Abstract

This article examines gender discrimination, and investigates the relation between gender and social class relation experienced by the main female character, Carla, in the short story entitled Bob Darling by Carolyn Cooke. The method used in this study is descriptive qualitative applying the concept of gender discrimination by Mansour Fakih and the concept of intersectionality by Kimberlé Crenshaw about the connection of multiple dimensions, such as gender and class in making discrimination. This study aims to find how the main female character that lives in the patriarchal culture is depicted in the story. Moreover, it is to show how social segregation strengthens the gender discrimination. Gender discrimination is unjust treatments and assumptions against someone, particularly based on a person’s sex that leads to the role that he or she should play in the society. The different role however, leads to the harm and the loss of person’s right in life especially for woman who lives in patriarchal culture. The results show that stereotype, subordination and violence against woman are experienced by the main female character in the society as the effect of gender discrimination. Then, social class as a division of individual classes based on levels of individual’s position in society that can be determined by wealth, education, occupation, and others has a part in gender discrimination. When the woman is on lower class, she has less power and authority so that it makes a stronger discrimination against her. In conclusion, in the patriarchal culture, the discrimination against woman is not only influenced by the gender itself, but also the social class. Keywords: gender discrimination, relations between gender and class, intersectionality, patriarchal culture.

A. Introduction

In the patriarchal culture, gender discrimination experienced by woman is not only caused by gender, but also caused by social class or social segregation. As it is argued by Kimberlé Crenshaw through the concept of intersectionality; the study about intersections between forms of oppression, domination or discrimination (Howard, J. A & Renfrow, D. G., 2014, p. 97), discrimination faced by women has different levels of strength that is determined by intersectional systems of society, such as race, ethnicity, social class, and others (Delavande & Zafar, 2013). It can be known that there are many intersectional system that can influence gender discrimination that woman is experienced, such as in the intersection of gender and class. Social class itself can be determined by occupation, education, status, wealth, and ownership so women, who are low class are
lack of wealth, status, education and so on, are discriminated more by higher class men (McMullin, 2004, p. 35). Based on Thio and Taylor (2012, p. 87), gender discrimination is harmful to all women, but for the women who have oppressed economically, it can be more harmful. For that reason, it can be assumed that gender discrimination can be strengthened by social class. As it is said by Delavande and Zafar (2013), women in the low class are discriminated more by men, while women from high social class are less discriminated. In brief, women are experienced in the gender discrimination in the patriarchal societies, and when the women have the lower social class than men, they will suffer from discrimination more by men.


*Bob Darling* tells about a middle-aged man named Bob Darling who is traveling to France with his girlfriend, Carla. Bob and Carla meet in the subway. When Carla passes out, Bob helps her. Then their relationship continues. In the story, Bob is described as a rich man, meanwhile Carla is a poor girl. As a woman from the lower class, Carla is sometimes underestimated by Bob who is an upper class man. Bob also forces his will to Carla. For example, before they do travelling, Bob clearly explains to Carla that he wants her to accompany him to ride the fastest train and eat six-course dinner on the train. Bob wants Carla to do everything that he wants though Carla does not want it. When Bob is angry, he sometimes does violence such as being rude and spoke harshly to Carla. It is obvious that discrimination experienced by Carla is caused by the gender in which put woman as a subordinate and being oppressed. Moreover, the social segregation between Carla and Bob lead to a stronger discrimination experience.

Based on the description of the short story above, it such an interesting to analyze gender discrimination in which it is not only influenced tradition, belief, religion, and those kinds of thing, but also is influenced by class segregation. It reveals that social class in society also holds power on gender discrimination. This short story is analyzed by using Mansour Fakih’s gender discrimination concept such as marginalization, subordination, stereotype, violence against women and the role of woman in family to show how the main female character is depicted in *Bob Darling* by Carolyn Cooke. Moreover, it is important to point out the relationship between gender discrimination and social class in patriarchal culture as it is reflected in the short story by
B. Method

The method used in this study is descriptive qualitative applying the concept of gender discrimination by Mansour Fakih and the concept of intersectionality by Kimberlé Crenshaw about the connection of multiple dimensions, such as gender and class in making discrimination. The research is done by collecting the data and information related to the short stories, classifying the data used for the research, analyzing and giving interpretation about the data and the last is finding the result of the analysis. This study poses at two primary research questions:

1. What types of gender discrimination experienced by the main female character in the short story?

2. How are the relations between gender and social class in patriarchal culture portrayed in the short story by Carolyn Cooke?

