one. It since the dominant has power and wealth to do any actions of using the energy of individuals or groups to control the exploited (Young, 2011).

Black people in America become the subordinated ones that involve rude, erratic and unskilled works for the dominant. Especially for black women, the US government provides policies, training, and scholarship for them in the 18th century. It is about a job as a maid in white houses or which involves parenting or caretaking such as a babysitter, waiter, nurse in a nursing home and others. Politically it is shown that indirectly they are

excluded from the jobs that can increase their power, status, and wealth. Moreover, a belief of working outside the house for women is considered challenge to compete with their husbands which affects women's emancipation for the black. The women should work since their husband is vulnerable to being fired due to their lack of education and ability. As a result, black women often take responsibility to fulfill their living expenses and in other words, black families have no opportunity to increase their economic status and systematically remain to be poor (Jones, 1985).

In *God Help the Child*, the exploitation is described by Sweetness who suffers due to her status as the poor. Although her skin is brighter and yellowish, Sweetness's status can not save her from other's unfair treatment since she is perceived as the poor. The exploitation is shown in the excerpt below.

So it was just us two for a long while and I don't have to tell you how hard it is being an abandoned wife. I guess Louis felt a little bit bad after leaving us like that because a few months later on he found out where I moved to and started sending me money once a month, though I never asked him to and didn't go to court to get it. His fifty-dollar money orders and my night job at the hospital got me and Lula Ann off welfare. Which was a good thing. I wish they would stop calling it welfare and go back to the word they used when my mother was a girl. (Part I, p.11)

The except "*my night job at the hospital got me and Lula Ann off welfare*" states that Sweetness is involved in the low paid job. Indirectly, as unwell-educated women, Sweetness is limited to get an opportunity for increasing her power, status and wealth through her job. As a nurse helper in the hospital, she better relies on her physical energy in caretaking than

knowledge. Besides, Sweetness is also a single mother who has to raise her black baby after her husband leaves their house. She is relieved that her husband often sends them money. However, her salary and the welfare from Louis still does not pay off their life needs. This condition shows Sweetness is continuously poor. Also, Sweetness's dislike of the "welfare" portrays American negative perspective towards that word.

Used in dog-whistle politics, the word "welfare" in America is the code refers to the poor - usually black people and Latinos. This word is very sensitive for Americans, especially for white people. It gives them the impression that the rich pay taxes to weed the poor blacks who don't work, drink a lot and commit a lot of crimes. Usually, in a political campaign, the slogan "don't choose pro-welfare" have very racist meaning: anti blacks and Latinos (Supriatma, 2018).

Collaborating the perspective above with Sweetness's case, since Sweetness is a member of American citizens, the negative perspective of "welfare" certainly influences her way of thinking. Sweetness seems to dislike the way her surroundings call "welfare" to the money from Louis because she thinks that they will treat her as the poor and then she feels exploited. Here, Sweetness's exploitation is supported by Young's statement – anything can be perceived as an oppressive condition if the victim says so (Young, 2011).

The next excerpt discusses Sweetness's exploitation in the residence due to her status as the poor. It is described in:

He demanded the rent be paid in cash before noon on the first day of the month and charged a late fee if you knocked on his door five minutes late. Sweetness was so scared of him she made sure I delivered the money first thing in the morning. I know now what I didn't know then—that standing up to Mr. Leigh meant having to look for another apartment. And that it would be hard finding a location in another safe, meaning mixed, neighborhood. (Part I, p.36)

Mr. Leigh's position in Sweetness's life is as the owner of her apartment. The owner because he has the legal ownership has right and freely does anything to his possession. In this case, Mr. Leigh enforces an arbitrary rule on the apartment payment system to his apartment occupants. As a member of Mr. Leigh's apartment, whether she agrees or not, Sweetness has to obey that rule. Sweetness must pay the rent on time or she will get a late fee. Here, Sweetness's silence to Mr. Leigh's policy is declared as the exploitation.

Sweetness's exploitation, in this case, is supported by a Marxist perspective: the capital has the power to use the poor by using money as their authority. It is the actual process of exploitation experienced by Sweetness. Her little wealth has been monopolized and slowly seized by the capital, Mr. Leigh. Besides, Sweetness has no other choice than obey the rule because it is very difficult to find cheap, safe and comfortable apartments in that area.

The exploitation towards poor black women is not only experienced by the selected character "Sweetness" but also supported by the evidence shown by Sweetness's mother. It is stated on:

The Bible! Can you beat it? My mother was housekeeper for a rich white couple. They ate every meal she cooked and insisted she scrub their backs while they sat in the tub and God knows what other intimate things they made her do, but no touching of the same Bible. (Part I, p.10)

Lula Mae (Sweetness's mother) works as the housekeeper for a rich white family. Lula Mae does a good job, more struggle in services, but all she does never seems enough for the whites. Instead, the whites make her do more difficult works arbitrarily. Here, the arbitrary treatment suffered by Lula Mae from her white master indicates exploitation.

Discussing this case further, the excerpt "no touching the same bible" answers the reason behind the exploitation that happens to Lula Mae. For racist whites, such caricature of black people strengthens whites' belief to justify their unfair treatment towards black people because they claim that they are not in the same class or their God was different. They believe their God is naturally superior so whatever they do to black people are forgiven.

The other reason, supported by a Marxist perspective, is because the riches claim themselves as the dominant because they have money, meanwhile, the poor are forced to submit them. Thus, Lula Mae as the poor deserves to be exploited (Heldke, 2011). However, Lula Mae's case is not that simple. Lula Mae is a private employee whose salary depends on the rich's satisfaction, it means serving her master well is her duty. Therefore, Lula Mae's situation supports her to do whatever they order voluntarily. Her situation also states that poor black women have been exploited due to their job for a long time since Lula Mae's experience occurs when Sweetness was still young until she herself experienced it (already explained in the discussion of the previous excerpt above).

