SELF-DETERMINATION TO FIGHT OPPRESSIONS AS SEEN IN THE MAIN CHARACTER OF THE COLOR PURPLE BY ALICE WALKER

AN UNDERGRADUATE THESIS
Presented as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Sarjana Sastra in English Letters

By
LEVITA SETYA BUDI
Student Number: 134214010

ENGLISH LETTERS STUDY PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LETTERS
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YOGYAKARTA
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SEEN IN THE MAIN CHARACTER OF THE COLOR PURPLE
BY ALICE WALKER

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Levita Setya Budi
HE HAS MADE EVERYTHING BEAUTIFUL IN ITS TIME. Ecclesiastes 3:11
For my family, the most precious thing I have in the world
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First of all, I would like to thank God who makes all these things become possible. Without His guidance, I might never finish this undergraduate thesis. He is the one who gives me strength whenever I try to give up.

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*PLAGIAT MERUPAKAN TINDAKAN TIDAK TERPUJI*
ABSTRACT

BUDI, LEVITA SETYA. Self-Determination to Fight Oppressions as seen in the Main Character of The Color Purple by Alice Walker. Yogyakarta: Department of English Letters, Faculty of Letters, Sanata Dharma University, 2017.

In several cultures in the world, women usually receive inequality. They also experience oppressions, like violence, rape, and sexual oppression because they are living in a patriarchal society where men are the center of everything. However, it does not make women just keep silent. They fight by using self-determination. These experiences are reflected in a literary work by Alice Walker entitled The Color Purple. This novel tells about a woman which is oppressed. However, she fights the oppression by having her self-determination. This study tries to identify how the characteristics of Celie are described, to find out how the oppressions that she experiences are described, and to examine how her self-determinations to fight the oppressions described.

There are three objectives which are discussed in this study. The first one is how Celie’s characteristics are described throughout the story. The second one is how the oppressions that Celie experiences are described throughout the story. The last one is how Celie’s self-determinations to fight the oppressions are described throughout the story.

Feminist approach and radical feminism theory were used in this study to analyze self-determination to fight oppression of the main character of The Color Purple. The writer used library research methodology in order to complete the analysis. The primary source of this study was The Color Purple by Alice Walker. The other sources that the writer used to fulfill the analysis were taken from printed and electronic books, the previous undergraduate thesis, and journal articles which discussed the similar topic.

In summary, The Color Purple proves that a woman must be able to fight any oppression by having self-determination. Celie is described as an uneducated, submissive, and unattractive woman in the story. She experiences sexual oppressions, namely repeated rapes, forced to marry a man that she does not love, and treated as sexual object; and also non-sexual oppression, namely is not allowed to get education, lives separated her sister and babies, gets physical violence from her stepfather and husband, and becomes a slave in her husband’s house. She proves that her sexual self-determination, by having a lesbian relationship with Shug Avery, and non-sexual self-determination, leaving her husband to Memphis and running her own business, helps her to fight oppressions that she experiences, and she could live her life without any oppression.
ABSTRAK

BUDI, LEVITA SETYA. Self-Determination to Fight Oppressions as seen in the Main Character of The Color Purple by Alice Walker. Yogyakarta: Department of English Letters, Faculty of Letters, Sanata Dharma University, 2017.


Berikut ini adalah tiga tujuan penelitian yang akan didiskusikan pada penelitian ini. Yang pertama adalah bagaimana karakteristik Celie digambarkan dalam cerita. Yang kedua adalah bagaimana penindasan yang dialami Celie digambarkan dalam cerita. Yang terakhir adalah bagaimana keyakinan Celie untuk menentukan nasibnya sendiri digunakan untuk melawan penindasan.

Pendekatan feminisme dan teori radikal feminisme digunakan dalam penelitian ini untuk menganalisa bagaimana keyakinan Celie untuk menentukan nasibnya sendiri digunakan untuk melawan penindasan. Penulis menggunakan metode studi pustaka untuk melengkapi analisa penelitian. Sumber primer yang digunakan untuk penelitian ini adalah novel The Color Purpelarya Alice Walker. Sumber lain yang digunakan untuk memenuhi penelitian ini diambil dari buku cetak dan elektronik, skripsi terdahulu, dan jurnal artikel yang membahas topik yang sama.

Ringkasnya, The Color Purple membuktikan bahwa wanita harus mampu melawan berbagai penindasan dengan keyakinan bahwa mereka dapat menentukan nasibnya sendiri. Celie digambarkan sebagai wanita yang tidak berpendidikan, patuh, dan tidak menarik. Dia mengalami penindasan seksual, yaitu diperkosa berulang kali, dipaksa menikahi pria yang tidak dia cintai, dan menjadi objek seksual oleh suaminya; dan penindasan non-seksual, yaitu dilarang sekolah, dipisahkan dengan saudara perempuan dan anaknya, mengalami kekerasan fisik dari suami dan ayah tirinya, dan menjadi budak di rumahnya. Dia membuktikan bahwa keyakinannya untuk menentukan nasibnya sendiri secara seksual, dengan memiliki hubungan sesama jenis dengan Shug Avery; dan secara non-seksual, dengan meninggalkan suaminya ke Memphis dan memiliki usaha, membantunya untuk melawan penindasan yang dia alami dan hidup tanpa penindasan.
A. Background of the Study

In several cultures in the world, women are usually treated differently from men. They always experience inequality because they are considered lower than men. Women are seen only as an ordinary human being that do not receive a great favor like men, as what stated here,

in the most cultures of which we have any knowledge, women are considered to be sort a lower being, a creature human enough, but not quite human as the male; certainly not as wise, nor as intelligent; and lacking in most of the capacities and abilities with which the male is so plentifully endowed? (Montagu, 1953: 27).

These are the example of women that are treated differently in three different cultures in the world. First, in Bangladesh, the birth of male children is more welcomed than the female. The society believes that sons will contribute more in financial support, provide adequate support in old age to their parents, and carry forward their family names. In Bangladesh, girls receive the lower education than the boys because it is not necessary for Bangladeshi girls to receive a formal education. Girls should be a good wife and a good mother (Sultana, 2012: 257).

Second, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), domestic violence is a global problem affecting women in the world. Based on a study on women’s health and domestic violence, it is found that 71 percent of women in Ethiopia and 56 percent of women in Tanzania are reported experiencing violence. The violence is done by husbands or other intimate partners. The violence against women goes in many forms, such as beating, forced marriage,

Last, in the nineteenth-century women in America were not able to enjoy the rights that men had. They did not have any rights to vote as citizens. Married women also could not own property and had no legal claim to any money that they earned (Madsen, 2000: 3)

In the three examples that have been mentioned before, show that women are usually treated differently because of the patriarchy of the cultures. In patriarchy, men were the center of everything. Only men that had the rights and authorities at home in patriarchal society.

‘Patriarchy’ is another recurrent term, referring to government by men (viz. ‘the Father’); patriarchy is a cultural (ideological) system that privileges men and all things masculine, and a political system that places power in the hands of men and thus serves male interests at the expense of women (Madsen, 2000:xii).

In a patriarchal society, the domination of men is very strong. Men use oppression to control and dominate women so that women are not able to do whatever they want. Oppression can be in many ways, such as violence, rape, and sexual oppression as what stated here.

The use of sexual violence by men as a strategy for sustaining patriarchal control of women rose to prominence as a major feminist issue in the 1970s and was the subject of Susan Brownmiller’s ground-breaking analysis of rape in Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape (1975). Brownmiller shares the radical position that all women constitute a single class with the same experience of oppression. All women are victimised by rape because the threat of rape is directed towards all women in patriarchal culture and therefore benefits all men in that culture. The rapist is not defined in Western legal culture as a specific criminal type, and thus rape is regarded as a general masculine characteristic (Madsen, 2000:12).
The domination of patriarchal society is the main concern of radical feminism that will be used in this study as they opposed the domination of patriarchal society, as stated here,

radical-libertarian feminists rejected patriarchal society’s assumption there is a necessary connection between one’s sex (male or female) and one’s gender (masculine or feminine). Instead, they claimed that gender is separable from sex and that patriarchal society uses rigid gender roles to keep women passive (“affectionate, obedient, responsive to sympathy and approval (Tong, 2009:51).

According to Andrea Dworkin, there are three fundamental terms of radical feminism. First, women are the oppressed class and men are the class of oppressor in a patriarchal society. Second, their relationship is maintained through physical violence against women. Third, the oppression happens systematically under patriarchy (Madsen, 2000: 162).

Women, that are always being the victims of oppression, did not keep silent. They make many movements to struggle and fight for their rights throughout the history. The history of women’s movements can be divided into three, which are the first wave of American Feminism, the second wave of American Feminism, and the third wave of American Feminism.

The first wave of American Feminism that began in the 1840s, and commonly marked by the first Women’s Rights Convention, held in Seneca Falls in 1848. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and other women organized the movement because they had been denied a place at the international anti-slavery convention in London 1840. The focus of this movement National Woman’s Suffrage Association and other legal rights because women at that time have limited right to their property and political rights (Madsen, 2000: 4-7).
The second wave of American Feminism appeared in the early 1960s. Themovement focuses upon an indictment of male sexism, the domestic oppression of women, and on the exclusion of women from the public sphere and sex-based discrimination in the workplace (Madsen, 2000:7-14).