C. Result and Discussion

*Bob Darling* is a short story about the relationship between Bob and Carla. The story begins when Bob and Carla are in the train. They want to go to Paris for travelling. Using flashback, the narrator gives an explanation how they meet. Bob is a middle age man who is sick and threatens with death. However, realizing his age is short, he still wants to love and to be loved. Even, he still has passion for woman. Two hours after he hears the news of his illness, he meets Carla who passes out in the subway. Bob helps her because there is no one who wants to help her. Then her relationship continues. They become a couple. However, Carla, as a woman sometimes experiences gender discrimination from Bob such as violence, subordination and others. However, the discrimination is caused by the social class that Carla occupied.

This study poses a primary question; how are the relations between gender and social class in patriarchal culture portrayed in *Bob Darling* by Carolyn Cooke? First discussion is describing gender discrimination experienced by Carla as a main female character in the story; second discussion is showing the gender and class relations or the intersectionality reflected in the story.

C.1. Gender Discrimination in the Story

Gender discrimination is the differential treatment based on individual’s sex categories (Rogers, 1980, p. 35). The victim of gender discrimination is commonly women. Gender discrimination is led by gender differences where woman as an irrational, emotional, weak and motherhood person is positioned in the domestic area, while man who is strong, brave and rational is positioned in public area (Fakih, 2006, p. 12). Then, gender differences itself is a reaction of the social construction of gender. As it is argued by Fakih (1996, p. 8), gender is identical characteristics of women and men that are constructed socially and culturally so what it is to be a man or a woman is governed by cultural assumptions that include men and women relationship especially their role, behavior, and characteristics in society.

According to Fakih (1996, p. 12), gender discrimination can manifest into marginalization, subordination, stereotype, violence against women and job burden. Firstly, marginalization is a process of impoverishment against woman (Fakih, 1996, p. 14). Secondly, subordination is a view that women are considered unimportant in making decision and positioned in the second priority after men because they are irrational and emotional so they cannot lead (Murniati, 2004, p. xxxiii). Thirdly, stereotype is labeling on a particular group (Fakih, 1996, p. 16).
O’Brien (2009, p. 379) argues that women’s stereotype can be divided into three. Firstly, women are stereotyped as a mother who provides and supports other, vulnerable, dependent, and weak. Secondly, women are stereotyped as childlike who are immature and incompetence person. This view causes some people to neglect women’s intelligence and competence. Thirdly, women are considered as sex objects. It is also a factor that can lead to other gender discriminations, such as sexual harassment, and sexual assault. Then, gender discrimination also can manifest into violence against women as the result of stereotypes about women because women are considered as weak so they are vulnerable to become victims of violence (Sumbullah, 2008, p. 13).

Based on Fakih (1996, pp. 17-18), violence against woman is an attack or assault against women physically or psychologically such as rapist, domestic violence (hitting, murder and maltreatment), prostitution as a form of women exploitation, pornography as a harassment form, enforcing of sterilization in family planning, and sexual harassment. On the other hand, according to World Health Organization (WHO) (as cited in McMullin, 2004, p. 151), violence is any form of physical force of power or threatened against someone or group that can cause injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation. The most common form of violence against women is intimate partner violence (IPV) that refers to controlling, and intimidating in intimate relationships that cause physical, sexual, or psychological harm (McMullin, 2004, p. 151). The central dimensions of IPV are power and control. Physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, isolation, economic deprivation, intimidation, and the use of social status are the ways that men mostly use to maintain power and control in intimate partnership (McMullin, 2004, p. 151). Lastly, gender discrimination can manifest to job burden means a workload which is received by someone is heavier compared to the other (Fakih, 1996, p. 21). In this case, the woman is considered as preserve and diligent person so that all domestic work is her responsibility (Fakih, 1996, p. 76).

