

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Research

In Sociology, social class has been a big issue since people divide their status and their class into some layers. The concept of social class has been adapted to refer to the different 'layers' or strata of social group which are thought to be arranged, one top of the other, in various human societies (Saunders, 1990).

The study of social stratification is the study people in different groups or strata relate to one another unequally. It has been exist since a long time ago especially in 19th century. "Those who have, get." This old saying suggests that in every society some people get more social rewards than others. The specific nature of the rewards may vary from one society to another. The rewards could be in the form of wealth, power, and prestige. (Thio, 1986:189).

There is a difference between each groups and one group may own their company while the other is a group of employee, or it may in a position where one group is has no power at all. In our society, people are divided with the poor and wealthy family. There are families of high birth and families of commoners. Besides, there are a group of politically powerful elites and relatively powerless groups of people who only follow the commands and obey the orders.

According to Thio (1986:189), "Social stratification is a system of inequality in which members of society are ranked into different strata on the basis of how much

rewards they have". It means that the distribution of many different rewards in societies also part of the social stratification and it can be seen on the unequal distribution of the rewards itself. The hierarchy ranked the society into some categories with rewards such as some group of people are getting more rewards than others.

Social stratification is about the pattern of social inequality. Social inequality exist when there is unequal access which is ranked by people to valued resources, goods, and services in a society. It can be found in all societies including our own. Social inequalities can influence our chances in many aspects such as getting a job, going to college, and etc. it also effects on our mindset and behavior in our daily life. In summary, stratification is necessary because it motivates people to work hard by promising them such rewards as money, power, and prestige. (Thio, 1986:211).

Then, social stratification is not only happened in the real world between society but also exist in the literary works such as a novel, short story, or even drama. Those literary works made in order to give critical and satire or to give the information to the society about culture, history, sociological issues and others. In this case, the writer would like to discuss a short story entitled *The Diamond Necklace* by Henry-Rene-Albert Guy de Maupassant which described about social stratification.

In summary, *The Diamond Necklace* is simply narrating a story about woman in France in late of 19th century. It tells about a pretty woman named Mathilde Loisel who is not satisfied with her life as a housewife who has no fancy things. She has no dowry and no expectation to be loved and wedded by a man of wealth and distinction. So, she let herself be married to a clerk man named Monsieur Loisel

who work for Ministry of Education. She was unhappy with her life as if she had once been wealthy and expected to be a part of upper-class society who has everything. Compared to her old friend Madame Forestier who live better than her, she lives with the poorness of her house with dirty walls and the things that another woman in a rich family would not even have notice but it tormented her and made her resentful. Her desire to act and live as a woman from upper class granted in a night when her husband give an invitation to a ball. She asked her husband to put a fancy dress and she brought a diamond necklace to her friend. She felt satisfied with her life for one night because all people notice her at the ball who attended by rich people, even an upper-class man asked her to dance at the ball. However, the misery came to her after she lost her friend necklace that she brought before. Both Mathilde and her husband try so hard to replace the necklace that she loses at that night so Madame Forestier would not know if Mathilde lost her diamond necklace. It makes them go into an extreme debt purchasing for 10 years. In the end of the story, Mathilde met Madame Forestier with her child and tell her that she loses her diamond necklace. Her friend was stunned and shock after she knows that Mathilde replace her necklace with the real diamond while Madame Forestier necklace was imitation and it only cost five hundred francs at most. (Maupassant, 1884)

Further, the writer chooses this short story since it portrays a complex dynamic among the characters and reflect a social stratification there. In this case, the history of rich class and poor class people influence most to the story. This story was the author famous work and the stratification of being wealthy and famous are the things that makes women in France feel that their strata is everything since they

cannot attend the party or the ball while they are from lower class society. Only some people with the same high status can mingle them.

Further, the writer noticed that the topic of social stratification is quite interesting to be discussed since social class differences between each class in French becomes the major issue since a lot of women in lower class try so hard to look like upper-class women who has fancy dresses and jewelries or the status of their family and husband. Those factors will affected on how people see them in a social rank as it mentioned in Brym in Tittenbrun (2017:2) “a ranked group within a stratified society characterized by achieved status and considerable social mobility”.

Another reason that the writer chooses this short story is because this short story is the author’s best-known work, and this story is based on the true story of author’s friend at that time. Here, the analysis of social stratification is one of important thing to be discussed, because the story displays an inequality.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of study, the writer formulates research question into:

How is the portrayal of social stratification in *The Diamond Necklace* short story by Guy de Maupassant?

1.3 Research Objective

Considering to the research question, the objective of this research is to describe the portrayal of social stratification in *The Diamond Necklace* short story by Guy de Maupassant.

1.4 Use of Research

1.4.1 Theoretical Use

The writer hopes this analysis can become one of references for other researchers that will do an analysis about social class in a literary work.

1.4.2 Practical Use

Practically, the writer hopes that this research is able to enrich the reader knowledge especially in understanding about social class that happens among society. After the readers understand about social stratification, hopefully they will find that it is a key to understand the social systems.

1.5 The scope of Research

In this research, the writer focuses on analyzing social stratification between characters that exist in *The Diamond Necklace* short story by Guy de Maupassant. In order to do that, the writer applied sociological approach and conducted Thio's theory (1986) of social stratification.