The third wave of American feminism happened in the mid of the 1980s. This is a more inclusive form of feminism that had a focus on things like race, ethnicity and sexual identity. It recognizes that every woman’s experiences are different, but continues to fight for the same rights and principles as the second wave (https://pacificu.edu/about-us/news-events/four-waves-feminism, 2015)

These three movements of American feminism show the self-determination that is done by women. Self-determination is a way that can be used by women to fight oppressions that they experience. The term self-determination according to Camille Paglia means,

What this means is that the individual should be granted the freedom to do anything that does not restrict the freedom of any other individual to do anything they wish (Madsen, 2000: 24).

In this study, the writer uses The Color Purple by Alice Walker as the object of the study. This novel brought the author to be the first African-American woman that won National Book Award and Pulitzer Prize in 1983. In 1985, The Color Purple was also made into a film directed by Steven Spielberg (https://democracynow.org/2012/9/28/alice_walker_on_30th_anniv_of,2012).

The writer is interested in Alice Walker, as the author of The Color Purple, because she puts a deep concern in gender inequality and domination of men toward women. She was involved in the Civil Right Movement, particularly the
fight against segregation and the restriction of voting rights to the literate, and also the Women’s Movement. Through her literary works, like an essay entitled *In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens* (1984) to show that she opposed male domination (Madsen, 2000:221).

The writer chooses this novel to reveal the self-determination to fight oppressions as seen in the main character of the novel, which is Celie. Celie is a fourteen-year-old girl that experienced oppression in her life. She is getting raped and abused by her stepfather. She is forced to marry a man that also abuses her. The oppressions that she experiences can be divided into two, which are sexual and non-sexual oppression. At the first of the story, she appears as a submissive woman. She never fights back; she just receives any oppression that she gets. However, at the end of the story, she is able to react and fight any oppression that she gets by using self-determination.

**B. Problem Formulation**

In this study, the writer formulates three problems:

1. How are Celie’s characteristics described throughout the story?
2. How are the oppressions that Celie experiences described throughout the story?
3. How are Celie’s self-determinations to fight the oppressions described throughout the story?
C. Objectives of the Study

This study consists of three objectives. The first is to identify how Celie’s characteristics are described throughout the story. The second is to find out how the oppressions that Celie experiences are described throughout the story based on her characteristics that have been described in the first problem. The third is to examine how Celie’s self-determinations to fight the oppressions that she experiences described throughout the story.

D. Definition of Terms

This is a definition about self-determination uses in this study. Self-determination refers to characteristics of someone that leads someone to have freedom. By having freedom, they are able to make choices based on their ownself. The term self-determination is described by Camille Paglia. According to her, self-determination means,

What this means is that the individual should be granted the freedom to do anything that does not restrict the freedom of any other individual to do anything they wish (Madsen, 2000: 24).

Self-determination is important for women who are always considered as the oppressed class in patriarchal society to have equality. By having self-determination, women will have freedom to do anything in their life. They could live their own life without any oppression from men.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Review of Related Studies

In this study, the writer presents four types of research which discussed the same work *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker. First, an undergraduate thesis by Anies Setyoningrum titled “An Analysis of Celie's Personality Development in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*.” This thesis talks about the analysis of Celie’s personality development. Setyoningrum shows how Celie, as the protagonist, develops her personality to her new and better life. Celie’s personality developments develop along with her struggles in oppression. It is much influenced by her past experience and other characters’ treatment, they are Shug, Sofia, and Nettie like stated here

I discuss this novel by relating the existing psychological problems in Celie to her past experiences and to how other characters treat her through the way they think, speak, and behave toward her (Setyoningrum, 2000: 37).

Second, an undergraduate thesis entitled “Feminism Portrayed in the Main Character, Celie, in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*” by Nina Setyorini talks about the feminism portrayed in the main character, Celie, by using four types of feminism theories, which are liberal feminism, radical feminism, Marxist feminism, and socialist feminism.

There are many aspects in determining feminism or someone who is considered as feminism. In this analysis, I would like to focus on Celie’s character and behaviors which reflect the practices of feminism. In this novel the main character, Celie, show the different images of what is society’s view and expectation about woman (Setyorini, 2009: 33).
In this thesis, the idea of feminism can be seen through Celie’s character. Celie asks for equality, freedom, independence, opportunity, and strength. The idea of feminism also reflected in Celie’s struggling to survive and to have equal rights as a human being (Setyorini, 2009).

Third, a study by Dr. Prasanta Kumar Padhi (2015: 1-4) with title “A Study of Celie’s Emancipation in Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple*,” which was written on “International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention.” It focuses on how Celie, a submissive woman, a black poor, and an uneducated African-American girl, who experiences oppressions achieves her success to being an independent woman, “Walker shows us the evolution of her major character, Celie, from being a sexually abused child to a passive wife and finally to an emancipated woman” (Padhi, 2015: 1). Based on this study, Celie succeeded to be an independent woman by having a good relationship among women character namely Nettie, Sofia, and Shug Avery.

Last, in a study written by Priya K (2014: 51-54) entitled "Violence in Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple*," which was written on “IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science 19.” This study focuses on the violence which is suffered by Celie. Celie’s relationship with her stepfather and husband is characterized by psychological and sexual oppression in the patriarchal society in America. This study explores the male domination on Celie in the black community and also white racial oppression of blacks both in the US and in Africa in the period between the turn of the century and Second World War.
From the four related studies, the writer positioned this study as the complement of the four studies before. However, there are differences in terms and theories that are used in this study. This study has never been conducted before. In this study, the writer is going to reveal how Celie’s characteristics and oppression described throughout her life, and how she fights oppressions by using her self-determination in *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker. The first difference is the personality development that Celie, as the protagonist character, experiences is influenced much by her finding of self-determination, not only influenced by her past experience and other characters’ treatment like in the undergraduate thesis by Anies Setyoningrum.

The second difference is this study will not only discussed Celie’s struggle in life to survive and to have equal rights as human being, but also her characteristics, oppressions, and finding of self-determination to fight oppressions. This study will only use feminism and radical feminism theory, not liberal feminism, radical feminism, Marxist feminism, and socialist feminism like Setyorini’s undergraduate thesis.

The third difference is the term that the writer uses in this study. The writer will use self-determination instead of self-emancipation used by Dr. Prasanta Kumar Padhi in his study. Celie’s success to be an independent woman is not because she has a good relationship among women character namely Nettie, Sofia, and Shug Avery, but is influenced much by her finding of self-determination. The last difference is this study not only focuses on the oppression or violence that
Celie experiences like a journal written by Priya K, but also how she fight the oppressions using her self-determination.

B. Review of Related Theories

1. Theory of Character and Characterization

Character and characterization play a big role in literature. Both of them are very important. The term character means a person represented in a dramatic or narrative work, including a novel. The character is understood by the reader that he has particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities. The particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities can be seen in his action and dialog in the story (Abrams, 1999: 32).

There are two categories of character, which are main or major character and minor character. A major character is the one who gets full attention from the readers. They perform an important function in the story. The success of a story depends on the major character because if the readers understand him or her, they will understand the story. Meanwhile, minor character or secondary character is the one who performs more limited function than the major characters in the story (Henkle, 1977: 88-95).

According to Greg Johnson, the character can be classified into two categories, static and dynamic character. A static character is a character that does not grow or change in the story. This character remains the same from the beginning until the end of the story. While the dynamic character is a character that undergoes grow and change in the story. The change can be a large or small
one; it can be a positive or negative one. However, it must be something significance (Johnson, 2009: 164-165).

The term characterization is different from character that has been discussed before; characterization means how an author characterizes his or her character. According to Greg Johnson, there are two methods of characterization. Firstly, direct presentation, it is a way that the author uses to present their characters, the author presents the characters directly by using exposition or analysis, what the characters are like, or they have other characters in the story that describethem. Secondly, indirect presentation, the author shows the readers about the characters through their actions, persuade the readers to conclude what the character is like through what they say or do (Johnson, 2009: 161-162).

According to Murphy (1972: 162-173), there are nine ways that an author uses to make his characters understandable to and come alive for the readers,

a. Personal Description

The author describes his characters from their appearance and clothes for the readers.

b. Character as seen by another

This is an indirect description used by the author. The author describes his character through the eyes and opinion of another character in the story.

c. Speech

The author gives a description of the character through what he says. A character can give a clue about his or her character whenever a character speaks, has a conversation with others, and gives an opinion in the story.
d. Past life

The character’s past life is used by the author to make his characters understandable for the reader. The reader can learn something from the character’s past life. A character’s past life shapes his or her character.

e. Conversation of others

The conversation of other characters in a story and everything that they say about a character help the reader to understand his or her character in a story.

f. Reactions

By letting the readers knows how the character reacts to various situations, the author can also give a clue to the readers about person’s character.

g. Direct comment

The author describes or gives commentsto a person’s character directly.

h. Thoughts

The author gives the readersknowledge about what a character is thinking about directly.

i. Mannerism

The author can describe a person’s mannerism, habits, or idiosyncrasies which may help the reader to understand a character in the story.

