CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of The Study

Humans are creatures that have diversity. This diversity can include physical appearance, culture, personality, and so on. Apart from human differences, they also have similarities. The similarity of these characteristics forms a community group called the race. In this world, humans' live side by side with each other, even though they have different races, tribes, and cultures. But unfortunately, this diversity is not followed by equality, there is inequality between one human being and another. The main reason is the feeling of wanting to be recognized at a higher level than other individuals. Those who already feel higher in rank assume that other individuals will only be competitors. This discrimination between individuals develops between communities, even between races that are better known as "racist". Racism has become an unfinished world issue. According to Koentjaraningrat (1990: 97), diversity and differences in skin color should be understood as racial pluralism, not as showing superiority.

A lot of counseling has been done to reduce acts of racism, by providing education about the negative effects of racism, such as stereotypes against a race. Racism is also a theme in many literary works, such as short stories, novels, and films. Along with the times and technological advances, video games are now also

raising the issue of racism as one aspect of the narrative. One of the video games that raises the issue of racism is *Life is Strange 2* (2018).

Life is Strange 2 (2018) is a video game about the racism of white Americans against Mexican immigrants living in America. According to Gratton (2015), Mexicans started migrating to America in the early 1900s and are continuing to this day. Immigrants who settle down also already have descendants who are, of course, native-born citizens of America. That way, white Americans should have been able to accept these Mexican immigrants, but unfortunately, the reality says otherwise.

Life is Strange 2 (2018) tells the story of two brothers who have to keep on the run from the police because they are suspected of committing a crime. The initial reason they were suspected was that they were both descendants of immigrants from Mexico. This video game is set in 2016, when the era is modern but the issue of racism still exists. This video game gives players a look at how racism works from a variety of different perspectives, especially from its main character, Sean Diaz. These video games also contain a moral message that is conveyed well to the players. Unlike watching movies or reading novels, as a video game player, apart from just watching the story, Player are allowed to play the characters in the story directly, so that players can better understand and appreciate every scene in the video game.

In this study, the writer will examine the various acts of racism experienced by the characters in *Life is Strange 2* (2018). In analyzing this study, the writer will

use Stuart Hall's representation theory as a guide. That way, the writer can find out how they deal with racism. And understand the reasons why the characters in *Life is Strange 2* (2018) still choose to stay in America despite all the hardships.

1.2. Research Question

1. In theoretical theory, why do Mexicans migrate to America in *Life is Strange 2* (2018)?

2. How does *Life is Strange 2* (2018) represent racism against Mexican immigrants in America?

3. How do the characters in *Life is Strange 2* (2018) deal with racism in America?

1.3. Scope of the Study

In this study, the writer will limit this research only to the literary elements contained in the story of *Life is Strange 2*. The data that the writer uses will be taken from dialogues and scenes founds in *Life is Strange 2 Full Game Gameplay No Commentary* by Monzor, because the video contains a complete storyline when compared to other gameplay videos. This study will focus on discussing the causes of the migration of the characters in the story based on theoretical theory. Also, the characters who experience racist behavior focus on prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination, and how they deal with it. The writer will analyze the collected data on racism and immigration using relevant theories, and the proof will be supported by Stuart Hall's representation theory. Because the storyline of this story is set in

2016, other data will try to use the 2000 or later edition, so the data obtained will be more accurate.

1.4. Aims of The Study

Based on the research problems described above, the aims of this study are:

1. To understand the reasons that Mexicans migrate to America in *Life is Strange 2* (2018).

2. To identify the racism against Mexican immigrants in America represented in *Life is Strange 2* (2018).

3. To examine how to deal with racism in America in *Life is Strange 2* (2018).

1.5. Previous Studies

Yuwono and Wahyuwono (2016), in Multiculturalism in the Video Game Dragon Age: Inquisition, explained that every video game must have its content. In the video game Dragon Age: Inquisition, one of the contents is multiculturalism. A video game that includes multiculturalism, like the real world, will almost certainly include discrimination and stereotypes between races. As a result of the multicultural content in the video game Dragon Age: Inquisition, there will undoubtedly be negative consequences if this game is played without proper supervision and understanding. One of the bad effects that will appear maybe that players in this game will have a bad perspective between races.

According to the article "Stereotypes in Video Games and How They Perpetuate Prejudice" by T. G. Deskins (2013), the behavior of in-game characters or the players themselves must have created stereotypes in video games.

