

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Racism, also called racialism, any action, practice, or belief that groups of humans possess different behavioral traits corresponding to physical appearance, and can be divided based on the superiority of one race over another. Newman(2012) states that “racism: belief that human subdivided into distinct groups that are different in their social behavior and innate capacities and that can be ranked as superior or inferior.” {“Sociology: exploring the architecture of everyday life (9th ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.p. 405. ([ISBN 978-1-4129-8729-5](#)) accessed on February 27<sup>th</sup> 2020}. It means that racism is a system of doctrines or actions in stating that differences inherent in the human race are used as a benchmark for individuals that certain races are superior to other races. Racist acts often occur because one race or class of people feels they have the right to govern another race.

Racism is a topic of discussion because racism has become a motivating factor for social segregation to become a criminal act that is capable of triggering war and it is not uncommon for humanity to become victims in this racism case in the survival of humanity in the world with race, ethnicity, religion and culture that

different. Hence, many authors express racism by novel, short-stories, poem, or drama to shows and makes the audiences or the readers to enjoy his literary work.

Meanwhile, some of popular novels in American literary work are written by the popular 19th-century author, novelist, short-stories writer, poet, and essayist. Moreover, Richard Wright is an American author of novel, short-stories, poems, and non-fiction. He was born on September 4-1908 in Mississippi. Much of his literature show about racial themes, especially related to the plight of African-Americans during the late 19th to mid-20th centuries, who suffered discrimination and violence in the South and the North. Meanwhile, Richard Wright hopes his work about the literary critics will help changing race relations in the United States in the mid-20th century. Among his literary works are *Uncle Tom's Children*, *Black Boy*, *The Outsider*, and *Native Son*.

Richard Wright writes novel entitled *Native Son* which are dominant displaying the race relations between African and American in United States. In *Native Son*, he tries to reveal of self-expression, discrimination and social relationship between white people and black people in the United States.

Bigger Thomas becomes the main character in Richard Wright's novel entitled "*Native Son*". In the 1940s racist conflicts between blacks and whites were very frequent, with the average black person lacking the same social rights at work. Black people are often regarded as working class people or slaves by white people, where on average they have decent jobs and have a luxury of their lives. This is inversely proportional in the lives of black people they have to work hard to get a job for their survival. Bigger Thomas works for Mr. Dalton as a

family's private driver and drove Mary to go to school. Mr. Dalton is a very rich white man and he has a daughter named Mary Dalton. Bigger and Mary have the same age of 20years. Moreover, he accidentally kills a white woman Mary and kills his girlfriend Bessie. Hence, he becomes fearful with this condition because he feels that Mr. Dalton wants to catch him and punish him. Meanwhile, the writer would like to discuss the influence of Bigger Thomas' self-expression on violence.

Concerning self-expression on violence, it deals with the condition of Bigger Thomas as lower class and he comes from black family. He is an uneducated and depressed person due to economic factors of a poor family. He lives with his mother and has two younger siblings without father in home. This condition makes Bigger Thomas becoming the backbone of the family and work hard. Conflicts of social inequality occur when Bigger considers them unfair for him that he must work hard to fulfill his family deprivation and live without a father, while Mary lives in a state of fulfillment. Therefore, the topic of self-expression on violence against racism is chosen by the writer to display the movement of the black people to get equality and existence of social relationship life avowed. Hence, the research focuses on the main character that is Bigger Thomas.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

In regard with the topic, there are two main interesting problems to be discussed in this study. The problems are as follows:

1. What crimes does Bigger Thomas commit in Richard Wright's novel entitled *Native Son*?
2. How does racism influence Bigger Thomas' self-expression on violence in Richard Wright's novel entitled *Native Son*?

### **1.3 Scope of the Problem**

To limit the problem is very significant in this research in order to get more understanding. The novel is which analyzed by the researcher is *Native Son*. The novel is written by Richard Wright. The researcher focuses only on the self-expression on violence against racism of the main character named Bigger Thomas in the novel entitled *Native Son*. In the novel entitled *Native Son*, Bigger Thomas shows his pressure by his mother to get job. In his job, he also gets pressure by Mary Dalton, as his boss' daughter to cover up her bad habit. That is drinking alcohol. After that, Bigger gets pressure by his girlfriend, Bessie, as she is the only who knows Bigger's crime and he is afraid that she will tell the truth. Bigger expresses his self-expression by doing violence.

### **1.4 Objective of the Study**

In line with the problems that have been stated above, the research is aimed:

1. To describe the crimes committed by Bigger Thomas as the main character in Richard Wright's novel entitled *Native Son*.
2. To analyze the influence Bigger Thomas' self-expression on violence against racism in Richard Wright's novel entitled *Native Son*.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The significance of this research is to enrich and deepen the knowledge of understanding the self-expression on violence against racism in the character of Bigger Thomas in novel *Native Son*. This research is also expected to make the readers have good understanding about racism in Richard Wright's novel entitled *Native Son*. For learners, this research may improve the knowledge about self-expression of Bigger Thomas on novel *Native Son*. Lastly, for the other researchers, this research is also hoped to be an encouragement to do the same research on different topic.