

GENDER DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN

BINA SHAH'S *BEFORE SHE SLEEPS*: A REVIEW ON THE MAIN CHARACTER

Firliana Alvira ^{a)}, Ni Made Widisanti S ^{a*)}, Agnes Setyowati ^{a)}

^{a)}Universitas Pakuan, Bogor, Indonesia

^{*)}Email Correspondence : wsarkana@gmail.com

Article history : accepted : June 28,2021 revised :July024,2021 approved : August 21,2021

ABSTRACT

The main topic in this research is gender discrimination which is based on the study of the main character in Bina Shah's *Before She Sleeps*. This research process involves the whole story, intrinsic elements: characters and characterizations, settings, and conflicts, as well as extrinsic elements: gender discrimination, patriarchy systems, and power relations. This qualitative research is supported by descriptive analysis methods and literature study techniques which result in findings that politicized gender disparities are the cause of gender discrimination. The main character, Sabine, experiences several forms of gender discrimination namely limited access to education and not allowed to work. Her only choice is to be a good housewife with three to five husbands, and to bear as many children as possible. This system, prompting Sabine to put up resistance by running away.

Keywords : gender; gender discrimination; gender gap; patriarchy system; main character.

I. BACKGROUND

Discrimination is a term that was first used in the 17th century. The term is derived from Latin, *discriminate*, an attitude of deliberately distinguishing between groups related to certain interests. These distinctions are usually based on religion, ethnicity, and race. Discrimination tends to be carried out by the majority group against the minority group. (Denny, 2013: 6)

The occurrence of discrimination in society is caused by historical, socio-cultural and situational development, personality factors, and beliefs, and religious differences of individuals or groups in society. Another discrimination that still occurs is gender discrimination based on the patriarchy system that has been ingrained since time before.

Gender is used to identify differences between men and women from a non-biological perspective. While sex is usually used to identify biological anatomical differences between men and women.

This form of gender discrimination is very visible in all aspects of people's lives, for example in boys' education it takes precedence over girls. Boys are considered the most qualified and able to inherit things than girls, so boys' level of education is a priority. On the other hand, women have always been in subordinate positions and considered second class. From the explanations above it can be concluded that gender injustice is also based on the patriarchy system.

The patriarchy system is still developing in the midst of society. This kind of culture exists in all aspects and scopes, such as economics, education, politics, even law. As a result, various social problems arose, restricting women's freedom and violating women's rights.

Historical records show that women have experienced painful experiences since time before. They are considered helpless, weak and "second class". It can be broadly

said that women accept all forms of discrimination and unfair treatment.

Depressed living conditions can raise women's awareness of their abilities. The novel by Bina Shah, *Before She Sleeps*, is one of the literary works that raises gender discrimination as a social problem that often occurs .

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is classified into qualitative research. The research techniques used in this study are library research using primary data, namely the novel *Before She Sleeps*, and secondary data derived from theories of books, journals, and scientific writing.

The authors also analysed the study by exposing the intrinsic and extrinsic

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the novel *Before She Sleeps* by Bina Shah, Sabine is the main character who becomes the center of conflict in the story. Judging by its physiological dimensions, Sabine is described as a woman with dark hair and smooth skin.

In terms of her sociological dimension, Sabine comes from a well-off family, this is seen from the side of Sabine's father who worked hard for Sabine's future. Sabine lives in a country that is strict on its rules, namely Green City which is described as a rapidly advancing country.

Green City survives on an uneven social level. This led to a social gap between the rich and the poor. This social disparity means the poor are required to

In this particular novel, gender discrimination is experienced by the main character, Sabine. She and other women were treated unfairly by a government-created system that demanded that all women in the country marry more than one husband and bear as many children as they could. The main character puts up a fight by hiding in order to be free from rules and systems that must always be adhered to.

elements of the novel *Before She Sleeps*. The elements that are written in the intrinsic element focus on character, affirmation, conflict, and background. extrinsic elements are also found in this study using the perspective of cultural studies

work more to become leaders in Green City than those born of the rich or leaders.

Almost all of its community activities are supervised by the local government from marriage to sexual affairs. This is in accordance with the concept of power put forward by Michel Foucault, which says that power spreads without being localized and seeps into the entire social fabric.

The Green City government requires all female citizens to marry more than one husband. This is due to a virus that attacks Green City that attacks women and causes a reduced female population, called *Gender Emergency*.

Gender Emergency is a term that Green City uses in gender imbalances caused by a virus whose victims are

women. The number of women's populations is very small, therefore the government makes regulations that burden many women and put women as victims of what happens.

Women who have more than one husband are also required to have as many children as possible, this is a never-ending pregnancies. This proves that the gender gap is indeed the main reason for the occurrence of gender discrimination but some things are also politicized by the government given the many rights deprived of the main character as a woman.

This case is included in gender-based violence as Kalibonso (2006) has mentioned, violence is directly directed against women including physical, mental and sexual harm or suffering, or threats to such acts or violence/coercion and deprivation of liberty.

The form of discrimination at that time was not only done directly but also in the media. Television stations were also created to educate how women can become good housewives.

This form of gender discrimination also occurred after the main character and other women living in Green City completed their secondary education, at which time they were required to take household-related classes meanwhile, men were exempt from university and some were prepared to become influential leaders or large men in Green City while women were given no other choice and were not given the same opportunities as men, while women are only prepared to be good wives.

This proves that the bitter reality experienced by women is not easily eliminated in everyday life as the story line

in the novel shows the limitations of women in choosing their way.

The pressure that the main character experiences makes her escape to a place called Panah. Panah is a women's shelter that does not want to follow the rules made by the Bureau, namely the rules on marriage. Their whereabouts are unknown to the Bureau.