Those are nine ways that an author uses to make his characters understandable to and come alive for the readers. However, in the analysis, the writer only chooses eight ways to understand the characteristics of Celie. The one that will not be used in this study is direct comment.
2. Theory of Feminism

Since the ancient time, women are usually considered lower than men. They have been conditioned to believe that they are inferior and men are superior. They have to believe that what is happening is a natural fact (Montagu, 1953: 23).

Montagu states that as the inferior, women are never given equal opportunities with men. They are not given opportunities to develop their capacities and intelligence skills. There are many norms which tell women what they should do and not in the society (Montagu, 1953: 38).

As the inferior, women always experience inequality because they are considered lower than men. Women are seen only as ordinary human beings that do not have any great capabilities and abilities like men.

in the most cultures of which we have any knowledge, women are considered to be sort a lower being, a creature human enough, but not quite human as the male; certainly not as wise, nor as intelligent; and lacking in most of the capacities and abilities with which the male is so plentifully endowed? (Montagu, 1953: 27).

Feminist has a perception that gender is socially constructed. Women should be equal to men and have equal opportunities and skill like men. The term inferior and superior is also constructed by the society. According to Humm, patriarchy is the one which shapes this construction (Humm, 2004: 46).

Patriarchy means a political system that places power in the hands of men. It is a cultural (ideological) system that honors men and all things masculine and therefore serves male interests at the expense of women. Only men that had the right and authorities to control everything in patriarchal society (Madsen, 2000: xii).
In a patriarchal society, women are dependent on men because men are the center of everything in their relationship with women. Women are treated unfairly. Men use oppression to control and dominate women so that women are not able to do whatever they want. Patriarchy is the source of women’s oppression. Oppression can be in many ways, such as violence, rape, and sexual oppression (Tong, 2009:4).

Radical feminism as a specific strand of feminist movement recognizes that the oppression that happens to women is a fundamental political oppression because women are the inferior class based on their sex. Radical feminist has an aim to destroy this sex-class system (Madsen, 2000: 153).

In radical feminism according to Andrea Dworkin, there are three fundamental terms. Firstly, women constitute the oppressed class in patriarchal society and men constitute the class of oppressors. Secondly, the relation is maintained by means of unceasing physical violence and psychological aggression against women. Thirdly, the gender oppression is systematic under patriarchy and not a matter of isolated violent and discriminatory incidents (Madsen, 2000:162).

According to Dworkin, the role of radical feminism is to offer an accurate analysis of the condition of women who are angry with men that oppress them, to offer a means of women rage can be properly directed to them who oppress them, and to point to a struggle that is based on self-determination (Madsen, 2000:163).

Self-determination refers to characteristics of someone that leads someone to have freedom. By having freedom, they are able to make choices based on their ownself. Someone that has self-determination can decide the best for her life.
Women would be able to live without any oppression in their life; they would get freedom to do anything as stated here,

What this means is that the individual should be granted the freedom to do anything that does not restrict the freedom of any other individual to do anything they wish (Madsen, 2000: 24).

Furthermore, for someone that has self-determination means taking some action to fight an identity which he or she has received from society. For women that are oppressed, they have to become self-determining. They have to take action in order to fight against the oppression that they received, as stated here, to become self-determining for a woman means taking some kind of action against an identity which she has received from her social conditioning—i.e., the identity of the so-called inferior sex (Wandor, 1986: 134).

Radical feminism encourages women to be self-determining. Women have to be united and develop solidarity with each other. It asserts that women are strong and powerful, and not weak. It also declares that they refuse objectification and exploitation by men (Wardon, 1986: 135)

Radical feminists agree that patriarchal society oppresses women, as stated here that, “Socialist feminists agree with Marxist feminists that capitalism is the source of women’s oppression, and with radical feminists that patriarchy is the source of women’s oppression” (Tong, 2009:4). Feminist states that being lesbian is a form of sexual self-determination because women want to release from the domination of patriarchy (Madsen, 2000: 226).
C. Review of Black Women in the United States

In the family, the black women were oppressed by the black men in their family because of the patriarchal system. The patriarchal system refers to a political system that places power in the hands of men. It is a cultural system that gives men the right and authorities to control family (Madsen, 2000: xii).

The black women lived under the domination of black men. Women became lower than men; they were called as the inferior, socially and legally. Women being considered as the minority, if they were married they were under the control of their husband (Harley and Terborg-Penn, 1978: 5).

In a patriarchal system, the domination of men was very strong. The black men wished to rule their wives. Violence became a way that the black men used to control their wives. The black men abused their wives to show their power toward the women (Andersen, 1997: 176).

In the family, the black women perform double duties; they worked in both home and field. They were not able to choose to work or not because their husbands were the one who decided whether their wives had to work or not. Their husbands also would decide the place they should work (Giddings, 2008: 58-59).

Rape, as a weapon of domination, was still used by the men to oppress black women. If the women are married, the offended parties were the one who owned the right to sexual access to the women’s body. At that time, the unmarried black women were not the one who owned the right to their own bodies. Their father were the one who have the rights to their daughters’ bodies. If the women were married, the husbands were the offended party because the husbands were the one...
who have the rights to their wives’ bodies. It was also a kind of adultery done by the women (Hine and Thompson, 1998: 169-170).

Black women thought that this is a serious problem, they demand justice because they had more difficult time in facing gender and race problem. They made an organization named NACW (National Association of Colored Women). It was the vehicle for them to face their problem (Giddings, 2008: 92).

D. Theoretical Framework

There are two related theories that will be used in this study. Theory of character and characterization is provided to analyses the first problem formulation, which are the characteristics of the main character of *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker. These two theories provide descriptions about character and characterization, the categorization of character, and nine ways that an author uses to make his characters understandable to and come alive for the readers.

Theory of feminism and radical feminism is provided to analyze the second and third problem formulations, which are the oppression that the main character experiences and the self-determination that used by the main character to fight the oppression.

The review of black women in the United States is provided to show that women experienced oppressions throughout their life in history. The review provides information about what is the oppression that they experienced, why is the oppression happen, and how do they fight the oppressions that they experience in the history. This review provided some data that is needed in this study to support the analysis.
In conclusion, these two theories are used by the writer to answer three problems that the writer formulates. Moreover, these two theories relate one another. The theory of character and characterization can be used to analyze how the main character’s characteristics are described in the story.

From the description about character and characterization, the categorization of character, and some ways that an author uses to make his characters understandable to and come alive for the readers; all of them will help the writer to analyze the characteristics of the main character.

Theory of feminism and radical feminism will help the writer to find out the oppression that the main character experiences, and to examine the main character’s self-determination to fight the oppressions. The review of black women in the United States helps the writer to analyze the oppression that the main character experiences by looking at the history and to explore how the main character fights the oppression that she experiences by using self-determination. At the end, all of the theories and the review of black women in the United States help the writer to draw a conclusion.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

A. Object of the Study

The object of the study which is used in this study is a novel written by Alice Walker, entitled *The Color Purple*. The novel was published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publisher in New York, 1982.

*The Color Purple* brought the author, Alice Walker, as the first African-American women that won both National Book Award and Pulitzer Prize in 1983. In 1985, *The Color Purple* was made into a film directed by Steven Spielberg. The actor and actress were Whoopi Goldberg and Oprah Winfrey, and many others. This novel was also made into a musical play by the same name (https://democracynow.org/2012/9/28/alice_walker_on_30th_anniv_of, 2012).

*The Color Purple* is generally a story about a young black girl that experiences sexual and non-sexual oppression from her stepfather and husband throughout her life. She experiences repeated rapes and violence from her stepfather and forced to marry a man. Celie must take care of her husband’s children. At the beginning of the story, she appears as a submissive woman. She never fights back; she just receives any oppression that she gets. However, at the end of the story, she is able to react and fight any oppression that she gets by using self-determination.

*The Color Purple* consists of 245 pages. Alice Walker presents this novel in the form of letters written with a typical language of Black Americans. There are about 91 letters in this novel, 70 letters are written by the main character, Celie.
They are addressed to God and her sister, Nettie. The rest, 21 letters in the novel are written by Nettie. They are addressed to Celie.

**B. Approach of the Study**

In this study, the writer uses the feminism approach as the approach to analyze the self-determination to fight oppression that the main character, Celie, experiences in *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker. According to Maggie Humm, Feminist has the perception that gender is socially constructed. Women should be equal to men and have equal opportunities and skill like men. The term inferior and superior is also constructed by the society. According to Humm, patriarchy is the one which shapes this social construction that makes women oppress more than men (Humm, 2004: 46).

The writer connects the idea of radical feminism to reveal the main character’s self-determination against oppression that she experiences. Radical feminist agrees that patriarchal society is used to oppress women, “Socialist feminists agree with Marxist feminists that capitalism is the source of women’s oppression, and with radical feminists that patriarchy is the source of women’s oppression” (Tong, 2009:4).