Overall, corresponded with Collin's perspective, through Sweetness and Lula Mae's case, the researcher finds a social phenomena in which the majority of black women in America are involved in low-paying jobs because they have a job as the housekeeper or related to parenting ability (babysitters, nurses in nursing home, waiters, etc.) in this novel is stated. Both Sweetness or Lula Mae are the members of American citizens, poor black women and work by getting low salaries - which is the factors cause Sweetness and Lula Mae to experience exploitation.

## **2. Marginalization**

Marginalization refers to the process of exclusion that places or shift someone away to be the peripheral society. Marginalization is perhaps the most dangerous form of oppression because it involves material seizure and annihilation. The marginalization process of black women continues as long as white power dominates a particular society. Since the whites are dominant and being the main culture, their assumption about no needs other "colored women" to achieve welfare in society. The support for black women is also not obtained (Yusuf, 2016). Black women lack of attention, help, and companion in this case.

The researcher finds the data related to marginalization in *God Help the Child* which is experienced by Bride and Sweetness. Bride is marginalized in her workplace because of lacking in education and her

skin color. Meanwhile, the law separates Sweetness in taking public facilities and services since she perceives as black women.

Marginalization happens to Bride as discussed on:

I was encouraged to take business courses not the college track, community college instead of four-year state universities. I didn't do any of that. After I don't know how many refusals, I finally got a job working stock— never sales where customers would see me. I wanted the cosmetics counter but didn't dare ask for it. I got to be a buyer only after rock-dumb white girls got promotions or screwed up so bad they settled for somebody who actually knew about stock. Even the interview at Sylvia, Inc., got off to a bad start. They questioned my style, my clothes and told me to come back later. (Part I, p.26)

Bride lacks the chance to study at university or college but she takes a business course. Then, Bride relies on her knowledge in business to find a job. Bride gets her first job to be the stock labor even though she wants a position as the cosmetic seller.

The reason behind the placement of positions in her job is because Bride is considered not qualified educated young woman since she is not a university graduate. This reason also causes Bride to wait for getting promotion after white employees but in fact, become the first one to be fired, and is limited to getting a high-paid job. This condition states Bride experience the exclusion process directs her to be marginalized (it is corresponding with Young's definition of marginalization in the previous explanation).

On the other hand, the opportunity to appoint a position prioritizes white employees shows that Bride is marginalized in the workplace not only because of her educational status but also because of her skin color. Thus, when she knows there is another institution that do not

fixate on skin color, without any hesitation, Bride took the chance to settle by doing the interview in Sylvia, inch.

In a different context, in line with Young's perspective states marginalization involves material seizure and annihilation (Yusuf, 2016), the researcher finds Sweetness is marginalized since she indirectly suffers material seizure through the separation of facilities and services enforced by the government in civil rights law for people black people, as stated on:

Can you imagine how many white folks have Negro blood running and hiding in their veins? Guess. Twenty percent, I heard. My own mother, Lula Mae, could have passed easy, but she chose not to. She told me the price she paid for that decision. When she and my father went to the courthouse to get married there were two Bibles and they had to put their hands on the one reserved for Negroes. The other one was for white people's hands. (Part I, p.10)

Sweetness's narrative above is an interpretation of the law in the past for black people. At that time, many laws are applied in America. These laws vary regionally which imposes various separations on each race (Collins, 2006). Hence, Sweetness cannot escape from the legal law enforced by the American government. Somehow, Sweetness is a member of American citizens so she has to get married and receive the blessings on the black bible like her father.

That interpretation also states black people are marginalized and white people don't want to be equalized to black people, even their gods are different. The experience of marginalization in the same context is also discussed in the data below:



Some of you probably think it's a bad thing to group ourselves according to skin color— the lighter, the better— in social clubs, neighborhoods, churches, sororities, even colored schools .....But because of my mother's skin color, she wasn't stopped from trying on hats in the department stores or using their ladies' room. And my father could try on shoes in the front part of the shoestore, not in a back room. (Part I, p. 10)

Sweetness's experience in her childhood above informs us about the harsh reality faced by black people because of their skin color at the time. Black people suffer the pain of hatred and humiliation due to racist prejudices and discriminative habits from people even though the era of slavery has ended. Also, the government participates in marginalizing black people by continually authorizing the separation or elimination of civil rights and denying citizenship towards black people (Collins, 2009). As a result, American people do the same thing since they think it is part of their ideology, even their treatment may be worse.

From a racism perspective, these experiences of black people are called "racial segregation" or "American apartheid". This term refers to the separation of facilities and services in all access such as housing, schools, churches, health services, and others, or it can also be defined as a discriminative separation committed by white people against other colored people, including the blacks. This separation is often unequal because the portion given to the colored especially black people is fewer. Implicitly, it seems that white people consider them to be

dominant and superior so this kind of separation is common in America in the past (Collins, 2006).

Not corresponding with that perspective, in the excerpt above, young Sweetness and her parents do not experience the separation, survive from people's hatred and humiliation, and are not marginalized by people around them because of their skin color. Visibly, Sweetness and her parent's skin is brighter and yellowish so people do not recognize their true identity and then they are not included in their exception list.

### **3. Powerlessness**

Young argues that the powerless individual or group does not have the power to resist their oppression. The dominant easily control the powerless to do their orders since the capacity and power of the powerless has been limited by them (Hinson & Bradley, 2013). According to Freire (2004), the powerless experience "a culture of silence" in which they are not able to speak their voice. While particular individual or group (e.g. a slave) certainly cannot express the terrible condition, the others just think that their participation will not give an impact (Hill, 2009).

Those who feel powerless possibly suppress themselves since they believe they become the lowest class of the ruler. As a result, the powerless feel insecure and need to instil awareness that everyone has their

own competence so the powerless need to strengthen their power by developing their education, literacy and self-reflection.

In this novel, Bride and Sweetness experience powerlessness due to two reasons: the capitalist power and the absence of acceptance. Both Bride and Sweetness together feel powerless under the landlord's order. Mr. Leight as the apartment owner considers himself as the dominant who has the power to control Bride and Sweetness. On the other hand, Bride and Sweetness feel powerless due to the rejection of their family but Bride also needs acceptance from her society.

