

The Existence of Women in the Short Story “Forever Love”

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Abstract: *Forever love* is a short story by Helvy Tiana Rosa that discusses women's struggles in social life. The aim is to describe the existence of women in the social system, family and environment. The method used in this study is descriptive analysis with a qualitative research type and an existential feminist approach. The data were obtained from excerpts from the short story "Forever Love". The research technique was carried out in stages, namely determining data sources, collecting data, and grouping data. Data analysis techniques were carried out in stages such as reducing research data, presenting research data, and concluding research data. Based on the research results, researchers can find that women are inspirational about love, friendship, and hard work.

Keywords: *existence of women; existential feminism; literary works.*

I. Introduction

Women are a phenomenon that unravels Indonesian literary works. The presence of women as something existential is a value that cannot be separated from literature. This happens because every literary work is made with sincerity which of course contains a strong attachment to life. Literature is a representation of the author's imagination of the environment and social reality that occurs. Women and literary works have their own existence with distinctive values attached to them. Sartre distinguishes radically, namely being-for-itself and being-in-itself. For-itself, that is, there are those who are aware that are humans, while in-itself there are those who are not aware, namely things other than humans (Muzairi, 2002:111-112). In the development of the world of education, especially after the rolling reforms, new phenomena have arisen in educational institutions, which are schools that use the term Integrated Islamic Schools (Titik, 2010: 42). The school is essentially aimed at helping parents teach good habits and add good character, also given education for life in society that is difficult given at home. Thus, education in schools is actually part of education in the family, which is also a continuation of education in the family (Daulay in Ayuningsih, W. et al. 2020).

Gender actually does not become wrong if women and men are treated fairly. It tends to happen that injustice often befalls women. The concept of gender explains that the inherent characteristics of both women and men are the result of social and cultural construction. For example, women are known to be gentle, loving, graceful, beautiful, polite, motherly, while men are strong, manly, brave, tough, mighty and fierce. The traits described are interchangeable traits between the two, men can be weak and women can be strong or vice versa. Oakley explained that gender is not a direct result of biological sex. He defines sex as an anatomical and psychological characteristic that determines maleness (maleness) and femaleness (femaleness). Language is one of the most important things in the life of every human being. Each of them is of course inseparable from language, the first time a child gets a language that is heard directly from the father or mother when the child is born into this world. Then as time goes by and as the child grows, they will acquire a language other than the language taught by the mother and father, either in the form of a second, third, foreign language or so on which is called language acquisition where it depends on the social environment and cognitive level possessed by these children through the learning process in

their environment. (Purba, N. et al. (2020).

When women begin to exist for themselves, they can create their own freedom and the future is wide open (Thomas, 2010: 47). However, the emphasis on individual choice is incompatible with the theory of oppression. De Beauvoir argues that women have so far been confined to the imagination of men who have claimed this quality of transcendence for themselves that this is the fate assigned to women in a patriarchal system, but not in occupations such as slavery. 'Therefore, how can we be optimistic about women's power to choose existence' or 'transcendence' associated with such history. There is something in the nature of being a woman that means that she is incapable of freedom, whose 'transcendence' has (as Virginia Woolf argues, albeit under different circumstances) depended on the immanence of woman. Communication is the process of delivering messages by someone to other people to tell, change attitudes, opinions or behavior either directly orally or indirectly through the media. In this communication requires a reciprocal relationship between the delivery of messages and recipients namely communicators and communicants. (Hasbullah, et al. 2018). Communication is the process of delivering messages by someone to other people to tell, change attitudes, opinions or behavior either directly orally or indirectly through the media. In this communication requires a reciprocal relationship between the delivery of messages and recipients namely communicators and communicants (Hasbullah, et al: 2018).

Feminism is here to pay attention to the existence of women in the world of literature. Existentialist feminism was pioneered by Simone de Beauvoir. His thinking is influenced by the philosophy of existentialism, especially Sartre's thought. To be able to summarize Sartre's thoughts is not an easy thing to do in a brief description. However, the most interesting part of his thinking is about human existence. According to Sartre, humans exist as themselves with consciousness. This is also what causes humans to be different from objects or other things. In other words, for humans, existence is openness, different from other objects, namely Existence is at the same time an essence, so for humans existence precedes essence. "Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself. Such is the first principle of existentialism". Existence, according to Sartre, in Tong (2006: 256), precedes essence. In other words, we are not simply amorphous living organisms until we create separate and essential identities for ourselves through conscious action-through choices and decisions, reaffirming old goals and projects, and upholding new goals and projects.

Existence can be interpreted as a way for women to understand their existence as human beings who are faced with a number of choices (Stone in Syah, 2021:66). This meaning makes existence a tool for women to make a deeper meaning of themselves and from this meaning women will be better prepared when faced with various realities of life. Existence according to Sartre precedes essence. The existence of an existence that precedes essence will make man responsible for his life. Thus, existentialism places humans in their position as themselves, and places all of the responsibility for their lives entirely on the shoulders of the humans themselves. Man being responsible for his own life does not mean that his responsibility includes only his own individuality.

Women have always been subjects and objects that cannot be separated in this life. Women have an attraction that is always inherent in the life of society until now, including in the world of literature. Since ancient times, literary works have become a culture regime and a strong allure to gender issues. One of the works that describes the reality of the problems against women in Indonesia is a short story. The short story "Forever Love" by Helvy Tiana Rosa invites readers to understand women's experiences with various complex problems in it. The short story "Forever Love" tells of an adopted daughter named Dini whose presence is unwanted.