Based on Fakih, gender discrimination can manifest into stereotype, subordination, marginalization, violence against women, and job burden. However, in this story there are only found 3 manifestations of gender discrimination. The first is stereotype. There are many assumptions about the stereotypes of women. One of the stereotypes is that women are considered as object of sex. Carla’s gender stereotypes her as object of sex. It can be found in the quotation as follows:

“From that first afternoon he thought he could get her into bed if he remembered to call her Carla, not Paula.” (Cooke, 2001, p. 5)

When seeing Carla in the first time, Bob has thought about Carla, he thinks he can get Carla to sleep with him. In gender, when people think about woman and man, they think about more than just their personality traits such as role, behaviors, physical characteristics, etc. Crawford & Unger, 2004, p. 51). When man sees woman, he also thinks about woman’s role. In this case, woman’s role is also considered as object of sex. Object of sex is seeing and treating a person as an object (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 257). It occurs when someone sees woman’s body, body parts, or sexual functions as a separated part from person’s personality (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997, p. 175). In this case, Bob thinks Carla as his object. The stereotype that considers woman as sex object contributes on sexual harassment that she experiences. Carla experiences sexual harassment because sexual harassment is a treatment that is done by anything takes attention to woman’s body and demands sexual favors (Nicolson, 1996, p. 170). It can be seen in Bob when he meets Carla, Bob has attention to Carla’s body to demand sexual favor from her. In the quotation, it...
also explains that Bob thinks that he can get Carla to sleep with him if he remembers to call her Carla. Implicitly, it shows us that woman as an inferior person is considered as a person that can easily persuaded. Therefore, it makes Bob does harassment to Carla by underestimating her. This condition is also supported by the quotation:

“That would be the end of it. Back home he would see her occasionally in the cafes he had first shown her and they would exchange shrill pleasantries. Sometime, perhaps, in the future, he could take her out for dinner and liquor at one of those subterranean French restaurants in Cambridge and afterward press himself on her.” (Cooke, 2001, p. 4)

In the quotation, it is narrated that after doing traveling, Bob plans that he will see Carla occasionally and then will meet her if he wants to invite her to sleep with him. Carla’s gender and class make her has lower position in society. It makes her becomes the object of sex that causes her experiences sexual harassment. In the other hand, Bob as a man is dominant in the society. Therefore, Bob underestimates her because in this case, Bob thinks Carla as a woman that he can leave and invite based on his will.

The second is subordination, a view that woman is considered as unimportant person, so that they have no right in making decision (Fakih, 1998, p. 15). In the story, Bob was dominated in making decision and controlling Carla. It is shown in the quotation:

“He had been very clear with Carla about this from the start. He wanted to ride the fastest train in Europe. That was one. Two was, he wanted to eat the wonderful six-course dinner they served on the train.. He asked her all about it before they left town, while they were still in the planning stages.”

Fine, Bob, whatever,” Carla said when he asked ”(Cooke, 2011, p. 10)

In the quotation, it is narrated that before Bob and Carla go for travelling, Bob clearly explains to Carla that he wants her to accompany him to ride the fastest train and eats six-course dinner on the train. Bob has made a decision what he wants to do and then he asks about it to Carla. Without asking first what Carla wants to do, Bob has decided it. Bob wants to ride the fastest train in Europe and eats dinner on the train. Carla’s opinion is also considered as unimportant. Bob does not ask Carla what she wants to do and where she wants to go. From the quotation, it can be seen that man is a decision maker. Woman does not have an opportunity to speak. Even, if woman speaks, it is unheard. Moreover, Bob is strict about his will. Bob wants Carla does what he wants. As it is explained in the quotation:

“He had read that the dinners on the train were sometimes oversubscribed. You could eat a croque monsieur in the bar car, but the thing to do was to get the dinner on the train.


He leaned across the table, angry, closed his fingers around Carla’s wrist, and squeezed.