As Marxist's perspective argues the capital or rich has the power to control others, the poor believe they are in the lowest class who have no power (Heldke, 2011). In this novel, this belief supports Bride and Sweetness feel powerless under their landlord's order, as follow:

So when I told Sweetness what I'd seen, she was furious. Not about a little crying boy, but about spreading the story. She wasn't interested in tiny fists or big hairy thighs; she was interested in keeping our apartment. She wasn't interested in tiny fists or big hairy thighs; she was interested in keeping our apartment. (Part I, p.36)

The excerpt above shows Bride and Sweetness as the poor feel powerless under the landlord's power so they choose to be silence from sexual harassment committed by their landlords. Since it is the best way to keep them from being kicked out of the apartment. Although Sweetness does not approve of their actions, she forces her daughter to avoid problems.

At the same time, Bride is just a little girl who is powerless to challenge the adults, either her mother or Mr. Leight. The detail is discussed in the excerpt below.

I just hung over the windowsill and stared, something made the man look up. And it was Mr. Leigh. He was zipping his pants while the boy lay whimpering between his boots. The look on his face scared me but I couldn't move. That's when I heard him shout, "Hey, little nigger cunt! Close that window and get the fuck outta there!" (Part I, p.36)

Young Bride directly sees what Mr. Leight does to the anonymous little boy. Her first reaction she becomes speechless. At that time, Bride is still too young to understand what really happened to the little boy. What Bride understands is Mr. Leight does a bad thing since the little boy looks scared. But Bride cannot help him because she is afraid of Mr. Leight. Bride even got yelled and insulted by using a very racist naming "nigger cunt" which has a negative meaning and is not worth to direct to children like young Bride because it can damage her mindset.

In this case, Bride feels powerless to speak her voice. Bride innocently only tells Mr. Leight's bad deed to her mother. However, Sweetness forces her to be silent so Bride thinks even if she tells others it is useless. At the same time, Bride is a daughter who has been abandoned by his mother for a long time so she thinks following his mother's orders is her chance to get Sweetness's attention.

Another reason Sweetness experience powerlessness because she feels rejected by her husband. It is supported by the excerpt below.

He never touched her. I never did convince him that I ain't never, ever fooled around with another man. He was dead sure I was lying. We argued and argued

till I told him her blackness must be from his own family— not mine. That's when it got worse, so bad he just up and left and I had to look for another, cheaper place to live. (Part I, p.11)

The excerpt above mentions Sweetness is accused by her husband, to have an affair. Both Sweetness and Louis argue about whose Bride's black skin comes from. Louis does not admit Bride as his child. Meanwhile, Sweetness does not convince him that she never fools around with another man. Sweetness just says that Bride's blackness originates from him. However, Louis cannot accept Sweetness's statement so he leaves the house. This condition describes Sweetness feels powerless to challenge that man's accusation.

Sweetness's powerlessness reflects that the case of household disputes perhaps display a patriarchal representation of gender towards women in family life. Woman in Sweetness's case is the first to be accused or blamed for an un-motivated accusation. It happens since Louis as a man and head of the family considers men as the dominant and women must submit all his words and orders – it is supported by the assumption states women are inferior and weak creatures (Djajnegara, 2000). As a result, Louis does not receive any plea. Clearly, Sweetness is aggrieved. She does not only have to bear the burden of family responsibilities but she is also emotionally hurt.

On the other hand, Bride greatly needs acceptance since her parent rejects her presence. Bride makes acceptance as her life goal. The rejection

of her presence leads Bride as the powerless. Bride's powerlessness in family acceptance is stated on:

I told her to call me "Sweetness" instead of "Mother" or "Mama." It was safer. Being that black and having what I think are too-thick lips calling me "Mama" would confuse people. Besides, she has funny-colored eyes, crow-black with a bluetint, something witchy about them too. (Part I, p.11)

From Sweetness's narration above, it is shown that Bride's presence has been rejected by her parents. Sweetness does not let Bride calls her "Mother" or "Mama" but "Sweetness". Bride's powerlessness is described as the condition in which her mother neglects her daughter to close to her. Bride never really gets her mother's love. Due to that, Bride in another excerpt shows how hungry Bride for her mother's attention.

I used to pray she would slap my face or spank me just to feel her touch. I made little mistakes deliberately, but she had ways to punish me without touching the skin she hated—bed without supper, lock me in my room— but her screaming at me was the worst. When fear rules, obedience is the only survival choice. And I was good at it. I behaved and behaved and behaved. (Part I, p.24)

Bride feels powerless because she wants her mother's love. Bride is willing to do anything to get Sweetness's attention. Bride often deliberately violates what Sweetness prohibits so she receives physical punishment or other punishments that damage her body. Bride is so hungry to know her mother's touch.

Bride's silence over Sweetness's treatment indicates that Bride experiences a condition in which she is powerless to speak her voice. Exactly, Bride naturally realizes her mother rejects her presence because of her skin color so she instills her mindset that black people are hated for

the blackness, and thus, Bride naturally believes that talking about her pain is wasteful.

Through Bride case, and elaborates it with Collins's perspective, the researcher finds black people especially black children have lost their self-image and acceptance because they are not taught to build confidence and pride as blacks by their parents. As a result, black people, especially women, often feel insecure about their physical beauty, stated as follow:

“I’m scared. Something bad is happening to me. I feel like I’m melting away. I can’t explain it to you but I do know when it started. It began after he said, “You not the woman I want.”

The excerpt above states Bride loses social acceptance. The sentence “I feel like I am melting away” in Bride’s narration in part 1 shows Bride feels rejected by Booker’s words. Contantly Bride’s confidence and pride are offended then lead her to feel powerless.

Another reason also because Bride wants Booker to tell her the truth but she is powerless. It makes Bride more suffer since Booker uses to expresses his love and admiration for her blackness. The closest person for Bride suddenly rejects her cause she feels more powerless, no one supports her.

Discussing this case further, in racist language, Booker’s words “You’re not the women I want” have a very racist meaning. It can be the rejection of a particular race existence - black people in Bride’s case. It can also mean rejecting black aesthetics and expelling black women from the definition of ideal women – it is supported by Wolf’s beauty myth that

states the perfect representation of ideal women directs to the whites (Mardhani, 2013). Therefore, it is understandable why Bride feels rejected and misunderstand by Booker's words.