Radical feminism analyses the domination of women by men (Madsen, 2000: 152). The role of radical feminism is to offer an accurate analysis of the condition of women that angry with men who oppress them, to offer a means of women rage can be properly directed to them who oppress women and to point to a struggle that is based on self-determination (Madsen, 2000:163).
C. Method of the Study

The writer used library research in order to complete the analysis. The primary source of this study was *The Color Purple*. This novel was written by Alice Walker. The other sources that writer used to fulfill the analysis were taken from printed and electronic books, the previous undergraduate thesis, and journal articles which discussed the similar topic.

In order to answer three problems that had been formulated in chapter one, the writer consulted with several books and theories related to the topic of character and characterization, feminism, and radical feminism. It was done in order to see the characteristics of the main character from point of view of theory character and characterization and see the oppression and the main character’s self-determination using the theory of feminism and radical feminism.

The writer did four steps to complete the analysis. First, the writer collected data, by fully reading, understanding *The Color Purple* novel, and also highlighting some important parts of the novel that could support the analysis. Second, the writer analyzed the data by using the theory of character and characterization, the theory of feminism, and radical feminism in order to answer the three problems formulation. Third, after analyzed the novel, the writer consulted with some related studies discussed the same topic. Last, the writer drew the conclusion that covered all aspects of the analysis.
CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the writer will discuss the analysis of this study. The analysis is divided into three parts, the first part will identify the characteristics of Celie throughout the story, the second part will find out the oppressions that Celie experiences throughout the story, and the third part will examine how Celie’s fight the oppressions that she experiences by using self-determinations in the story.

A. Celie’s Characteristics

Celie, a black fourteen-year-old girl, is the main or major character of *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker. Based on the definition of the main character in Abrams’, Celie is the main or major character in *The Color Purple* because she is the one who gets full attention from the readers in the story. As the main character of *The Color Purple*, Celie has an important role in the story.

Due to the fact that Celie is the main or major character in *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker, it is important to identify her characteristics. Celie, as the main character in this story, she helps the readers to understand the story because the success of a story depends on the major character. If the readers understand her, they will understand the story.

In the story, she writes letters to God and her sister, Nettie. Celie experiences oppressions from her father and her husband throughout her life. Here, the characteristics of Celie will be divided into three, which are uneducated, submissive, and unattractive.
1. **Uneducated**

Celie, the main character in the story, is described as an uneducated woman. It can be inferred from her manner in writing her letters to God and her sister, Nettie. She writes her letters in a typical language of Black Americans, like the example here,

She say Naw, I ain’t gonna. Can’t you see I’m already half dead, an all of these children. She went to visit her sister doctor over Macon. Left me to see after the others. He never had a kind word to say to me (p. 3).

From the example above, it can be seen that in the letter can be found many grammatical errors. It proves that Celie’s lacking education makes her unable to write her letters in a good language.

Celie’s lacking education happens because her stepfather never lets her go to school. From his eyes and opinion, he sees Celie as a dumb person, as stated in the story, “You too dumb to keep going to school, Pa say” (p. 11). Here, it can be seen that Celie’s stepfather has a direct description that Celie is an uneducated woman; she is too dumb for him.

Celie’s stepfather considers that Celie has to do everything that woman should do at home, not going to school. In the eyes of her stepfather, Celie is good to be a wife and keep children, not for going to school and get an education. It can be seen from his conversation with Albert, Celie’s husband, before they get married. Celie’s stepfather says,

She ugly. Don’t even look like she kin to Nettie. But she’ll make the better wife. She ain’t smart either, and I’ll just be fair, you have to watch her or she’ll give away everything you own. But she can work like a man (p. 10)

Celie’s stepfather says something like that to convince Albert to take Celie as his wife. Even though Celie is uneducated and different with Nettie, but Celie can be
a better wife. She can work like a man. For Celie’s stepfather, Celie is also good with children, “She good with children” (p. 12).

Through the eyes and opinion of Celie’s stepfather, Celie is not a clever woman. In the story, Celie’s sister named Nettie is the one that should go to school. He says that Nettie who is clever enough to go to school and Celie is not the clever one, as stated in Celie’s letter.

The first time I got big Pa took me out of school. He never care that I love it. Nettie stood there at the gate holding tight to my hand. I was all dress for first day. You too dumb to keep going to school, Pa say. Nettie the clever one in this bunch (p. 11). It is clearly stated that Celie’s stepfather sees Celie and her sister, Nettie, differently when he takes Celie out from school. He does not allow Celie to study. In his eyes, Celie is dumb and not the clever one, but her sister is the other way around.

Actually, Celie loves to go to school, even though she knows that she is not as smart as her sister, Nettie, it can be seen from her thought “I know I’m not as pretty or as smart as Nettie, but she say I ain’t dumb” (p. 11). However, her stepfather never cares about Celie. He does not even care whether Celie loves it or not, even though her sister and teacher always convince him that Celie is smart too but he does not change his mind. Even Miss Beasley, their teacher, comes to their home. She is the one who knows that Celie and Nettie want to study so badly. She comes to their home, in order to talk and persuade their stepfather so that Celie could go to school. However, it does not work at all. Miss Beasley just stops talking and leaves their home after seeing Celie’s appearance.
2. **Submissive**

Celie is a submissive woman. She always obeys every word from her stepfather, her husband, and her stepchildren. She could not be mad every time she gets oppression from her stepfather. It can be seen from her speech; she says that a child has to obey her father and her mother because there is a norm written in the Bible that says so,

I can’t even remember the last time I felt mad, I say. I used to git mad at my mammy cause she put a lot of work on me. Then I see how sick she is. Couldn’t stay mad at her. Couldn’t be mad at my daddy cause he my daddy. Bible say, Honor father and mother no matter what. Then after while every time I got mad, or start to feel mad, I got sick. Felt like throwing up. Terrible feeling. Then I start to feel nothing at all (p. 39).

The statement above gives an indirect presentation about Celie; it is clear that Celie is submissive. She knows what the Bible said and her reaction proves that she is submissive. She obeys the norm. She obeys her stepfather and never gets mad at him even though in her past life, her stepfather rapes her.

The submissive side of Celie also can be seen from her reaction when her stepfather asks her to do something. She has to do every job that her mother does, like cooking “I feel sick every time I be the one to cook.” (p. 3). Though doing any job at home makes Celie feels very sick. However, she never makes any protest. She just does whatever her stepfather asks her to do.

Celie’s past life gives a significance proof that Celie is a submissive woman. When her stepfather gives a command to her, “You gonna do what your mammy wouldn’t” (p. 3). This means that Celie has to satisfy her stepfather’s sexual desire. It happens after Celie’s mother getting sick and cannot satisfy his sexual
desire. Celie’s stepfather rapes her until she gets pregnant twice. However, Celie still never makes any protest toward any oppression that she experiences.

You gonna do what your mammy wouldn’t. First he put his thing up against my hip and sort of wiggle it around. Then he grab hold my titties. Then he push his thing inside my pussy. When that hurt, I cry. He start to choke me, saying You better shut up and git used to it (p. 3).

Celie is not only obeying what her father asks her to do but also her husband. Her husband is so cruel to her. He always asks Celie to do everything. If Celie does not obey him, he will beat her. This makes Celie fears with him and never fights back,

I say, Just born that way, I reckon. He beat me like he beat the children. Cept he don’t never hardly beat them. He say, Celie, git the belt. The children be outside the room peeking through the cracks. It all I can do not to cry. I make myself wood. I say to myself, Celie, you a tree. That’s how come I know trees fear man. (p. 22)

Instead of fighting back whenever her husband beats her, Celie just said, “I say, Just born that way, I reckon.” (p. 22). She believes that everything that happens to her it is a kind of fate. She thinks that she was born that way, so she has to receive it and becomes fears with her husband.

For other characters, like Harpo, Nettie, Sofia, and Kate, all of them are agree that Celie is very submissive. For Harpo, Celie’s stepchildren, Celie is an obedient person because she always does whatever his father asks her to do and never refuses it. He says, “When Pa tell you to do something, you do it, he say. When he say not to, you don’t. You don’t do what he say, he beat you,” (p.56).

Celie is very submissive; she also obeys her husband’s children. It can be seen from her reaction every time her stepchildren ask her to do everything. She just obeys them and lets them run over her and does whatever they ask her to do.
Mr. _____ children all bright but they mean. They say Celie, I want dis. Celie, I want dat. Our Mama let us have it. He don’t say nothing. They try to get his tention, he hide hind a puff of smoke. Don’t let them run over you, Nettie say. You got to let them know who got the upper hand They got it, I say. But she keep on, You got to fight. You got to fight. But I don’t know how to fight. All I know how to do is stay alive (p. 17).

As a sister, Nettie is the one that always reminds Celie to fight. Celie cannot just let them run over her. However, Celie is not willing to fight for herself. For her, it is enough to stay alive rather than to fight back.

Celia’s unwillingness to fight back reminds Sofia, Harpo’s wife, about her mother. For Sofia, Celie looks similar with her mother who never stands up for herself. Sofia’s mother always lives under her husband’s foot that always does everything that her husband asks her to do (p. 38).