Stereotypes will usually lead to discriminatory and prejudiced behavior in a social society. One example of this stereotype occurs in one of the popular games, namely "Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas", where black Americans are described as aggressive and violent. Of course, it creates a negative image of black people in America. And the article states that the stereotypes generated by video games can include gender, race, and many more.

The stereotype of a race that causes racism is also explained by Nakamura (2009) in Don't Hate the Player, Hate the Game: The Racialization of Labor in World of Warcraft, which discusses the issue of the Chinese "worker" race in the MMO RPG World of Warcraft. The element of racism itself is contained in the content of this game, where "workers" cannot get ownership of the game's Avatar. These "workers" are only considered unwanted players in the World of Warcraft game; they are considered destroyers of the ecosystem in the game. Because of this, Chinese players who become "workers" in this game often get racist behavior from other players.

Gratton (2015), in An Immigrant's Tale: The Mexican American Southwest 1850 to 1950, describes racism and exploitation as the main explanatory factors in Mexican-American history in the United States. The article states that immigration is the basis of this history, occurring between 1900 and 1930 when Mexican immigrants began arriving in America. The main factor driving massive immigration is the low wages they receive, which are still much higher than the wages earned in their home country of Mexico. Although the number of Mexican

immigrants has been limited by the American government, there are still many Mexicans who escape becoming illegal immigrants in the United States.

This is also supported by Pérez-Soria's (2017) article, "Mexican immigrants in the United States: A review of the literature on integration, segregation, and discrimination," which discusses integration, segregation, and discrimination against Mexican immigrants in the United States. Starting from residential areas that are separated from other residential areas to jobs that also feel discriminated against, this is what causes social and economic inequality for Mexican Americans. Even though they are not immigrants and were born in America, Mexican Americans still have trouble getting their citizenship recognized. This can be seen in the article, which states that they have not fully obtained access to public services.

Based on the previous studies that have been described above, the writers believe that this study will be different from previous studies. Starting from the material object to be studied, namely video games, not many studies discuss video games. Then, the racism theme in studies of video games, most of them comes from games in the Role-Playing genre, which often have multicultural content in games, and *Life is Strange 2* (2018) is a game in the Graphic Adventure genre. To differentiate itself from previous studies, this study will connect racism in the game world to racism in the real world as it occurred in the United States.

1.6. Research Method

1.6.1. Data Collection

The primary data for this study was obtained from the research object, a video game called *Life is Strange 2* (2018). In addition to primary data, there are also secondary data that is used as support for evaluation. The writer uses various sources of data related to racism and immigration in America. The data can be in the form of scientific journals, articles, and published manuscripts in print and digital media.

1.6.2. Method of Collecting Data

In this study, the writer uses qualitative research methods to assist in processing data and information that is appropriate and needed. According to Koentjaraningrat (1993: 89), qualitative research is a research design that has three formats. The three formats include descriptive research, verification, and grounded research formats. Initially, the writer will collect data from *Life is Strange 2* through screenshots and dialogue for each scene and character. After the data has been collected, the writer then explains the results of the analysis descriptively. If the primary data is lacking, the writer will add supporting data from secondary data.

1.6.3. Method of Approach

The approach that will be taken by the writer is to analyze the intrinsic aspects first. The intrinsic aspects that will be observed will be focused on characters, plots, conflicts, and settings in this video game. To support the writer's statement, this study will use the representation theory of Stuart Hall. Apart from

the intrinsic aspects, the writer will also look at the extrinsic aspects of *Life is Strange 2,* especially racism and immigration. Therefore, in this research, the writer tries to find out the relationship between racism and immigrants in America.

1.7. Organization of the Writing

This study consists of the following chapters:

1.   Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter contains an introduction to the studies that will be discussed. The contents of this chapter include the background of the study, the research question, the scope of the study, the aims of the study, previous studies, the research method, and the organization of the writing.

2.   Chapter II: Theoretical Framework

This chapter contains a collection of theories related to the study that is supported by the opinions of experts. These theories will be used as a reference and guide in the analysis related to the studies discussed.

3.   Chapter III: Result and Discussion

This chapter contains an explanation of the results of the writer's analysis related to the material objects used. The results of the analysis obtained are supported by existing theories, so the contents of this study become valid.

4.   Chapter IV: Conclusion

This chapter will be the conclusion of this study. This chapter contains the conclusions from the explanation in the previous chapter. Besides that, there are suggestions and criticisms of this study and future studies.