The next excerpt shows how badly Bokker's words affect her emotion, as stated on:

Any minute I would hear the key turn, the front door click open and close. But I didn't hear anything the whole night. Nothing at all. What? I'm not exciting enough? Or pretty enough? I can't have thoughts of my own? Do things he doesn't approve of? By morning soon as I woke up I was furious. (Part I, p.13)

Bride is speechless and hurt by Booker's words - especially that man suddenly leaves her without explaining the meaning of his words. Bride then feels complicated and becomes insecure. This condition leads Bride experiences more severe powerlessness – it is in accordance with Young's perspective states that through the process of indoctrination those who are powerless possibly suppress themselves because the insecurity control over them (Young, 2011).

In the same context, Bride's powerlessness is discussed in another conflict as follow:

Bride swallowed. For the past three years she'd only been told how exotic, how gorgeous she was—everywhere, from almost everybody—stunning, dreamy, hot, wow! Now this old woman with woolly red hair and judging eyes had deleted an entire vocabulary of compliments in one stroke. Once again she was the ugly, tooblack daughter in her mother's house. (Part IV, p.81)

Bride approves the beauty of white skin color. For the first time after changing her appearance, Bride is fascinated by other woman's beauty. Queen's white skin and red hair have intimidated her. Bride is powerless since she feels insecure, even compares their beauty. Bride admits Queen's



beauty is looked more authentic. Through this doctrine, Bride believes she is rejected.

#### 4. Cultural Imperialism

Cultural imperialism places the culture as colonial. It means the culture takes the power to control the society in acting, behaving and making an attitude. By regulating a good or bad belief, cultural imperialism sets the norms for society to be followed. Barker (2006) states cultural imperialism does not fully erase the original culture but it has a diverse effect on the local culture. Thus, there is a rotation of cultural domination from time to time (Barker, 2006).

Young explains that:

*“Those who are oppressed by cultural imperialism are both marked by stereotypes and made to feel invisible. The stereotypes define what they can and cannot be. At the same time, these same stereotypes turn these people into a mass of Others that lack separate identities. The White male can have a distinct identity and be an individual because he holds the most power. All other groups are just “groups” of Others.”*

American culture adheres to Jewish Christian belief that favours white people so American stereotype is also influenced by white favouritism (Hill, 2009).

##### a. Stereotype

Lippman’s definition states stereotype is a complex form of grouping someone or people that mentally regulates individual experiences and directs individual attitudes in facing a particular

community. It becomes a way to organize the images of individuals into a certain and simple category which is used to represent a group of people.

The stereotype is spread so easily. It is because humans have a psychological need to group and classify things. The world in which various things are too vast, complex, and dynamic to be known in detail. So, individuals want to classify and compartmentalize it. The problem is not about the grouping or classification, but overgeneralization and negative judgment (actions or prejudices) towards the members of a particular group as like black women which is explained as follows (Lippmann, 1992).

In *God Help the Child*, stereotype happens only to Bride. The stereotype groups Bride into a member of particular group expelled from the society due to her skin color. Others' actions and prejudices stereotype her like excerpt below.

### 1. Stereotype from Family

In family relation, the stereotype may happen. *God Help the Child* shows Sweetness as a mother stereotypes Bride as stated on:

She was so black she scared me. Midnight black, Sudanese black. I'm light-skinned, with good hair, what we call high yellow, and so is Lula Ann's father. Ain't nobody in my family anywhere near that color. Tar is the closest I can think of yet her hair don't go with the skin. It's different—straight but curly like those naked tribes in Australia. (Part I, p.10)

From the excerpt above, Bride has been stereotyped by her mother because of her skin color. Her mother (Sweetness) does not only reject her presence but she also claims her daughter into Sudanese. Sweetness since her skin color is brighter and yellowish, she notices the contrasting skin between them. Indirectly, Sweetness ignores her daughter. This case shows women in the same race possibly stereotype the fellows, moreover in the family.

Sweetness's stereotype also shows black people inevitably hate their blackness, as stated on:

I know I went crazy for a minute because once— just for a few seconds— I held a blanket over her face and pressed. But I couldn't do that, no matter how much I wished she hadn't been born with that terrible color. I even thought of giving her away to an orphanage someplace. And I was scared to be one of those mothers who put their babies on church steps.

Sweetness is very surprised that she has given birth to a black baby, Bride. She does not want anyone else to know that Bride is her daughter so without thinking, Sweetness almost kills her black baby. Sweetness also has thought to abandon the black baby to the orphanage. However, her maternal instinct does not let her do all that. Sweetness maybe dislikes Bride's blackness, but her hatred can not be a reason to take away someone's life.

The real reason why Sweetness dislikes Bride's blackness is that she is afraid of how people will treat them as described in the excerpt below.

I knew enough not to take her with me when I applied to landlords so I left her with a teenage cousin to babysit. I did the best I could and didn't take her outside much anyway because when I pushed her in the baby carriage, friends or strangers would lean down and peek in to say something nice and then give a start or jump back before frowning. (Part I, p.11)

Sweetness's narration above mentions Sweetness does not like to walk outside with her black baby. She rather leaves the baby to a teenage cousin when she goes to work. Sweetness probably feels shamed because of their contrast skin color. Sweetness does not want to be judged and accused to have an affair with another man by others.

## 2. Stereotype from Society

Stereotype happened to black people for a long time ago. In this novel, Bride experiences stereotype in the series of her life starts from her first social institution (in school), then continue to the widest institution (workplace and human relationship). The first evidence states Bride is stereotyped by her peers. It is described in:

I was six years old and had never heard the words "nigger" or "cunt" before, but the hate and revulsion in them didn't need definition. (Part I, p.37)

As the school is the first place for children to communicate and interact, young Bride knows social stigma about her black skin from her peers. In this case, the adults' social stigma which circulates around them also influence children's mindset.

Social stigma in the excerpt above argues black people are marginalized, shunned, related to sexuality, and considered to be from the same place. This stigma refers to the terms used by those children. Bride is called “Negro” or “cunt” by her peers. They call her by that term to humiliate her. Through this case, it is inevitable that black children often suffer stereotypes by her peers.