She ripped his fingers apart, a smooth strong gesture which surprised him. She laid her hand into her lap. “I eat anything. Scraps,” she said.” (Cooke, 2001, p. 11)

Bob says to Carla that she can eat croquet monsieur, a fried or grill cheese and ham sandwich (Stevenson, A. & Waite, M., 2011, p. 341), but the things that she can do are getting dinner on the train. He reasserts this to Carla. Impliedly, he controls what she must do. He forces his will to Carla. Even, when Carla answers and Bob
Ida Rosida, Lestari Rejeki:

Woman in Patriarchal ...

does not satisfy with her word, he will do violence. As in the quotation above, besides experiencing gender discrimination in subordination, Carla also experiences gender discrimination in violence; this violence against woman become the third point of gender discrimination experienced by Carla as the main female character in the story.

Furthermore, when Bob reasserts Carla that the things that she must do are getting dinner on the train, Carla just answers that anything it is, she will eat it and she does not care what she eats. Hearing her word, Bob is angry. He does not satisfy with Carla’s answer. Then Bob squeezes Carla’s wrist. This treatment hurts Carla, so that she makes a smooth strong gesture and corrects her word. The stereotype of woman that says that woman is a weak person and cannot do anything causes men usually do harm to women. In this case, Carla experiences physical violence. Physical violence can happen by hitting, slapping, punching, biting, kicking, pushing or harming woman in any way (McMullin, 2004, p. 152). In this case, Bob hurts Carla by squeezing Carla’s wrist. This action makes her afraid of him. The quotation above shows that as a restrained person, Carla experiences isolation because Bob controls what Carla must do.

“‘Look,’” said Carla, “‘Why can’t we just go into the bar car? I can’t stand being crammed in here like a sardine. Wouldn’t it be more interesting to go and have a drink and look out the windows and talk to people?’”

“I don’t want to,” Darling said. “What I want to do is what we arranged a month ago. I want to eat the dinner they serve on this train. I want to sit right here and eat dinner they serve on the train!” (Cooke, 2001, pp. 18-19)

When Bob informs that they have dinner in half an hour, Carla says that she does not like to eat at night. She refuses to eat dinner, and even she wants to have a drink in the bar. However, Bob still wants her to do what he wants. This condition indirectly tends to be called as violence. Violence can be caused by using isolation such as controlling what she does, who she sees and talks to, where she goes, and limiting her outside involvement (McMullin, 2004, p. 152). In this case, by using isolation, Bob controls what Carla does, where she goes, and also limiting her outside involvement. When Carla refuses to accompany Bob to eat dinner, Carla wants to go to bar for drinking liquor. However, Bob does not want. Bob wants Carla to do what he wants and Bob restrains her. Impliedly, the quotation above shows that as a restrained person, Carla experiences isolation because Bob controls what Carla must do.
C.2. Gender and Class Relations (Intersectionality) portrayed in Bob Darling

Women’s life is not only influenced by gender. However, the differences of race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality can shape women’s life especially in experiencing discrimination. Those differences intersect with each other which can cause harm for women. The combination of gender, race, ethnicity and class in discrimination against women is commonly called as intersectionality. Intersectionality is a concept appeared more than 30 years. It existed in the women’s movement of the 1970s in the United States when black women started to fight an idea of feminism that was based solely on a white female subject (Hochreiter, 2014, p. 401). The term intersectionality is first invented by Kimberlé Crenshaw, a critical race legal scholar, when referring to the interaction of multiple dimensions of oppression (Howard & Renfrow, 2014, p. 97). At first, she uses the concept intersectionality to indicate the interaction of the various ways of race and gender in shaping multiple dimensions in discrimination against Black women. She argues that in understanding about Black women’s life especially in discrimination, it cannot be seen by looking at the race or gender as separate dimensions, but looking them together (Crenshaw 1991, p. 1244). Then, she also asserts that the concept of intersectionality can and should be developed by multiple grounds of identity such as class, ethnicity, age and so on; not only between race and gender (Crenshaw 1991, p. 1245).