One day, two of Celie’s husband sisters come to visit their home. Their names are Carrie and Kate. They have a conversation with Celie’s husband; they discuss about Celie. Kate says, “And you right about Celie, here. Good housekeeper, good with children, good cook, “(p. 20). Kate sees Celie as a good one because Celie does what women should do at home. Celie is good at cooking, cleaning the house, and taking care of her stepchildren.

3. Unattractive

Throughout the story, Celie is described as an unattractive woman. Her personal description shows how unattractive she is. Her appearances in the story, such as wearing a tight dress and having a fat body (p.12) show that she is an unattractive woman. Compared to Nettie, Celie is less attractive than her. “I know I’m not as pretty or assmart as Nettie, but she say I ain’t dumb” (p. 11). From this
statement, it can be seen that Celie’s thought shows that she is not as pretty and smart as her sister.

The other characters in the story often give a direct presentation or opinion about Celie, like her father, her husband, and Shug Avery. For Celie’s stepfather, he states that Celie is ugly, “She ugly. Don’t even look like she kin to Nettie,” (p. 10). For him, Celie is different from Nettie, she is ugly.

Not only Celie’s stepfather who thinks she is ugly but also Shug Avery. She said that Celie is really ugly at the first time she saw her. She looks at her from head to toe and nothing looks attractive in Celie, it is clearly stated in the story, “She look me over from head to foot. Then she cackle. Sound like a death rattle. You sure is ugly, she say, like she ain’t believed it,” (p. 42).

In the story, Celie’s husband described Celie as an unattractive woman from the very first time he saw her. He described Celie as an ugly woman since the first time he saw her (p. 9). Later, he also describes that Celie is skinny, funny, too scared to open her mouth to people, not a good cook, a pore, and black. He says everything bad about Celie (p. 176).

B. Oppressions Experienced by Celie

Celite, who is described as an uneducated, submissive, and unattractive woman, experiences inequality in the story. Her characteristics become one of the factors that trigger her to experiences oppressions throughout her life. Moreover, she lives in the patriarchal society that makes her considered lower than men. In this story, Celie’s stepfather and husbandas the men in the story are the centers of everything that had the right and authority to control the family.
Living in a patriarchal society, Celie is treated unfairly by her stepfather and her husband. Her stepfather and her husband use oppressions to control and dominate Celie so that she is not able to do whatever she wants. The domination of men in Celie’s family that is really strong is the source of oppression that Celie experiences.

Based on three fundamental terms in radical feminism according to Andrea Dworkin (Madsen, 2000:162), Firstly, as a woman, Celie constitutes as the oppressed class in patriarchal society and as men, her husband and stepfather constitute the class of oppressors. Secondly, the relation between Celie and her stepfather and husband is maintained by means of unceasing physical violence and psychological aggression against her. In this story, Celie experiences many oppressions. Thirdly, the oppressions that Celie experiences is systematic under patriarchy and not a matter of isolated violent and discriminatory incidents.

Here, the oppressions that Celie experiences will be divided into two, which are sexual oppression and non-sexual oppression.

1. Sexual Oppression

Celie as a woman, she is the oppressed class in a patriarchal society based on Andrea Dworkin’s (Madsen, 2000:162) fundamental terms in radical feminism. The story begins with the sexual oppression done by Celie’s stepfather. She experiences repeated rapes from her stepfather at the age of fourteen. As a submissive woman, she cannot fight or refuse whenever her stepfather rapes her.

You gonna do what your mammy wouldn’t. First he put his thing up against my hip and sort of wiggle it around. Then he grab hold my titties. Then he push his thing inside my pussy. When that hurt, I cry. He start to choke me, saying You better shut up and git used to it (p. 3).
He rapes Celie for many times until Celie gets pregnant twice since her mother was very busy with her children and cannot satisfy her husband’s sexual desire. So, in this case, Celie be the one who replaces her mother’s role to satisfy her stepfather’s sexual desire. However, Celie just keeps that as a secret and never tells her mother that her stepfather rapes her. Her mother only knows that he is so kind to her.

Rape is one of the sexual oppressions that Celie experiences. Rape is a common way that done by men to oppress women in patriarchy. As said by Hine and Thompson (1998: 169-170), rape is a weapon of domination and a weapon of repression that done by men to dominate women. In this case, Celie’s stepfather uses rape as a way to dominate and oppress Celie.

Moreover, based on the fact that can be found in Hine and Thompson (1998: 170), unmarried black women are not the one who owned the right to their own body. Here, Celie is not the one who owned the right to her body. Her father is the one who has the rights to his daughter’s body, including sexual access to their daughter’s body. So, in this case, Celie’s stepfather rapes Celie to show his domination toward the woman as the one who has the right to her daughter’s body. Moreover, Celie is a submissive woman. She does not fight her stepfather when he oppresses her.

After Celie’s mother died, Celie is more oppressed by her stepfather. He forces her to marry Albert, someone that Celie always calls as Mr.____ in her letters. Actually, Albert wants to marry Nettie, Celie’s sister. However, Celie’s stepfather does not let him marry Nettie, as stated in Celie’s letter,
Well, He say, real slow, I can’t let you have Nettie. She too young. Don’t know nothing but what you tell her. Sides, I wanther to git some more schooling. Make a schoolteacher out of her. But I can let you have Celie. She the oldest anyway (p. 9).

The fact above shows the reason why Celie’s stepfather does not let Albert marry Nettie. Nettie is too young for him. Celie’s stepfather sees Nettie as an educated person, he supports Nettie to get higher education and reach her dream to have a schoolteacher. Because of that reasons, as the one who has the rights to his daughter, Celie’s stepfather forced Celie to marry with Albert because he thinks that Celie is the oldest girl, she is dumb and he does not let her get education Celie will be a good wife if she marries with Albert, as what he says to Albert, “But she’ll make the better wife,” (p. 10).

As a submissive woman, Celie obeys her stepfather to marry a man she does not love and love her back. Celie does not have any other choices because as a black woman, she does not have any right to decide to whom she will get married.

However, after marrying Albert, Celie’s life does not even change. She is more oppressed by her husband sexually. Celie’s husband that always described Celie as an unattractive woman from the very first time he saw her, he only treated Celie as a sexual object, “Mr. ______ clam on top of me, do his business, in ten minutes us both sleep,” (p. 59). Celie never feels the sexual pleasure from her husband. It is consistent with the fact that the husbands are the one who has the rights to their wives’ bodies (Hine and Thompson, 1998: 170). Celie’s husband only treated Celie as his sexual object to satisfy his sexual desire. He does whatever he wants as the one who has the right to his wife’s body. He does not care whether Celie feels the sexual pleasure or not.
2. Non-sexual Oppression

In the story, Celie is not only experiencing sexual oppressions, but also the non-sexual one. Her stepfather always treated her badly. Her stepfather does not allow Celie for getting an education. Celie stays at home and he makes Celie do everything that woman should do at home. She has to cook and do everything like her mom, and also satisfy her sexual pleasure (p. 3).

After experiencing repeated rapes by her stepfather, Celie gets pregnant and the oppression does not stop there. Later, after Celie gives birth to her babies; her stepfather always throws her two babies away. He takes the first baby while Celie was sleeping, “He took it. He took it while I was sleeping. Kilt it out there in the woods,”(p. 4). Celie thinks that her stepfather kills her baby. Her stepfather also does the same thing to her second baby and Celie thinks her stepfather sells her baby to a man, “He took my other little baby, a boy this time. But I don’t think he kilt it. I think he sold it to a man an his wife over Monticello,“(p. 5).

The other oppression that Celie gets is violence from her stepfather. He does not hesitate to beat her if she does not obey him or for something that she does not do, as stated in here when her stepfather accuses Celie of winking her eyes to the man at church, “He beat me today cause he say I winked at a boy in church. I may have got somethin in my eye but I didn’t wink. I don’t even look at mens” (p. 7).

Subsequently, Celie married Albert. She lives with her husband and lives separately with her stepfather and sister, but it does not make the oppressions that she experiences stops. Albert also loves to beat her whether she do what he
wants or not. When Harpo, his son, asks why he beat Celie, he just answers because Celie is his wife, as stated in this monologue, “Harpo ast his daddy why he beat me. Mr. _____ say, Cause she my wife. Plus, she stubborn. All women good for—he don’t finish,” (p. 22).

Celie’s husband shows his domination toward Celie when he says to Harpo, “Cause she my wife. Plus, she stubborn. All women good for—he don’t finish,” (p. 22). He believes that woman should be lower than man. Woman is the inferior and man is the superior. A woman should obey man. He thinks that he has the power to rule and control her wife by beating her.

In this story, the relationship between Celie and the men in her family, her stepfather, and husband, is maintained by physical violence. It is in agreement with the second and third fundamental terms of radical feminism by Andrea Dworkin (Madsen, 2000:162), which is the relation of men and women is maintained by means of unceasing physical violence. The main reason why her stepfather and husband use physical violence to Celie is systematic under patriarchy.

