CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Sexual violence is a coercive action to someone sexually regardless of the perpetrator relationship with the victim, in any setting including home and work place. Similar to the definition above, National Sexual Violence Resource Center argues that "sexual violence means that someone forces or manipulates someone else into unwanted sexual activity without their consent" (2010). The reasons why someone is forced into unwanted sexual activity are fear, young age, illness, disability, influence of alcohol or other drugs. According to Young (2004: 7-9) sexual violence could be divided into 3 kinds: sexual assault, rape, and sexual abuse. To begin with, first, sexual assault can be depicted as attempted rape, fondling or unwanted sexual touching. As example, the masturbation is the term of attempted rape, the term of fondling is touching the genital or the vagina smoothly. And also touching some intimate part of the body such as legs, butt or breast is the term of touching. The second kind of sexual violence is rape. The term rape is often used as a legal definition to sexual penetration without consent. Third, sexual abuse, that is unwanted sexual activity using violence directed to the victim's body, making threats or taking advantage from victims' fear.

Sexual violence could be experienced by men or women, black or white, young or adult. However, mostly, those who get the violence are women, black

and youngster. It is triggered by patriarchal system that creates the discrimination between women and men. Men in the patriarchal system tend to have more power than women, some of them abuse their power such as doing a sexual violence.

As mentioned earlier, men and white people tend to have more power, while black people and women are susceptible to receive discriminations because they are considered as inferior. Thus, black women are mostly become victims of sexual violence because of their gender and race. Moreover, their voices are mostly unheard, which is why most of them try to fight for their voice and rights.

The main character Marguerite is discriminated black woman who is sexually abused by her mother's boyfriend that she thought as her own father. After the abused she is threatened not to tell anybody. She describes her experience of sexual violence.in detail and how it changed her. The clear description of her discrimination is what makes it interesting topic to be discussed. Sexual violence's victim comes with many backgrounds, different victim's age average, and the abuser can be male or female. However, male and adult are more likely to do sexual violence. As it seen from Marguerite's experience in *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings.*

The discrimination and sexual violence in the story will be analyzed using sexual politics theory (1976) developed by Kate Millett. Sexual politic explains the trigger of sexual violence based on gender systems divided into 8 aspects: ideological, biological, sociological, educational and economic,

anthropological, psychological, and force. However, the writer just took some aspects related to the analyzed data, which are sociological, ideological and religion. Thus, the three aspects is used to reveal the triggers of sexual violence experienced by Marguerite's character.

The analysis about sexual violence not been analyzed before. However, woman discrimination has been analyzed by Birhan Assafie (2012) portrays women as marginalized beings in *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* using black feminism theory. She discussed about the experience of black American based on the autobiography, focuses on the race and gender oppressions and class issues.

The second research was written by Souhelya Teifiani (2015) entitled *The Social and the Political Influence of Literature in Maya Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. She wrote about the narrative aspects and the impacts in social and politic experienced by Maya. She describes the voice of Maya in her autobiography as the form of the black women liberation that changes the stereotype of low class in America towards blacks. She also thought that politic in literature as political purposes of colonization and imperial expansion. The argument between the two researches is that Birhan focuses on the woman marginalization and the black feminine experiences in America divided into race, gender, and issue. Meanwhile, Teifani focused on social and politic in literature. the autobiography can be served as a means to change of black image. Both of the researches do not make a further research on the trigger and the impact of the woman marginalization and discrimination Therefore, this

research entitled **Sexual Violence Experienced by Marguerite in Maya Angelou's "*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*"** raises the issues of the trigger and impact of sexual violence in the novel.

1.2 Research Question

Based on issues above, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What kind of sexual violence are experienced by Marguerite?
2. What are the triggers of Marguerite's sexual violence?
3. What are the impacts of sexual violence on Marguerite?