Crenshaw uses an analogy of crossroad in explaining discrimination. Discrimination can happen from one direction and another. If an accident happens in the crossroads, it can be caused by car travelling from any direction or from all of them. Similarly, if a woman experience gender discrimination in the intersection, her injury could be caused by her gender or social class (Crenshaw 1989, p. 149). In addition, Matthews and Beaman (2007, p. 129) stated that intersectionality allows to change our thought from the simple statements such as “men oppress women” to a more complex analysis and understanding of discrimination and privileged so intersectionality gives more explanation that a focus solely on gender may miss. For example, in understanding gender discrimination against women, besides looking in gender, we can look in other dimensions of domination such as social class. Social class refers to a group of people who have equal status in a hierarchy of class statues or positions that related to someone’s income, occupation, education, the possession of wealth and power, family background, lifestyle, and associations with and acceptance with others (Hebdig & Glick, 1996, p. 234). Therefore, social class also determines how someone speaks and acts, who someone speaks to, how someone classifies oneself and others, what someone studies and how someone knows who he/she is or is not (Ore, 2006, p. 10). For that reason, woman who is lower class is discriminated more by man because she has little prestige, social recognition and power in society (Hebdig & Glick, 1996, p. 237). Furthermore, Matthews and Beaman (2007, p. 127) also argues that the way gender discrimination works for a middle class women is different from the way it works for a lower class woman. The individual’s position in society can make them get power and advantage or disadvantage and privilege that influence their life. In this context, the concept of intersectionality above helps to answer the second question of the research. By concerning the intersection of gender and class, it provides us the understanding of discrimination experienced by women in patriarchal culture.

In Bob Darling, Carla is a twenty years old woman with small skinny body, and
round face. She is the main female character that presented as a lower class woman through her appearance. The appearance of Carla that wears thrift store clothes shows us that she was lower class. We can see from the quotation:

“She wore her thrift store strapless; she had tied her hair back and pushed tiny pearls into her earlobes. Her skin had a yellow-blue pallor which made her seem unearthly, untouchable-it dazzled him.” (Cooke, 2001, p. 15)

There are some indicators to determine someone’s social class. One of them is appearance. In the quotation above, it is described that Carla wears thrift store strapless. Using implicit narration, through her appearance the narrator wants to show that Carla is lower class woman. According to Kellner (1995, p. 264), identity of someone can be constructed through commodity that they wear so that one’s appearance can indicate one’s social class, profession, and status. In this case, Carla’s appearance is a symbol of her social identity. Her appearance that wears thrift store strapless shows her identity that is lower class. Moreover, Lancianese (2014) also argues that lower class person wears clothes from thrift store. It is depicted in Carla, she wears thrift store strapless. It gives an assertion that she is lower class woman.

Carla who has lower class also can be determined from her wealth that can be seen through where she lives. Carla is an unemployed woman who lives in a room above a busy Indian restaurant with Chinese paper lanterns, museum posters and a futon. It can be seen through the quotation:

“And yet- he felt this was somehow a contradiction, about eating- she lived above a busy Indian restaurant in Central Square, in one room of Chinese paper lanterns, museum posters and a futon on the floor batten down with sheets and a quilt and ropes of lingerie and clothes. They sat on the futon- it was the only furniture. There was an old coal fireplace with a flue out one side, but the blue rug ran into it. She served him a glass of yellow wine, a ripe tomato. Everything she had, she offered.” (Cooke, 2001, p. 10)

In this quotation, it is described that in her room, Carla only has a futon as her furniture. As it is said by McMullin, social class can be defined as the differences of people’s position in society that is denoted by wealth, income, occupation, etc. A person who belongs to lower class is unemployed, less wealth and income (McMullin, 2004, p. 35). Carla belongs to lower class because she has less of wealth. Moreover, when Bob goes there, Carla offers everything she has. However, everything she has is just a glass of yellow wine and a ripe tomato. She has nothing but yellow wine and a tomato. Implicitly, the narration above can indicate that Carla is lower class.

