

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Men and women are always contradictory in terms of strength and domination. Men in society are generally known as the first gender that has been stronger and more dominant gender than women. At the same time, women are always being viewed as the second gender in society. Male domination in society is generally known as patriarchy. Patriarchal men have historically held control over all aspects of life, including the domestic area and society. Throughout history, patriarchal systems have privileged men as the dominant gender while marginalizing women. Kimberlé Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality defines oppression as the systemic and interconnected subjugation of individuals who occupy multiple marginalized identities. The marginalization of women in society also creates other oppressions that intersect with the multiple oppressions based on race, gender, and class. Crenshaw (1989:143) explains that intersectionality is a theory that describes how systemic oppressions based on race and gender affect minority women, especially Black women. The intersectionality also highlights that the forms of oppression that appear in American society have impacted Black or African-American women.

One of the causes of multiple oppressions toward Black women in American society is male domination or patriarchy. Align with patriarchy, misogyny as defined as hatred action or strong negative prejudice toward women also become the causes of oppressions. Patriarchy and misogyny remain pervasive forces in American society, creating layered forms of oppression that disproportionately

impact Black women. While all women face gender-based discrimination, Black women experience unique marginalization due to the intersection of racial and gender biases. This dual oppression manifests in systemic neglect, economic disparities, and heightened vulnerability to violence. Historically rooted in slavery and perpetuated through enduring stereotypes, these inequities persist in modern institutions that often fail to recognize or address intersecting forms of discrimination.

Patriarchy or male domination and hatred over women is still a crucial issue in American society. Despite the patriarchy and misogyny against women in usual ways, the worst case is when those combinations happen towards Black women or African American women. Black women in American society are always receiving multiple forms of discrimination and oppression. They not only receive racial discrimination but also objectification and misogyny from men. Being a Black race in the United States is more than enough to receive all kinds of discrimination, so with Black women as the self-identity, it must be worse. Moreover, Black women are often neglected by the authorities if they experience forms of abuse or sexism.

Because of the multiple oppressions of being women and being Black, Black women must fight harder than White women in their way of facing patriarchy and misogyny. Society and authorities only turn a blind eye towards abuses and misogyny that happen to Black women. American society, specifically, is often sceptical toward Black women when they try to ask for help. In other words, American society typically throws negative stereotypes towards Black people. As a

result, Black women find it harder to fight against patriarchy and misogyny, especially when those actions have been done by a White man.

In the way to fight against multiple oppressions, Black feminism plays an important role. Back in history, mainstream feminist movement only tended to White women's urgency. The feminist movement in the first wave of feminism and second-wave feminism was more inclined towards White women's rights at the political and economic levels. Later, in the third wave, Black women began to raise their spirits to fight against multiple oppressions. The feminism approach that critiques those mainstream feminism is Kimberlé Crenshaw with her intersectionality.

The representation of patriarchy, misogyny, and objectification can be seen in U.S. movies, for instance, the *Run Sweetheart Run* film (2020), which portrays a Black woman battling against a White man's sexist and misogynistic actions. *Run Sweetheart Run* is a tense horror-thriller film about Cherie, a hardworking single mother just trying to get ahead at a business dinner with her boss's client. When she's sent on what should be a simple business dinner with an important client named Ethan, things turn into a violent situation. The charming executive reveals his true violent nature, forcing Cherie into a deadly cat-and-mouse game through the streets of LA. As she fights to survive the night, Cherie discovers this is not Ethan's first time.

The reason why this topic has become a research thesis because the multiple oppressions toward Black women in American society still remain the same. Black

women face unique challenges at the crossroads of racism and sexism, where systemic discrimination presents to continue failed to recognize Black women's experiences. The film *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020) serves as a powerful lens to exposes these issues because it does not just tell a survival story it also demonstrates how society and authority fail to protect them. This research thesis aims to analyze the causes and the impacts of multiple oppression toward Black women in American society and the struggle of Black women against those multiple oppression in the film *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020).

1.2 Research Problems

The research questions of this thesis are as follows:

1. What are the analysis of character and characterization, conflict, and setting in the *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020) film?
2. What are the causes of multiple oppressions toward Black women in American society, as depicted in the *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020) film?
3. What are the impacts of multiple oppressions toward Black women as reflected in the *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020) film?
4. How does the main female character struggle against the intersecting structures of oppression in *the Run Sweetheart Run* (2020) film?

1.3 Aims of the Study

The aims of this thesis are as follows:

1. To analyze the character and characterization, conflict, and setting in the *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020) film.