Panah became a silent witness as a place of rebellion of women who fought against the system and chose its course as every individual's right should have.

They survive by buying their clothes and food in the illicit trade. Their form of resistance is to dwell somewhere and survive in limited conditions. The main character is depicted fighting the structure of the state by escaping.

The way they make money and survive from getting caught is to accompany the sleep of some highly educated men who have great power in Green City, therefore they are never caught. Here it appears that power is always actualized through knowledge, and knowledge always has a power effect.

In addition, it also proves that in fact, not only women are harmed from the system made, but also in men who cannot feel the complete affection of one woman who only focuses on one partner. This encourages men to do things that clash with the system so that this group of men choose not to perform their functions as law enforcement, instead protecting and becoming rebels.

Panah women do the job without emotional or sex ties. Given their goal is to avoid the rules that force them to become child "printers" and have to serve households with 3 to 5 husbands.

The gender discrimination experienced by the main character relates to the gender gap experienced by the country. The gender gap is the cause of the main character experiencing gender discrimination through the system created by the government so that the main character does not get her rights as a human being who should be able to choose her own way of life. The political content in the novel is also very visible with the patriarchy system created for the sake of increasing the population.

The main character fights back by escaping and exiting the system that binds

IV. CONCLUSION

Gender is used to identify men and women from a non-biological perspective. Gender injustice and discrimination are conditions of injustice due to social systems and structures, both women and men being victims of this system.

Another explanation regarding the definition of women is that women are included in gender-based violence. Such violence includes acts that cause physical, mental and sexual harm or suffering, or threats of such acts of violence or coercion and deprivation of liberty.

The main objective of this research is that the writer wants to show the form of gender in a country that is made for certain benefits and the resistance attitude of the main character to a system created by the government.

This novel tells the story of the main character named Sabine, who lives in a country called Green City who is facing gender caused by a virus that kills many

her. This proves that the system that has been created cannot be easily abolished by simply fighting to disobey it. The power holder will easily get rid of those who do not want to follow the rules. This reasoning is believed by the main character so that she only fights against the rules by hiding. The entrenched patriarchy system is also the reason for gender discrimination against the main character by simply thinking that only women can be the solution to the problems that Green City is experiencing by depriving women of their rights.

women. Therefore, the government in Green City made a regulation requiring three to five husbands of women and requiring women to bear as many children as possible.

Sabine, who has childhood trauma, doesn't want to get married and the rule weighs heavily on her. Because of that, Sabine decided to escape herself from Green City and restart her life with other women who have the same principles.

Gender discrimination that is created through this system that is detrimental to women is largely an illustration of the large number of people around.

The entrenched patriarchy system is also the reason for gender discrimination against the main character by simply thinking that only women can be the solution to the problems that Green City is experiencing by depriving women of their rights.

REFERENCES

Abdullah, Irwan (1998), Rekonstruksi Gender terhadap Realitas Wanita, dalam Bainar (ed) :Wacana Perempuan dalam

Keindonesiaan dan Kemodernan, Yogyakarta : PT. Pustaka Cidesindo.

Abdullah, Irwan, (2001), Seks, Gender & Reproduksi Kekuasaan, Yogyakarta: Tarawang Press.

Abdullah, Irwan, (2006), Dari Domestik ke Publik: Jalan Panjang Pencarian Identitas Perempuan, dalam Abdullah (Ed): Sangkan Paran Gender, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar Offset.

Adji, M., Meilinawati, L., Banita, B. (2009). Perempuan dalam Kuasa Patriarki. 21, 35-46. <http://pustidaka.unpad.ac.id>

Adji, M., Meilinawati, L., Banita, B. (2009). Perempuan dalam Kuasa Patriarki. 21, 35-46.

Ali, A., Januarbain, M., F., Azizah, N. (2015) Pemikiran Gender Menurut Para Ahli. (11), 75-94.

argorekmomenoreh.wordpress.com. (2014, 25 November). Analisis Sosiologi Sastra Dalam Novel Perempuan Jogja Karya Achamad Munif. Diakses pada 23 April

2020.

<https://argorekmomenoreh.wordpress.com/2013/12/28/analisis-sosiologi-sastra-dalam-novel-perempuan-jogja-karya-achmad-munif-kajian-sosiologi-2/>

Bernard S. Hayong, ed. 2013. Diskursus Seksualitas. Maumere – Flores, NTT (86152):Ladalero

Hermawan, H., Hamzah, R., E. (2017) Objektifikasi perempuan dalam iklan televisi : analisis lintas budaya terhadap iklan parfum Axe yang tayang di televisi Indonesia dan Amerika Serikat. *Jurnal Kajian Media*, (1), 166-176.

[Ibdjk.blogspot.com](http://www.Ibdjk.blogspot.com). (2015, 20 April) Ilmu Budaya Dasar, Makna Sikap Hidup. Diakses pada 21 April 2020. <http://www.Ibdjk.blogspot.com/2013/01/makna-sikaphidup.html>

[Lakilakibaru.or.id](https://lakilakibaru.or.id). (2015, 8 Maret). Sejarah Gerakan Perempuan di Dunia. Diakses pada 19 Maret 2020. <https://lakilakibaru.or.id/sejarah-gerakan-perempuan-di-dunia/>

[Medium.com](https://medium.com). (2016, 13 Maret). Sejarah, Pengertian, Kadar, dan Bentuk Ideologi Patriarki. Diakses pada 19 Maret 2020. <https://medium.com/@suriadibara/sejarah-pengertian-bentuk-dan-struktur-ideologi-patriarki-efd0124e2128>.