Violence is a common way that men use to oppress women in patriarchy. Men use oppression to control and dominate women so that women are not able to do whatever they want. Violence becomes a way that the black men used to control their wives. The black men abused their wives to show their power toward the women (Andersen, 1997: 176). In the story, Celie’s stepfather and Celie’s husband have no doubt to beat Celie. They beat Celie as a way to oppress her with the purpose of controlling and dominating her.
Moreover, Albert treats Celie like she is a slave. At home, she does everything that woman should do at home, such as cleaning house, cooking, and taking care her stepchildren (p. 20). She spends her wedding day to take care of her husband’s children. All of them are rotten children. They ask Celie to do everything they want (p. 13).

At the field, Celie also has to work in the field for hours, like what stated here, “He wake up while I’m in the field. I been chopping cotton three hours by time he come,” (p. 26). In the society where Celie lives, it is a common situation that a woman works in the field. It can be seen from the conversation between Kate and Harpo, “Harpo, she say. Harpo the oldest boy. Harpo, don’t let Celie be the one bring in all the water. You a big boy now. Time for you to help out some. Women work, he say. What? she say. Women work, I’m a man,” (p. 20).

How Harpo refuses to help Celie by saying that woman is the one have to work shows that Celie lives under the domination of men in patriarchal society. She performs double duties in the family; she works both at home and field. Celie cannot decide what she will do because her husband is the one who will decide it to her (Giddings, 2008: 58-59).

Albert more oppresses Celie by separating her with her sister, Nettie. Albert, as the one who takes the mail out of the box, receives the letters from Nettie to Celie and never gives the letter to Celie.

I know you think I am dead. But I am not. I been writing to you too, over the years, but Albert said you’d never hear from me again and since I never heard from you all this time, I guess he was right. Now I only write at Christmas and Easter hoping my letter get lost among the Christmas and Easter greetings, or that Albert get the holiday spirit and have pity on us (p. 100).
Albert hides all letters from Nettie to Celie, and never gives the letters to Celie. He makes Celie thinks that her sister is dead.

C. Celie’s Self-determination to Fight the Oppressions

As a dynamic character in the story, Celie, she undergoes grow and change in the story (Johnson, 2009: 164-165). At the beginning of the story, Celie appears as an uneducated, submissive, and unattractive woman that experiences sexual and non-sexual oppressions. At the end of the story, she develops a radical change in her life by finding self-determination to fight oppressions that she experiences.

Celite’s self-determination here is talking about her characteristics that lead her to have freedom. By having freedom, she is able to make choices based on her ownself and decide the best for her life (Madsen, 2000: 24). Celie’s self-determination here is also talking about her action in order to fight oppression that she experiences (Wandor, 1986: 134).

Here, Celie’s self-determination to fight oppressions that she experiences will be divided into two, which are sexual self-determination and non-sexual self-determination.

1. Sexual Self-determination

After experiencing sexual oppressions, namely repeated rapes, forced to marry a man that she does not love, and treated as asexual object, Celie undergoes a radical change in her life. She tries to fight sexual oppressions that she experiences by using sexual self-determination. Celie’s sexual self-determination can be seen from her relationship with Shug Avery in the story.
Shug Avery is Albert’s girlfriend. While she was sick, Albert brought her home and Celie takes care of her. As a submissive woman, Celie does not get angry. It seems that Celie does not have any problems when her husband brings another woman home because Celie has loved Shug Avery from the very first time she saw Shug’s picture at the beginning of the story, the evidence can be seen in here,

Shug Avery was a woman. The most beautiful woman I ever saw. She more pretty then my mama. She bout ten thousand times more prettier then me. I see her there in furs. Her face rouge. Her hair like somethin tail. She grinning with her foot up on somebody motocar. Her eyes serious tho. Sad some (p. 8) From the statement above, it can be seen how Celie admires Shug Avery. She directly states that Shug Avery is the most beautiful woman she ever saw. Even, Shug Avery is prettier than Celie’s mother. At the first time Celie sees Shug Avery in the picture, she keeps much attention on Shug Avery. Celie observes every single aspect of Shug Avery, like her clothes, face, hair, foot, and eyes.

When Shug Avery is sick, Celie’s husband brings her to the house. Nonetheless, Celie’s reaction does not like any other women in common who sees her husband comes home with his lover, she does not feel angry. It is the other way around, Celie feels very happy and excited like written here, “Come on in, I want to cry. To shout. Come on in. With God help, Celie going to make you well,” (p. 42). It shows how Celie is very happy and excited with Shug Avery’s arrival. She really hopes to take care of Shug Avery. She believes she can make Shug healthier with God’s help.

Even though Celie feels very happy and excited when Shug Avery is coming, Shug Avery gives a different response to Celie. She does not feel like having any
interest in Celie. She seems to hate Celie from the very first time she meets Celie. This fact is strengthened by this statement, “She look me over from head to foot. Then she cackle. Sound like a death rattle. You sure is ugly, she say, like she ain’t believed it,” (p. 42). In Shug Avery’s opinion, Celie is an unattractive woman. Celie is just an ugly woman for her. From Celie’s head to toe, nothing attracts Shug Avery’s attention.

Time flies, Celie and Shug Avery get along with each other. Shug Avery does not hate Celie anymore. They start to build a lesbian relationship.

Listen, she say, right down there in your pussy is a little button that gits real hot when you do you know what with somebody. It git hotter and hotter and then it melt. That the good part. But other parts good too, she say. Lot of sucking go on, here and there, she say. Lot of finger and tongue work. Button? Finger and tongue? My face hot enough to melt itself. She say, Here, take this mirror and go look at yourself down there, I bet you never seen it, have you? Naw. And I bet you never seen Albert down there either (p. 69).

Having a relationship with Shug Avery makes Celie feels what she cannot get from her husband, like sexual pleasure. Her husband always oppresses her sexually. He thinks that Celie is an unattractive girl and as a woman, she has to obey him. In her married life, he just makes Celie as his sexual object that makes Celie never feel the sexual pleasure from her husband.

Shug Avery is the one who teaches Celie about her parts of the body that Celie does not know. Shug teaches Celie about sexual pleasure that she does not get from her husband. Celie feels sexual pleasure from Shug that she does not get from her husband. They hug and kiss and do anything like two married ladies (p. 94).
By having a lesbian relationship with Shug Avery, Celie feels safe and comfortable. Celie can feel the freedom because whenever she stays behind Shug Avery, no one will oppress her. Shug Avery protects Celie from getting any non-sexual oppression like beating by Albert; she stays beside Celie so that Albert will not beat Celie. This fact is strengthened with this speech when Celie tells Shug Avery that her husband always beats her and Shug Avery says that she will not leave Celie until she knows that Albert will never beat his wife again.

What he beat you for? she asks. For being me and not you. Oh, Miss Celie, she says, and put her arms around me. Us sit like that for maybe half a hour. Then she kiss me on the fleshy part of my shoulder and stand up. I won’t leave, she say, until I know Albert won’t even think about beating you (p. 66-67).

Celite’s relationship with Shug Avery shows the sexual self-determination done by Celie. Radical feminists (Madsen, 2000: 226) state that being lesbian is a form of sexual self-determination. Having a lesbian relationship demonstrates that women want to release from the domination of patriarchy. They want to release from the domination of patriarchy because it is the source of women oppression. They believe that in a lesbian relationship, there is no domination of patriarchy and no one will oppress them. In this story, Celie wants to be separated from the domination of the men in her family, like her stepfather and husband that always oppress her. Celie wants to be separated from men and removes patriarchy from her life, so she builds a lesbian relationship with Shug Avery where there is no domination and oppression from men. The other way around, Celie feels very comfortable and safe with Shug Avery who always protects her.
Celie does not only feel comfortable and safe by having relationship with Shug Avery but also feel to be loved and appreciated; this fact can be found in this statement,

Then I hear my name. Shug saying Celie. Miss Celie. And I look up where she at. She say my name again. She say this song I’m bout to sing is call Miss Celie’s song… First time somebody made something and name it after me (p. 65).

Celie feels to be loved when Shug Avery mentions her name. Celie feels that Shug Avery appreciates her. Celie feels very proud that Shug made something by using her name.

Moreover, Shug Avery never thinks that Celie is her maid, like a statement that can be found in one of Celie’s letter to Nettie, “Besides, she say. You not my maid. I didn’t bring you to Memphis to be that. I brought you here to love you and help you get on your feet,” (p. 179). In this statement, it is clear that Shug Avery brings Celie to Memphis is to encourage Celie. She hopes Celie becomes able to stand on her feet. Shug Avery does not make Celie feels to be oppressed by treating Celie like she is her maid.

In The Color Purple, Shug Avery represents a character that has self-determination. Shug Avery, as an attractive woman, always encourages Celie that she needs equality in life. Shug Avery can encourage Celie because no one oppresses her, as stated here “What he beat you for? sheast. For being me and not you,” (p. 66). Shug Avery has freedom; she does not receive any violence or oppression from men. Shug Avery represents a character that could live her life without any oppression.
Celie can decide to start her new life by having a relationship with Shug Avery, “My life stop when I left home, I think. But then I think again. It stop with Mr. _____ maybe, but start up again with Shug.” (p. 72). Celie thinks that her life just stops when she gets married to Albert. However, she can start her new life again after she meets Shug Avery. This is in line with the idea of radical feminism (Wardon, 1986: 135). It is said that women have to be united and have solidarity with each other. Here, for a person like Celie who experiences oppressions, she needs support from people around her, like Shug Avery. Shug Avery and Celie become united. They develop solidarity with each other. Shug Avery supports and encourages Celie that Celie needs equality.