2. To analyze the what are kinds of causes of oppression against Black women in American society depicted in the *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020) film.
3. To analyze the impact of the issues of Black women's oppression as reflected in the *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020) film.
4. To analyze how the struggle of the main female character against those multiple oppressions as portrayed in the *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020) film.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is to analyze the struggles of a Black woman as a single mother, middle-class individual, and minority fighting against multiple oppressions in American society, as depicted in the 2020 supernatural horror film *Run Sweetheart Run*. This film premiered at the Sundance Film Festival on January 27, 2020, and was later aired on Amazon Prime Video on October 28, 2022. The film, directed by Shana Feste and produced by Blumhouse, follows Cherie, a Black single mother in Los Angeles, who faces a life-threatening situation when her client, Ethan, exhibits violent and patriarchal behaviour after a business dinner. Starring Ella Balinska as Cherie and Pilou Asbæk as Ethan. In summary, the study focuses on how intersectionality shaped Cherie's experiences as a Black woman in American society.

1.5 Previous Study

Run Sweetheart Run is an American movie directed by Shana Feste which has a general theme as a supernatural horror movie. The movie tells a story about a single mother who works at a law firm and then gets on a blind date that later turns

into tragic horror. In this research, the writer compiles various studies that have related to this film.

The first previous study is online review by Brian Talerico in Roger Ebert blog in 2022. This online review discuss in how the business dinner turns out to be violence moment. Talerico's reviews also highlight how the metaphor "RUN" on the screen become realization of Cherie's struggle.

The other related review is an online review by Himawan Pratista. This review generally highlights the metaphorical idea of cycle menstruation shapes a woman in emotional turbulency. Pratista's review also underscores in how male domination created a suspension and horror theme within this film.

The third previous study is review by Sarag El-Mahmoud in November 2022, she elaborate Ella Balinska interview, that *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020) menstruation plotline in *Run Sweetheart Run* as both empowering and emotionally liberating, turning a natural process into a tool of resistance. The film uses horror to challenge taboos and reclaim female bodily autonomy in a bold and symbolic way.

Those online reviews basically highlight the metaphors that appear in the *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020) film. The reviews also present that the theme within this film created tensions and horror supremacy towards the audience. Because the reviews certainly highlight the metaphors and the theme within this film, so in this research, the elaboration about Cherie's struggle and male domination will consist of a comprehensive analysis using intersectionality theory by Kimberleé Crenshaw and the theory of women's struggle by Bell Hooks.

1.6 Research Method

1.6.1 Method of Collecting Data

In this research, the writer will generally use a qualitative method. According to Creswell (2014:190) in his research design book, in qualitative research, primary data refers to the raw materials or the data that provide direct and first-hand evidence about the research subject. The process of collecting data, as stated by Creswell (2014:195), is the process of segmenting the data and putting it back together. According to Creswell (2014:190), primary data refers to the raw materials or the data that provide direct and first-hand evidence about the research subject. In this study, the primary data is the film *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020), which serves as the main data to be analyzed. While secondary data, as defined by Creswell (2014:201), consists of interpretations and analysis derived along with sources from journals articles, peer reviews, historical and theoretical books, whether printed in online or hard-copy.

1.6.2 Research Approach

Based on the background of the study that reveals the phenomena of oppression toward Black women, the writer will use a feminist approach, which is specified on the theory by Kimberlé Crenshaw's theory, intersectionality and Bell Hooks' theory of women's struggle. Intersectionality theory is used to explore how oppression, as depicted in the film *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020), shaped Black women's experiences and impacted them in American society. While Hook's theory is used to explore the struggle and the solidarity of women against those multiple oppressions.

1.7 Organization of Writing

In organizing this research, the writer structured it into chapters, each discussing the main points of the paper.

I. Introduction

The first chapter of this research thesis consists of the background of the study, research problems, aims of the study, method of the study, scope of the study, previous studies and organization of the writing.

II. Intrinsic Theoretical Frameworks

The second chapter of this research thesis consists of narrative elements such as character and characterization, setting, conflict and cinematography, which are camera distance, sound, lighting, and breaking the fourth wall.

III. Extrinsic Theoretical Frameworks

The third chapter of this research thesis consists of explanations of social extrinsic aspects, including the history of women's oppression, and important issues faced by Black women, and also includes the intersectionality theory and women's struggle theory.

IV. Discussion and Results

The fourth chapter of this research thesis will analyze intrinsic elements, such as character, conflict, setting, cinematography, camera movement and dialogue and extrinsic elements will analyze the causes and impacts of multiple oppression toward Black women and the struggle of the main female character against those multiple oppressions in American society as depicted in the film *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020).

V. Conclusion

This chapter of this research thesis will discuss the conclusion of intrinsic elements, such as character, conflict, setting, cinematography, camera movement and dialogue, and extrinsic elements will include of the causes and impacts of multiple oppression toward Black women and the struggle of the main female character against those multiple oppressions in American society as depicted in the film *Run Sweetheart Run* (2020).