1.3 Objectives

Based on the research questions above, the objectives are formulated as follows:

1. To describe kind of sexual violence experienced by Marguerite
2. To identify the triggers of sexual violence experienced by Marguerite
3. To show the impacts of sexual violence to Marguerite

1.4 Significance to Knowledge

This study is expected to provide the clear explanation about Marguerite's sexual violence in autobiography entitled *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou and to explain the causes of Marguerite's oppression, especially sexual violence. Kate Millett's sexual politics theory (1970) is applied in order to learn the aspects of women's subordination using the lenses of feminist

radical. Personally, the significance of this study is to deepen the writer's comprehension about the sexual politics theory. Furthermore, this study is also expected to develop knowledge about sexual politics to the reader.

1.5 Framework of Theory

In order to examine sexual violence experienced by Marguerite, identify its triggers, and its impacts, the research uses feminism proposed by Iris Marion Young (2004). According to his research sexual violence experience can be seen from of the perpetrator's actions toward the victim such as touching, fondling, forcing and the victim's reactions toward the actions. The victim can experience shock, fear, or confusion.

Besides that, the research uses the concept of Millet's sexual politics theory (1970) included into radical feminism theory focused on gender system. Millett (1970:91) states that "gender is political. Male and female relationship is the paradigm for all power relationship" which means that politics appears because there is a discrepancy relationship between male and female that constructed the patriarchal system. Millett explains that the patriarchy occurs in society because the institution or the system constructs it wherein mostly all the institutions and the system itself are dominated by male. Within this theory Millet explained how patriarchal system dominate the women's rights that produce gender inequality. Hence, Millett analyzed 8 aspects which can be the triggers of inequality based on gender system among others: ideological, biological,

sociological, educational and economic, anthropological, psychological, and force.

Among 8 aspects above, the research uses three aspects which are ideological, sociological and religion. Those aspects are used because those are the dominant aspects that triggered sexual violence experienced by Marguerite. Below is the flowchart for the framework of theory:

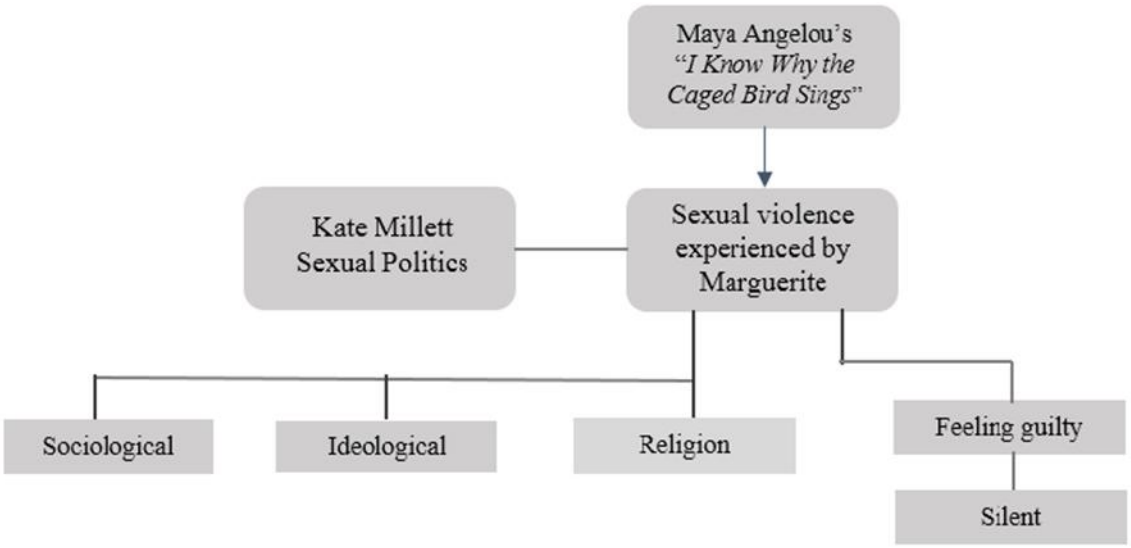


Figure 1.1 Framework of Theory