2. **Non-sexual Self-determination**

   After becoming submissive and receives non-sexual oppressions, namely, is not allow to get an education, lives separated with her sister and babies, gets physical violence from her stepfather and husband, and becomes a slave in her husband’s house; Celie becomes able to fight any oppression that she experiences by using non-sexual self-determination. She is brave enough to make choices and decisions to pursue her freedom and decide the best for her life.

   Celie starts to change after knowing that Albert is the one that hides Nettie’s letters, Celie gets shocked. She becomes so mad for knowing that Albert hides the letters. Celie has a decision to kill him although Shug Avery does not let it happens (p.122). Celie also makes a decision about the one who will sleep with Shug Avery because Shug Avery does not let her kill Albert. Celie says to Shug Avery, “Make Albert let me sleep with you from now on, while you here, I
say. And somehow or other, she do,” (p. 123). Celie decides that Shug Avery should make Albert let Celie sleep with Shug Avery, and surprisingly Shug Avery does it for Celie.

Celine is also showing a characteristic of someone that has self-determination by fighting the oppression that she experiences. She leaves her husband and lives in Memphis with Shug Avery. The evidence can be seen in the statement which is said by Shug Avery when Shug Avery says “Celie is coming with us, say Shug. Mr. ____’s head swivel back straight. Say what? heast. Celie is coming to Memphis with me” (p. 170). The statement that said by Shug clearly shows that Celine’s wants to leave her husband that always oppresses her. Shug Avery helps Celine to speak to show her support toward Celine.

After Shug says that Celine will go with her to Memphis, Celine repeats and emphasizes that she wants to leave her husband. Moreover, Celine starts to curse her husband by saying, “You a lowdown dog is what’s wrong, I say. It’s time to leave you and enter into the Creation. And your dead body just the welcome mat I need” (p. 170). As an unattractive woman that her husband always says that she is too scared to open her mouth to people (p. 176), Celine shows that she is brave enough to speak, she cannot become a submissive woman anymore who always obeys every word that is said by her husband. Furthermore, after deciding to leave her husband, she curses her husband by saying that he is a lowdown dog and his dead body just a welcome mat for Celine. It shows that Celine wants to fight her husband that always oppresses her, by leaving him she could enter into creation which means a life without oppressions.
Subsequently, Celie is also brave to express her anger toward her husband. She is angry at her husband because he is the one that separates her from her sister, Nettie. She is also brave enough to tell everyone that she already has children (p.170). What Celie does makes everybody get shocked, including Sofia. Moreover, when her husband gets angry and wants to slap her, Celie reacts by jabbing her case knife to his hand. This fact strengthens the idea that Celie finds her self-determination that everyone should be granted the freedom to do anything, that does not restrict the freedom of any other individual to do anything they wish (Madsen, 2000: 24). Celie realizes that no one can prevent her from achieving her freedom and to do everything as what she wishes. In this story, her husband, as the man that always oppresses her, restricts Celie from pursuing her freedom. Realizing that her husband is the one that prevents her from pursuing her freedom, Celie fights him and leaves him.

It is not only Celie’s husband who becomes the target of Celie’s anger but also Harpo. Celie says to Harpo, “You was all rotten children, I say. You made my life a hell on earth. And your daddy here ain’t dead horse’s shit” (p.171) Celie expresses her anger to her stepchildren. She said that they are all rotten children. Her anger shows that she cannot be a submissive woman anymore. She cannot obey every word that Harpo and his siblings ask to her any longer. Her stepchildren have made her life like a hell on earth.

Even though she always described as an uneducated, submissive, and unattractive woman in the story, but Celie has a good characteristic in her life. Celie proves that she is a strong woman. She experiences oppression for a long
time; however, Celie never commits suicide or just escapes from her difficult life problem. She stays there. She endures and receives the oppression that she experiences as her fate. This good side helps Celie to find her self-determination. If Celie escapes from her difficult life problem without doing something, Celie might never find her self-determination. Celie might never fight the oppression that she experiences.

After moving to Memphis and lives with Shug Avery as what Celie decides, she does not experience any oppression anymore. As an uneducated woman, Celie does not live dependently to Shug or any other men. Celie becomes more independent. She can support her own living economically.

She laugh. Let’s us put a few advertisements in the paper, she say. And let’s us raise your prices a hefty notch. And let’s us just go ahead and give you this diningroom for your factory and git you some more women in here to cut and sew, whileyou sit back and design. You making your living, Celie, she say. Girl, you on your way (p.181).

Celie works to achieve her freedom. She is making her own living by making pants. She starts running her business in the dining room as her factory. She gets money and employees; they are Jerene and Darlene, who help her with her business. Moreover, Celie become more educated because she has Darlene that teaches her how to talk. After the death of her stepfather, Celie and Nettie are the ones who inherit the land, house, and store from her real father.

After Celie finds her self-determination and fights oppressions that she experiences, Celie becomes happy with her life right now like what she says in her letter to Nettie, “I am so happy. I got love, I got work, I got money, friends and
time. And you alive and be home soon. With our children,” (p. 183). No more men oppress her. She can live her life independently and get freedom.

Here, Celie shows a good characteristic in her life. She desires to learn everything is very strong even though she is an uneducated woman. She learns how to make pants that finally helps her to support her own living economically. When her stepfather does not allow her to go to school, Celie still keeps learning every school subjects from Nettie (p. 11). In the end of the story, she also learns how to talk from Darlene. Her desire to learn helps her to find her self-determination.

Shug Avery, as an attractive woman, represents a character that has self-determination. She always encourages Celie that she needs equality in life. Experiencing oppressions sexual and non-sexual does not make her life stops. Her life has not stopped yet. Celie cannot be submissive anymore. Celie can start a new life, “My life stop when I left home, I think. But then I think again. It stop with Mr. _____ maybe, but start up again with Shug,” (p. 72).

Not only Shug that always encourages Celie to have equality, but also Nettie. Nettie also represents a character that has self-determination. Nettie and Celie are also becoming a united to encourages and develops solidarity between each other. Nettie is also being the one who helps to support Celie in finding self-determination. Nettie as the one who gets an education, Nettie always encourages Celie to fight back. She cannot be a submissive woman. However, Celie never wants to fight back before she finds her self-determination.

You got to fight them, Celie, she say. I can’t do it for you. You got to fight them for yourself. I don’t say nothing. I think bout Nettie, dead. She fight, she
run away. What good it do? I don’t fight, I stay where I’m told. But I’m alive (p. 21).

For Celie, it is enough for to just stays alive and believes that everything that happens to her it is only a part of her destiny.

Nettie also proves to Celie that she has self-determination; she has a characteristic that leadsher to have freedom. She is able to make choices based her own preferences. She is also working to reach her freedom. This fact can be found in the novel.

You’ve got to fight and get away from Albert. He ain’t no good. When I left you all’s house, walking, he followed me on his horse. When we was well out of sight of the house he caught up with me and started trying to talk. You know how he do, You sure is looking fine, Miss Nettie, and stuff like that. I triedto ignore him and walk faster, but my bundles was heavy and the sun was hot. After while I had to rest, and that’s whenhe got down from his horse and started to try to kiss me, and drag me back in the woods. Well, I started to fight him, and with God’s help, I hurt him bad enough to make him let me alone. But he was some mad (p. 107).

From the statement above, it can be seen that Nettie is able to make choices based her own preferences. She takes actions to fight against Albert. When Nettie leaves home and she finds out that Albert is following her, at first she ignore him and walks faster. However, it still makes Albert could catch her and try to kiss her. Nettie reacts and fights him by hurting Albert.

After Celie finds her self-determination, she is able to fight and live their own life without any oppression from her stepfather and husband. This is in line with the role of radical feminism. The role of radical feminism is to offer an accurate analysis of the condition of women that angry with men that oppress them, to offer ameans of women rage can be properly directed to them who oppress them and to point to a struggle that is based on self-determination (Madsen, 2000:163). Celie’s anger to the oppression that she experiences and her struggle to fight oppression is
based on self-determination. Her anger is directed to her stepfather, her husband and her children that oppress her in the family.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis that has been discussed in the previous chapter, the writer draws conclusions from this study. From the analysis of first problem formulation, the writer finds how Celie’s characteristics are described in the story. She is an uneducated woman, submissive, and unattractive woman.

Celia becomes an uneducated woman because her stepfather never lets her go to school and get an education. For her stepfather, Celie is a dumb woman. Celie’s stepfather considers that Celie has to do everything that woman should do at home, not going to school. In the eyes of her stepfather, Celie is good to be a wife and keep children.