II. Research Method

This study uses a descriptive analysis method. The descriptive analysis method is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words about individual characteristics, circumstances, or symptoms of certain observable groups (Moleong, 1984:16). The theory used in the research of the short story "Forever Love" is the theory of existentialist feminism and Sartre's existence. The initial method used to understand, know the problem is feminism. The analysis was carried out to find out which characters are professional in the series of events that appear in the short story.

Sources of data in this study were library data sources such as Sartre's Existence, Beauvoir's Existence, feminist books, women's journals, magazines, and others. The data collection technique in this study was by collecting dialogue, paragraphs, and sentences about the professional character in the short story "Forever Love" by Helvy Tiana Rosa. The data collection techniques are determining data sources, collecting data, and grouping data. Data analysis techniques using flow analysis techniques include reducing research data, presenting research data, and concluding research data (Miles and Huberman, 2009:15-20)

III. Result and Discussion

In this section, the results of data analysis are described which consist of forms of marginalization of women as others and the existence of women in the short story "Forever Love" as the resistance.

3.1 Results

There are two forms of marginalization of women as other, namely the view of the different positions of women and men and physical violence against women. Meanwhile, there are two forms of women's existence, namely work and intellectuality.

3.2 Discussion

A form of marginalization of women as other.

a. A view of the differences in the position of women and men

In Simone de Beauvoir's view, women are always seen as weak and not absolute creatures. This can be seen from the events in this short story. The powerlessness of this woman can be seen in the character of Dita.

"I'm tired, Dean! My job as a washer-iron still has to be supplemented by caring for three small children and an elderly person! Do you know how tired I am! That's all coupled with my relationship that was never harmonious with my own husband! And that's because of Mother, Din!" Kak Dita's voice rose and the baby in her arms started crying again.

In the quote above, it can be seen that the female character named Dita is only a housewife whose job is washing, ironing, and taking care of the children. A woman who doesn't work is the traditional view. Women are only able to take care of household needs. This tradition has been inherited in Indonesian culture. Female characters have no other choice but to take care of the household. Meanwhile, the men work.

b. Physical Violence against Women

One form of marginalization of women is violence. A weak woman will lose to a man because a man has physical strength. The female characters in this short story experience physical violence. Give me the quote.

"Wait. Here he is. We found this grandmother, Mrs. Dini, without identification, two weeks ago. He sobbed in front of the orphanage. An old man who happened to be outside said a man pushed him out of the taxi and left him in front of the orphanage."

The quote above shows the treatment experienced by a woman by a man. Bu Hasni experienced violence from her son-in-law named Tio. The character Tio uses physical violence by pushing the female character out of the taxi.

The existence of women: work and intellectual.

1. Work

One form of resistance to the problems experienced by the characters is to work. Initially, work was only done by men. However, women can also work is a form of resistance that occurs within the main character, namely Dini. Here's the quote.

"Finally I got up the courage to start making spicy cassava chips which I sold myself at school and left them in stalls. It turns out that the results are not bad and can be saved. Once I even set aside money to buy milk for my nephew. However, Kak Dita's welcome was cold. He also didn't want to talk about Mom, or anything to me. After all, he didn't want me to come to his house often. She said she was afraid her husband would be angry!"

The quote above explains that Dini's character started working independently by making cassava chips. The struggle does not end here. Dini's figure also applied for a job in a nursing home along with her quote.

"Yes sir. At that time I thought, when I graduate maybe I can help out here. Cooking, sweeping, tending, you name it."

"Incidentally there are some workers here. Some are nursing graduates, but there are also honorary workers who have graduated from elementary school, like Mrs. Sri, who is a cook. If Dik Dini wants, maybe we can accept younger siblings to work here. Maybe help with nursing or administration? But...to be honest, the salary is not much."

2. Intellectual

Dini's character has problems in her family, but she continues her studies until she finally graduates. Here's the quote.

"Today after the graduation announcement, Rahmi and I returned to visit Mother and tell her the happy news. It was at that time that Mother broke the news to her other friends. I gawked when one by one the grandmothers in the big room hobbled their hands at me while smiling broadly and nodding their heads."

The quote above shows that Dini's character has graduated and then informs her mother. The various problems that Dini's character went through did not make him afraid to drop out of school. These problems are like the bad treatment of Uncle Hadi's family.

"If you eat it, don't eat too much. The others won't get it later." I looked down. I felt the sharp glances of Uncle Hadi's wife who was sitting not far from me."

"Come on, Nia, Iin...take the side dishes! Soon it will sell out again!" The sharp sound pierced my heart. Yes, ever since. But this time I think the stab is more stabbing."

Apart from that, Dini's character also has to find his mother's whereabouts at his own expense. Here's the quote.

"Suddenly I felt my stomach grunt. Ouch, the pain! I glanced at the thousandth sheet in the pocket of my school uniform. That's my only fare. And I can't even buy a piece of tofu to fill my stomach."

In the quote above, it is explained that Dini only has a thousand rupiahs to find her mother in a nursing home. These various problems did not make him never give up to find his mother. In fact, Dini's character is in conflict with her brother which makes her hurt. Here's the quote.

"I, his biological child, already know what is best for him. And as an adopted son, you don't have to disturb Mother's peace!" said Kak Dita suddenly. My tears dripped. My voice caught in my throat. Without a word, at that time I ran away from them.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the researcher's analysis of the role of women in the short story, it is evident that their duties are not only as women in general. Portraits of women's experiences in the form of a number of portraits of women related to the social and family environment. Through this aspect, women experience various aspects of problems that have occurred in the past or present. The portrait of women's experience in a story only tells about women in general, but women can penetrate morality as perpetrators of discrimination against their own mothers. Women as characters are categorized as soft, loving and caring and can become antagonistic characters caused by pressure from men.

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