Further, Bride’s stereotype continues to her workplace. Her white friend, Brooklyn, compares their beauty. In detail, it is explained in the excerpt below.

I shouldn’t be thinking this. But her position at Sylvia, Inc., might be up for grabs. How can she persuade women to improve their looks with products that can’t improve her own? There isn’t enough YOU, GIRL foundation in the world to hide eye scars, a broken nose and facial skin scraped down to pink hypodermis. (Part I, p.21)

The excerpt shows Brooklyn's way of thinking about Bride. Elaborating it with Naomi Wolf's beauty myth which states the ideal women definition directs to whites' physical body: slim and tall body, white skin and blonde hair (Mardhani, 2013), Brooklyn as the whites stereotypes Bride's skin color and expels her from the real definition of woman's beauty. Brooklyn thinks the physical damage experienced by Bride is too awful and cannot be repaired. Especially with her black skin, Bride’s physical condition looks worse and denounces the function of cosmetics which should reflect the ideal definition of a woman. It is also Brooklyn’s reason to think that Bride is not suitable to be the manager in a cosmetic

company anymore. Bride does not realize that Brooklyn may have a lot of envy and wants Bride's position in their company, Sylvia, Inc. This case describes the whites reject black aesthetics. They consider white women to be more pretty and charming. Brooklyn's biased prejudice strengthens Young's perspective which states that American stereotypes is influenced by white favoritism since American culture adhere to Christian Jewish which favors the whites (Hill M. , 2009).

Another evidence of the white stereotypes Bride is stated on:

She nods. A tiny flash of fear is in her eyes. I'm black as midnight and dressed in all white so maybe she thinks it's a uniform and I'm an authority of some sort. I want to calm her so I hold up the shopping bag and say, "Come on. Let's sit down. I have something for you." She doesn't look at the bag or my face; she stares at my shoes with their high lethal heels and dangerously pointed toes. (Part I, p.18)

According to the excerpt, the stereotype refers to the image of black people in society. They are considered as lazy, uneducated and rude or cruel people. Sofia Haxley (a white woman) is fixated on that image so she is scared of looking at Bride's blackness and groups her as a criminal. Besides, Bride just intends to ask forgiveness for her lies that lead that woman has to stay in prison for 10 years.

Strengthened by Collins's perspective, Bride's case in this context states that the image of black people have been controlled by the whites who consider themselves dominant. The dominant has a role as the subject, deserves to define their own reality, and builds their own historical identity and name. Automatically, other colored people like

the blacks serve as the submissive who can not determine their own identity. Therefore, they often suffer negative prejudice from the image or identity created by the dominant (Collins, 2006), as happened to Bride.

## 5. Violence

As Young states, violence is the most visible form of oppression experienced by black women. black women must be prepared for random attacks that they might receive. The attacks sometimes have no clear motive There are four forms of women violence: economical, sexual, psychological and physical violence (Yusuf, 2016).

In *God Help the Child*, the researcher finds two forms of women violence, as follow, psychological and physical violence. Psychological violence involves harsh words or actions of body language to insult or humiliate the victims. On the other hand, physical violence forms any actions intended to injury the victim's body. Mostly the victims who physically face violence do not only experience physical losses, but they also have a huge trauma because of being injured (Dhinnoor, 2016).

Violence has only happened to Bride. She is easily hurt because of her skin color. The analysis provides a detail explanation as follows.

### a. Psychological violence

The first psychological violence noted by the researcher is shown by Bride's love relationship in the excerpt below.

“Isn't she beautiful?” he kept repeating. “Look at her, Mother? Dad?” His eyes were gleaming with malice. But they outclassed him with their warmth—however faked—and charm. His disappointment was obvious, his anger thinly repressed. His parents even drove me to the train stop, probably so I wouldn't have to put up with his failed racist joke on them. I was relieved, even knowing what the mother did with my used teacup. (Part I, p.26-27)

The sentence “Isn't she beautiful?” is sarcasm. The aim is to insult and humiliate Bride. The action of Bride's old lovers and his white parents is a form of psychological violence that happened to Bride. Bride has been treated as an object for jokes. For them, Bride's blackness is funny to be mocked and laughed at. The way they welcome her might seem warm to the extent of formality. Within a humbled gaze, they greatly satisfy for bullying her. They are proud that they have conquered a poor woman. They deny a black aesthetic.

Bride also experiences bullying in school as stated on:

Just like later in school when other curses—with mysterious definitions but clear meanings—were hissed or shouted at me. Coon. Topsy. Clinkertop. Sambo. Ooga booga. Ape sounds and scratching of the sides, imitating zoo monkeys. One day a girl and three boys heaped a bunch of bananas on my desk and did their monkey imitations. They treated me like a freak, strange, soiling like a spill of ink on white paper. (Part I, p.37)

As Galtung states that psychological violence can forms body languages (Dhinnoor, 2016), in this case, Bride experience psychological violence because her peers in school insult her by doing



monkey imitation, either sounds or gestures. They also do brutal attacks, stay away and isolate Bride. They have treated her like a freak, strange or spoiling. Not reporting the bullies to the teacher is not because she fears that other children will do more bullying action. Instead, she believes that adults don't care and will blame her. Since it makes Bride suffer in her feeling, the loneliness, humiliation and sarcasm words which are the source of her violence.

#### **b. Physical violence**

Bride experiences physical violence committed by her mother as shown in:

I didn't make a sound, didn't even raise a hand to protect myself when she slapped my face then punched me in the ribs before smashing my jaw with her fist then butting my head with hers. She was panting when she dragged and threw me out the door. I can still feel her hard fingers clenching the hair at the back of my neck, her foot on my behind and I can still hear the crack of my bones hitting concrete. (Part I, p. 24)

The excerpt discovers the severe physical violence happens to Bride. Here, it describes Bride's mother, Sweetness, uses to injure Bride's body. The injuries are starting from little actions like slapping Bride's face until actions that fatally damage her body. Because of Sweetness's punishment, Bride suffers physical losses. However, Bride just receives the injuries from her mother since she is afraid Sweetness will do more damage actions. It is seen that Sweetness does not only hurt Bride physically but also emotionally, Bride also suffers an ongoing trauma.