Celia is a submissive woman since she always obeys every word from her stepfather, her husband, and her stepchildren even though they always oppress her. She never fights back and makes any reaction every time she gets oppressions.

For other characters, like Harpo, Nettie, Sofia, and Kate, all of them are agree that Celie is very submissive. For Harpo, Celie is an obedient person because she always does whatever his father asks her to do and never makes any refusal. For Nettie, she always encourages Celie to fight any oppression that she experiences. However, Celie is not willing to fight for herself. For Celie, it is enough to stay alive rather than fighting back. For Sofia, Celie has similarity with her mother that lives under her husband’s foot; she never stands up for herself. For Kate, Celie is a
good woman because Celie does what women should do at home, like cooking, cleaning the house, and taking care of her stepchildren.

From the analysis of second problem formulation, the writer finds that Celie, who is described as an uneducated, submissive, and unattractive woman. Her characteristics and patriarchy become the factors that trigger her to experiences oppressions throughout her life. As a woman, Celie was the oppressed class and her husband and stepfather constitute the class of oppressors as the men in the family. Their relationship is maintained by the oppressions which are experienced by Celie.

The oppression can be divided into two, which are sexual and non-sexual oppression. The sexual oppression that Celie experiences are repeated rapes, forces to marry a man that she does not love, and becomes her husband’s sexual object.

Celie experiences repeated rapes at the age of fourteen from her stepfather until Celie has two babies. Here, rape is a common way that done by men to oppress and dominate women in patriarchy.

Celie’s stepfather more oppresses Celie by forcing her to marry Albert, a man she does not love and loves her back. In their married life, Albert only treats Celie as his sexual object to satisfy his sexual desire. He does whatever he wants as the one who has the right to his wife’s body. He does not care whether Celie feels the sexual pleasure or not.

Celie is not only experiencing sexual oppression but also the non-sexual one. The non-sexual oppression that Celie experiences are she is not allowed for
getting an education, she is separated with her babies and her sister; she gets violence from her stepfather and husband, she is treated like a slave by her husband.

Celie’s stepfather does not allow Celie to go to school and get an education; he thinks that Celie is too dumb to get an education. She has to stay at home and does everything that woman should do at home, including satisfying his sexual pleasure. Her stepfather also separated Celie with her babies. He throws her babies away.

Celie is oppressed by her stepfather and husband by getting violence from them. Her stepfather and husband do not hesitate to beat her whether she obeys their words or not. The main reason why they use physical violence to Celie is systematic under patriarchy. Violence is a common way that men use to oppress women in patriarchy. Men use oppression to control and dominate women so that women are not able to do whatever they want. Men want to show that women should be lower than men.

In Celie’s married life, Celie is oppressed by her husband. She is treated like a slave by her husband. She performs double duties, she has to do everything that women should do at home, such as cleaning house, cooking, and taking care her stepchildren. Celie also has to work in the field for hours. The men in her family believe that woman is the one who has to work because she lives under the domination of patriarchal society. Celie cannot decide what she will do because her husband is the one who will decide it for her.
From the analysis of third problem formulation, Celie finally finds her self-determination to fight any oppression that she experiences. She develops a radical change in her life by finding self-determination to fight oppressions that she experiences. Here, Celie’s self-determination is divided into two, namely sexual self-determination and non-sexual self-determination.

Celie’s sexual self-determination is shown by her lesbian relationship with Shug Avery. By having a relationship with Shug Avery, Celie can feel the sexual pleasure that she does not get from her husband. Celie also feels safe and free because whenever she stays with Shug Avery, her husband cannot oppress her.

Celie’s relationship with Shug Avery shows the sexual self-determination done by Celie. Celie wants to be separated from men and removes patriarchy from her life, so she builds a lesbian relationship with Shug Avery where there is no domination and oppression from men. In her relationship with Shug Avery, Celie feels very comfortable and safe with Shug Avery that always protects her.

Finally, Celie is brave enough to fight her husband that always oppresses her. This is because Celie becomes very mad after knowing that her husband hides all letters from Nettie, Celie’s sister. Celie’s bravery to make choices and decisions in order to pursue a freedom shows Celie’s non-sexual self-determination. She can fight her husband that always oppress her and decides to leave him and leaves in Memphis with Shug Avery. After moving to Memphis, Celie becomes more independent. She can support her own living economically. She starts making pants, having her own factory, and her own business. She gets money and employee to help her in her business.
Celie’s anger to the oppression that she experiences and her struggle to fight oppression is based on self-determination. Her anger is directed to her stepfather, her husband and her children that oppress her in the family.

Shug Avery and Nettie also involve in Celie’s finding of self-determination. They represent characters that have self-determination in a story. As people that have self-determination, they support and encourage Celie to fight and get equality in life. As a person that have a difficult life problem, Celie needs help from people around her to have self-determination. This is in line with the idea of radical feminism that women should be united and develop solidarity each other.

In conclusion, *The Color Purple* shows that women still experiences inequality in life. They get many oppressions, sexual and non-sexually. It is because women are living under the domination of patriarchal society. In a patriarchal society, women are the oppressed class. Women should be able to fight back any oppression that they experience by using self-determination, by having the ability to make choices and decision for themselves in their life. Their anger should be directed to the one who oppressed them and removes the patriarchy itself from their life so that they could live their life without any oppression.

Celie, the main character of *The Color Purple*, proves that a woman must be able to fight any oppression whatever characteristics that she has. As a woman, Celie shows that she has to fight any oppression that she experiences by having self-determination. She proves that her finding of sexual and non-sexual self-determination helps her to react and fight sexual and non-sexual oppressions that she experiences, and she could live her life without any oppression.
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Summary of the Alice Walker’s The Color Purple

The Color Purple is a novel presented in the form of letters. The letters are written by the main character of the novel, Celie. The letters are addressed to God and her sister, Nettie. Celie is a black fourteen-year-old girl. She experiences oppression throughout her life, sexually and non-sexually.

The very beginning of the story is started by the oppression that Celie experiences. She is raped by her stepfather, Alphonso, since her mother is busy with her children. Celie has two babies from her stepfather, and finally, at the end of the story, Nettie finds out that her stepfather gives her babies to missionaries. Celie cannot refuse everything that her stepfather asks her to do because he does not hesitate to beat her.

Celia is not allowed to go to school and get an education by her stepfather, like Nettie. After the death of Celie’s mother, she becomes more oppressed, she is forced to marry to a man she does not love, Albert. Celie is forced to marry him by his stepfather.

In the marriage life, Celie is more oppressed by living separately with her sister, Nettie. Her husband makes her thinking that her sister died by hiding all the letters from Nettie to Celie.

Celia also receives bad treatment from her husband. She is treated as a sexual object. She never feels sexual pleasure from her husband. She also receives violence from him. He always beats her.

Celia is treated like a slave by her husband. She has to work in the field and home. She should do everything that women should do at home, like cooking,
cleaning house, and taking care of children. All of her stepchildren are rotten children.

One day, Albert is bringing Shug Avery, a blues singer, home. She is his lover. Albert brings her home because she was sick. Celie becomes the one who takes care of her. While at first, Shug Avery hates Celie, however as time flies they become closer. They build a lesbian relationship. Celie feels sexual pleasure that he does not get from her husband. She feels safe because her husband will not beat her whenever she is with Shug Avery.

By the help of Shug Avery, Celie gets letters from Nettie that her husband hides it from her. Celie finds out that Nettie travels to Africa with missionaries, Samuel and Corrine that adopted her children. Nettie tells Celie that she finally married with Samuel after his wife died.

Celia leaves her husband that always oppresses her. She moves to Memphis with Shug Avery and runs a business there. She makes pants and has employee. She gets her freedom and happiness, moreover her sister and children and lives with her.
Appendix 2: Alice Walker’s Life

Alice Malsenior Walker is a novelist, poet, and feminist. She was born on February 9, 1944, in Eatonton, Georgia. Alice Walker is one of the most admired African-American writers working today. She is also the first African-American women that won both of National Book Award and Pulitzer Prize in 1983 for her book, *The Color Purple*.

Alice Walker lived in the racially divided South, she attended segregated schools. She got a scholarship; she was able to go to Spelman College in Atlanta. She later transferred to Sarah Lawrence College in New York City. While at Sarah Lawrence, she visited Africa as part of a study-abroad program and graduated in 1965. After graduating from college, she worked as a social worker, teacher, and lecturer. She fought for equality for all African-Americans at that time and joined Civil Right Movement.


*The Color Purple* was her third novel. It was published in 1982. The novel talks about Celie, a black fourteen-year-old girl who experience oppressions throughout her life. This novel was made into a movie in 1985. Alice Walker also published *The Temple of My Familiar* (1989) and *Possessing the Secret of
Joy (1992). These two novels earned great critical praise and caused some controversy for its exploration of the practice of female genital mutilation.

Alice Walker is continuing her works as a political activist. She puts a deep concern about women. She wrote about her experiences with the group Women for Women International in 2010’s *Overcoming Speechlessness: A Poet Encounters the Horror in Rwanda, Eastern Congo, and Palestine/Israel*.

Adapted from: http://biography.com/people/alice-walker-9521939#personal-life
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