

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

Jones (1968: 1) in *Outline of Literature* states, "literature is simply another way we can experience the world around us through our imagination." It means that people can express their idea from their experience that happen in their daily life or their environment and show them in their literary works.

Novel is one of the kinds of literature. It is used as a medium to entertain and to share ideas or experiences in life. In *The Encyclopedia Americana*, Carene (1972:510) explains as follows:

The world novel is derived ultimately from the Latin adjective "Novellous" diminutive of "News" meaning "new", Hence when applied to fiction it means a new tale or story. It was adapted in the 16th century by the English language from "Novella", and Italian word use to describe a short tale portraying the incidents and often-amorous intrigues of everyday living.

The novel *The Accidental Office Lady* by Laura J. Kriska has interesting ideas. The novel emphasizes to the gender. Gender is interesting point to be discussed. It is a term used to make differences between man and woman. Brannon (1966:16) in *Gender Psychology Perspectives* says, "Gender is the term used by some researchers to describe the traits and behaviors that are regarded by the culture as appropriate to man and woman. The gender discrimination was so clear in Japan. The women are isolated and discriminated in workplace strongly dominated by men both in terms of number and power. Some researches show that in some factories, there is only one

woman among about 80 men in working place. Although in another workplace there are many working women but their class was still low and under the men position and policy. On the other hand, that discrimination creates the bad effect to the society especially for the woman situation. It creates the women harassment. Therefore, men program should give space to energetic women to oppose men's hegemony concerning with gender ideology, which was already rooted in the women and men's conviction. ([http://www.undp.org./rblac/gender/legislation/employment /htm](http://www.undp.org./rblac/gender/legislation/employment/htm)).

Concerning to the gender, women study does not only talk about comparing to men, but also about how to organize society. Women can not be separated from social system in wherever they live. Values in the society put women with their power and femininity high in the social construction. It should be understood as well that women also have great role in performing society. *The Accidental Office Lady* presents a story of women discrimination clearly. The main character, Kriska is an American lady who works as a secretary at Honda company in Japan. Kriska comes as a determined, irreverent, and very human American trying to grow up professionally in a foreign country that does not want her.

The writer is interested in analyzing *The Accidental Office Lady* by Laura J. Kriska because it gives attention to the dilemma of gender so much in which it is experienced by Kriska as the main character.

1.2 The Statement of the Problems

The writer presents some cases that will be the subject of analysis. There are as follows:

1. What gender discriminations are experienced by the main character?
2. What are the efforts of the main character to get the equal right?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

Based on the statement of the problems above, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To describe the gender discrimination experienced by the main character.
2. To find out the efforts of the main character to get the equal rights.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

Based on the title "Gender Discrimination of Main Character in Laura J. Kriska's *The Accidental Office Lady*," this study is limited to analyze Kriska as the main character in Laura J. Kriska's novel *The Accidental Office Lady*. It will focus on the discrimination experienced by the main character and the efforts of the main character to get the Equal right.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that the result of this writing will give deeper understanding to the readers on the problems that appear in the novel *The Accidental Office Lady* by

Laura J. Kriska, that is, the discrimination experienced by the main character and her struggles to get the equal rights. Hopefully, the reader will be familiar with the message implied within it, so that they can use this writing as a comparative material for further analysis. Accordingly, this thesis will be significance reference for the other researcher writings on the gender discrimination in a novel.