Sum up, the researcher finds children often become the victim of violence. Parents possibly commit child abuse and neglect to their children when children do not fulfill their expectations. In the case of black families who dislike their blackness, their expectation is to avoid black descendants by marrying white or other colored people whose skin is brighter and yellowish. Therefore, if that expectation is not fulfilled, they choose to educate their children in a hard and disciplined way to return their pride and self-esteem - they voluntarily give physical punishment to their children even if they do a minor violation.

#### **B. Characters' Struggle to Fight against the Oppression**

The general perspective about colored women (especially black women) circulates in society is the assumption that they are inferior and submissive under the whites' control. People suppress black women in many aspects such as economic, religious, social, etc. It is because they are oppressed in their race, gender class. In response to this case, black women need to struggle against their oppression. The aim is to achieve equal rights in society and eliminate the unfair treatment they receive (Yusuf, 2016).

Womanism basically becomes the struggle against equal rights, existence, role and status of black women, so that there will be no domination, either from men or other women. In the process, black women cooperate with either other racial groups of women (possibly the whites) or black men. This cooperation can raise the joint solidarity of racial groups, either women or

black people which grows race and gender pluralism and give positive impacts on the development of women's emancipation for the blacks. However, black women need to emphasize their struggle so their goal will be not mixed and ignored.

As the black female character in *God Help the Child* by Toni Morrison, Bride and Sweetness do struggle to be free since they have experienced oppression from people around them. Everyone has their own way to solve problems and open their opportunity. So, Bride and Sweetness's struggles are different because they have their own experience of oppression.

Bride's first conflict which makes her feel suffered is the absence of acceptance and love from her mother, Sweetness. It is Bride's reason for willing to do anything to get love from her mother. It is discussed as follow:

I was only eight years old, still little Lula Ann, when I lifted my arm and pointed my finger at her.  
 "Is the woman you saw here in this room?" The lawyer lady smells of tobacco.  
 I nod.  
 "You have to speak, Lula. Say 'yes' or 'no.'"  
 "Yes." (Part I, p.24)

Bride just wants a decent love from her mother and hopes not to be ignored. She thinks Sofia's accusation of sexual harassment is her only chance so she lies by giving a fake charge in the courtroom. At that time, Bride is too young to understand that what she has done will ruin Sofia's further life, an innocent white woman has to suffer for what she never does. Bride only thinks about how her mother will respond to her. What she understands is her effort is successful and his mother shows little attentions, as stated in:

Outside the courtroom all the mothers smiled at me, and two actually touched and hugged me. Fathers gave me thumbs-up. Best of all was Sweetness. As we walked down the courthouse steps she held my hand, my hand. She never did that before and it surprised me as much as it pleased me because I always knew she didn't like touching me. (Part I, p.24)

Bride feels happy to know what she has been dreaming of for a long time (Sweetness's attention) is achieved. She even receives compliments from her parents and audiences. Bride never expects Sweetness would smile at her and touch her skin directly, even her father (Louis) also looks so proud. Her happiness comes to the point in which her loneliness is finally filled. However, it seems, her effort is no longer success. Bride is disappointed that after that day Sweetness returns to before - neglecting and physically hurting her. Therefore, Bride gives up because she realizes her mother will never give what she really wants, as stated in:

Taught me a lesson I should have known all along. What you do to children matters. And they might never forget. She's got a big-time job in California but she don't call or visit anymore. She sends me money and stuff every now and then, but I ain't seen her in I don't know how long.

Bride chooses to be independent and live apart from her mother when she began to grow up. Sweetness's guilt above tells us that Bride still feels hurt for what Sweetness has done so Bride avoids interacting directly with her but Bride still pays for Sweetness's hardwork and shows her devotion as a child. On the other hand, her desire to get a better job requires him to change his appearance. The detail is stated in the excerpt below.

"You should always wear white, Bride. Only white and all white all the time." Jeri, calling himself a "total person" designer, insisted. Looking for a makeover for my second interview at Sylvia, Inc., I consulted him.  
 "Not only because of your name," he told me, "but because of what it does to your licorice skin," he said. "And black is the new black. Know what I mean?"

Wait. You're more Hershey's syrup than licorice. Makes people think of whipped cream and chocolate soufflé every time they see you." (Part I, p.25)

Bride knows about fashion so she accepts Jeri's advices. That man advises Bride to wear mostly white which is a contrast to her skin color for emits the beauty of her blackness. Jeri says that people will remember the combination of chocolate souffle with whipped cream by looking at her appearance than a humiliation perspective. In this case, implicating Walker's womanism idea, Bride cooperates with men in opening her life path since Jeri has a big part in Bride's changes. Bride's change is not only about her fashion but also her makeover. It is described on:

Jeri, advising me, said, "Listen, Bride baby. If you must have a drop of color limit it to shoes and purses, but I'd keep both black when white simply won't do. And don't forget: no makeup. Not even lipstick or eyeliner. None." I asked him about jewelry. Gold? Some diamonds? An emerald brooch? "No. No." He threw his hands up. "No jewelry at all. Pearl dot earrings, maybe. No. Not even that. Just you, girl. All sable and ice. A panther in snow. And with your body? And those wolverine eyes? Please!" (Part I, p.25)

Jeri helps Bride to represent her's natural beauty as black so she is prohibited to use cosmetics and any jewelry. In this era, actually, Bride not suppose to fill a shame with her skin color. After Bride follows all Jeri advices to her, it could be said as a successful change to be a beautiful woman. People previously use to seem disgraceful by looking at her has fascinated by her beauty and forgets their hatred for her black skin, as follow:

I took his advice and it worked. Everywhere I went I got double takes but not like the faintly disgusted ones I used to get as a kid. These were adoring looks, stunned but hungry. Plus, unbeknownst to him, Jeri had given me the name for a product line. YOU, GIRL. (Part I, p.25)

Bride's change makes her survive from people's hatred and humiliation towards her black skin. People in her current life know Bride as a beautiful and successful young executive in her field. They are no longer fixated by the negative image of black people and acknowledged her charm.