Carla’s social class makes her treated as an inferior person. Inferior means a lower in position, rank or status (Stevenson & Waite 2011, p. 1226). In patriarchal culture, woman is considered has low position in society. This condition is strengthened when woman is in lower class. In the analysis above, it has been explained that Carla’s gender stereotypes her as sex object. Carla becomes the object of sex of Bob. Then her class strengthens the stereotype. Actually, the view of object of sex in every woman is different. Based on Fredrickson and Robert (1997, p. 174), women experience objects of sex in different way because it is influenced by race, ethnicity, class, age and so on. As a woman who lives in patriarchal culture, Carla’s social class influences the view of object of sex against her. In the first time, Bob thinks Carla as object of sex of him as shown in the quotation:
From that first afternoon he thought he could get her into bed if he remembered to call her Carla, not Paula. (Cooke, 2001, p. 5)

The quotation describes that being stereotyped as object of sex, it leads Carla to get sexual harassment by drawing attention on Carla’s body. Bob’s view against Carla that thinks that he can get her to bed is also influenced by Carla’s social class. It makes the view of object of sex becomes stronger. Based on Crawford and Unger (2004, p. 463) sexual harassment can be seen as an abuse of power done by men who have greater authority, status and power to control and force their sexual attentions in women. Bob has higher status in society. This condition is strengthened by his social class that belongs to upper class. Conversely, Carla is a woman who belongs to lower class. This condition makes Bob has power and authority toward Carla. It causes him easy to do harassment to Carla. For that reason, it can be assumed that Carla’s gender and social class intersect in gender discrimination that she experiences. In patriarchal culture, the stereotype that sees women as object of sex also causes woman experiences sexual harassment. This view is also strengthened by class. Intersectionality works in sexual harassment that is experienced by Carla. Sexual harassment that is experienced by her happens because she is in the intersection; it is a result from her gender and social class. As it is said by Crenshaw (1991, p. 1245), discrimination that is experienced by women can happen by multiple grounds of identity such as class, gender, ethnicity, age and so on. However, in this case, it is only Carla’s gender and class identity that influences the discrimination experienced by her.

The intersection between gender and class also can be seen from violence that is experienced by Carla. In the analysis above, Carla experienced violence in some ways such as physical, intimidation, and isolation. Actually, the violence that is experienced by Carla happens because of Bob’s domination. This domination is related to his power in society. Domination means that the situation when someone has power to dominate or make a rule to influence people’s behavior (Puspita, 2012, p. 25). As a man, Bob has power in society. Furthermore, it is strengthened by his social class. The domination of Bob can be seen from what he does to Carla. He forces her will to Carla and controls Carla’s life. Furthermore, as a lower class that has no material, Carla turns to depend on Bob. She becomes a restrained person. This condition is used by Bob to control her such as controlling what Carla does, where she goes and so on. So that violence faced by Carla is caused by the intersection between her gender and class.

From the explanation of the short story above, Carla as the main female character who lives in patriarchal culture experiences gender discrimination that manifests into stereotype, subordination, and violence against women such as physical violence, intimidation and isolation. The relations between gender and social class in gender discrimination also can be seen in the short story. Sexual harassment, violence and subordination that Carla experiences happen because of her gender and social class. Carla has less power because she is woman. In addition, she is also lower class woman. It strengthens gender discrimination that she gets. Patriarchal culture works tightly on women in the lower class position, so that the women suffer discrimination more.

C. Conclusion

As a woman who lived in patriarchal culture, Carla as the main female character in Bob Darling is experienced in gender discrimination. It is unjust treatments and assumptions against someone, particularly based on a person’s sex that leads to the role that he or she should play in the society. The different role however, leads to the harm and the loss of person’s right in life especially for woman who lives in patriarchal culture.
Moreover, the different social class of male and female character as they are reflected in the short story gives a stronger discrimination against the woman. Both gender and social class come together in the intersection way for discriminating them. Social class, a division of someone’s position in society (commonly in hierarchy) based on someone’s occupation, wealth, education, and those kinds of thing, has a role in gender discrimination. It can intersect with gender. Then, the intersections of the gender and the social class make the patriarchal culture in woman’s life is more bounded to them. It indicates that women in the patriarchal culture are experienced in the gender discrimination that is strengthened by her social class. When woman’s social class is lower than man, she is experienced more discrimination. In the patriarchal culture however, the discrimination against the woman is not only influenced by the gender itself, but also the social class.

References


Puspita, L. (September 2012). Keterasingan Perempuan Dari Pekerjaannya Kemi-