Not only her appearance but Bride also changes her name. It is shown by the excerpt below.

But Lula Ann Bridewell is no longer available and she was never a woman. Lula Ann was a sixteen-year-old-me who dropped that dumb countryfied name as soon as I left high school. I was Ann Bride for two years until I interviewed for a sales job at Sylvia, Inc., and, on a hunch, shortened my name to Bride, with nothing anybody needs to say before or after that one memorable syllable. (Part I, p.25)

Bride changes her name from "Lula Ann Bridewell" to "Ann Bride" as soon as she leaves her high school. She firstly uses the official name when she does a working interview in Sylvia, Inc. She again changes her name by shortening it to only "Bride". Bride successfully creates a new memorable identity and erases her miserable past. On the other hand, Bride also wants people to accept her existence.

Unfortunately, despite all efforts she does, Bride still loses people she loves. Her second destruction is when Booker (her boyfriend) suddenly disappears and Bride can not accept his words, even loses confidence she hardly builds. Her meeting with Rain (a white teenage who saves Bride from the death) on her journey to find Booker at Whiskey (a small village in California) makes her learn to accept her painful past, as stated in:

"Why? Why would she do that?" Why would anybody do that to a child? Bride wondered. Even Sweetness, who for years couldn't bear to look at or touch her, never threw her out.

.....Listening to this tough little girl who wasted no time on selfpity, she felt a companionship that was surprisingly free of envy. Like the closeness of schoolgirls. (Part II, p.62)

Bride is grateful that her childhood experiences are not as bad as Rain. Bride also shows sympathy for Rain's terrible experience and judges Rain mom's action as a bad deed. Bride does not understand why most parents (including her mother) hurt or neglect their children instead of protecting and loving them. However, Bride also learns that she isn't the only one who suffers more. Bride realizes she has to forgive her past pain in order to escape from feeling suffered, so the next step in solving problems in Bride's version is confessing her sin to Booker when they finally meet, as she says in:

"First tell me why you bought presents for a child molester— in prison for it, for Christ's sake. Tell me why you sucked up to a monster."

"I lied! I lied! I lied! She was innocent. I helped convict her but she didn't do any of that. I wanted to make amends but she beat the crap out of me and I deserved it."

The room temperature had not risen, but Bride was sweating, her forehead, upper lip, even her armpits were soaking.

"You lied? What the hell for?"

"So my mother would hold my hand!"

"What?"

"And look at me with proud eyes, for once."

"So, did she?"

"Yes. She even liked me." (Part I, p.86)

Booker cannot hide his disappointment towards Bride but he still listens to Bride's honesty about her secret, which makes them misunderstand since Booker knows it is Bride's effort to liberate herself from feel suffered. The secret is about Bride's lie of Sofia's accusation which lets that woman becomes the prisoner. Meanwhile, Bride is worried that Booker may reject her after that but she has prepared for all risks of her struggle so she does not regret to talk honestly to Booker, as stated on:

She didn't get up right away; instead she remained in Booker's bed, eyes closed, enjoying a fresh vitality and blazing clarity. Having confessed Lula Ann's sins she felt newly born. No longer forced to relive, no, outlive the disdain of her mother and the abandonment of her father.

Bride manages herself to forgive the past and overcome her trauma. She is no longer haunted by nightmares, either her guilt towards Sofia or her suffering from her parents. Her pain has been successfully healed. As her last struggle, Bride reveals her last secret, her pregnancy, to Booker on another occasion, because she hopes for a happy future with him. The details state as follow:

"No," he said. "It's ours."

Then he offered her the hand she had craved all her life, the hand that did not need a lie to deserve it, the hand of trust and caring for—a combination that some call natural love. ....Staring through the windshield, each of them began to imagine what the future would certainly be.

No lonesome wandering child with a fishing pole passed by and glanced at the adults in the dusty gray car. But if one had, he or she might have noticed the pronounced smiles of the couple, how dreamy their eyes were, but would not care a bit what caused that shine of happiness. (Part IV, p.98)

Bride's purpose of her struggle is ultimately considered successful since Booker accepts the presence of their baby. Coming from the same experience of a misused childhood by the adults, Bride fully believes Booker is capable to guides her in building a good marriage life. Indirectly, both have built their own commitments as parents. Both hope to be able to be good parents for their children, who are able to protect and love them unconditionally. In this case, Bride again cooperates with men in doing her next effort to get a better future together – it is in accordance with Walker's womanism concept.

Unlike Bride, Sweetness is never oppressed because of her skin color - people oppress her because of her gender and class (as stated in the previous



discussion). It is because Sweetness never reveals her blackness so people don't know about her hidden identity. The details is stated in the excerpt below.

But because of my mother's skin color, she wasn't stopped from trying on hats in the department stores or using their ladies' room. And my father could try on shoes in the front part of the shoestore, not in a back room. Neither one would let themselves drink from a "colored only" fountain even if they were dying of thirst. (Part I, p. 10)

Sweetness puts an awareness of the negative perspective of black people since she was a child. She was very glad her skin is brighter and yellowish rather than other blacks, even though she is also a descent of black family. Without telling about her skin color to society, Sweetness indirectly hides her identity to avoid suffering from being oppressed. Sweetness consider hiding her identity is the secured way to survive since she knows well about all hatred and ridicule towards black skin.

Even though Sweetness moves out from the old house, until the end, people do not underestimate Sweetness for her skin color. It is discussed on:

.....That's when it got worse, so bad he just up and left and I had to look for another, cheaper place to live. I knew enough not to take her with me when I applied to landlords so I left her with a teenage cousin to babysit. I did the best I could and didn't take her outside much anyway because when I pushed her in the baby carriage, friends or strangers would lean down and peek in to say something nice and then give a start or jump back before frowning. (Part I, p.11)

Sweetness's anxiety arises because she is afraid people will spread negative gossips if people see the contrast skin color between her and her black baby. So, she leaves her baby when she works. This condition shows that Sweetness's new neighbors perhaps make biases prejudice but un-automatically know her true identity if Sweetness never tells them. In this

case, it can be said that Sweetness's struggle mission to escape from suffering because her skin color has succeeded because she never reveals her blackness to others.



## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

#### A. Conclusion

From the analysis, the researcher concludes all forms of Young's oppression division: exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence – happen to Bride and Sweetness in their own condition. Exploitation occurs only to Sweetness. She is exploited due to her social status as the poor. The second form of oppression, marginalization, happens to both Brides and Sweetness in different situations. Bride is marginalized at work because she lacks in education and is perceived as the black, whereas, Sweetness's marginalization leads to the separation of facilities and services for black people. Explaining the third form of oppression, both Bride and Sweetness feel powerless for two reasons, the capitalist power and the absence of acceptance. The capitalist power forces both of them to obey Mr. Leight as the apartment owner. Both Bride and Sweetness also lose acceptance. Unlike Sweetness, Bride also needs social acceptance because her parents reject her. Furthermore, cultural imperialism in this novel happens only to Bride in the form of stereotypes. Bride is stereotyped not only by her family but also from society. Moreover, Bride is the victim of violence in this novel, either psychological or physical violence. Bride experiences psychological violence from society. Meanwhile, her

mother, Sweetness, injures Bride's body as a form of punishment for the violations she commits.

In response to the oppression, , Both Bride and Sweetness do struggles to fight against oppression. As they experience their own oppression, they have different struggles. Different from Sweetness, Bride's struggle is not only in social life but also in family life. Their goal is liberating themselves from their suffering. Their struggle, in the end, is success. Bride finally overcomes her trauma and accepts her past, whereas, until the end, people don't know about Sweetness's blackness since she never reveals it.

### **B. Suggestion**

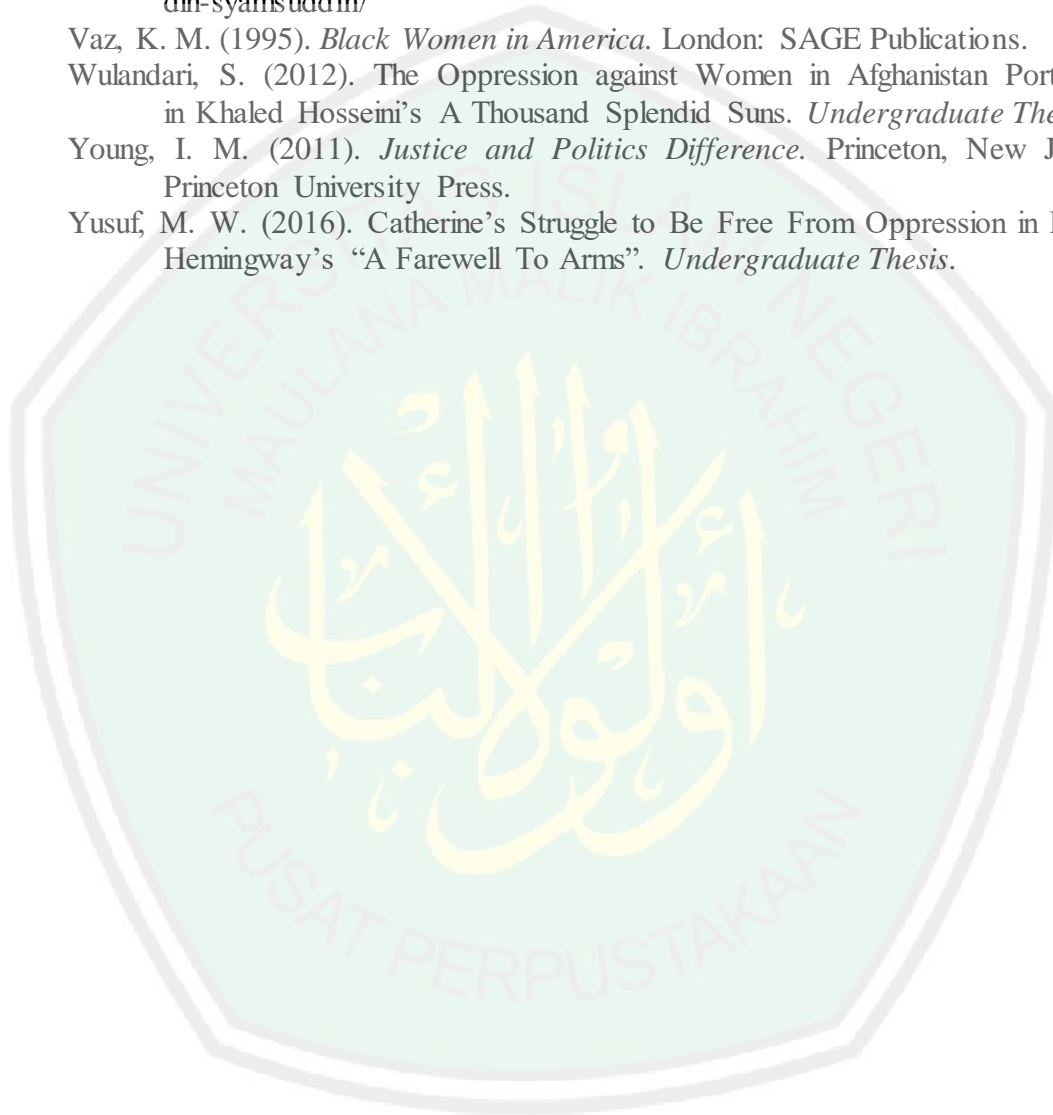
Through the presented analysis, the researcher has invited readers to acknowledge the oppressive experiences faced by black women. She provokes them to realize and care by participating in criticizing the phenomena of black women described in Toni Morrison's latest novel, *God Help the Child* (2015). Also, the researcher expresses her hopes in the further researches to develop and broaden the criticism, especially in black feminist criticism which is still narrow in scope. Not only that but the researcher also hopes other researchers will properly look at other aspects involving black women group, then help this type of critics get the world's attention such as racism problems and the limit of black's power and put aside black's nationality.

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## CURICULUM VITAE



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