

Feminism Analysis in the Novel “Woman at Point Zero”

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Abstract

Feminism, as a movement of a woman to demand equality and justice, fight for sexist exploitation and oppression. The movement is triggered by the awareness that the women have equal right with me. In society, woman discriminated by rules and culture. By all means, women can not accept the action of society that makes them intimidated. The methodology of the study was descriptive qualitative. Woman at Point Zero by Nawal El-Sadawi is a novel describes how hard the condition of a woman, named Firdaus, who wanted to struggle her rights, not only as a woman but also as human. The study described about feminism, a woman struggle for their rights that found in the Novel. Firdaus had to crouch, because she killed a pimp who wanted to price her, before she was on gallows. She did not feel fear of die, whereas she felt that she became a free woman without man around. She struggle for her right as woman by defending to be passive for all that accused to her.

Keywords: feminism, analysis, novel

INTRODUCTION

Feminism is a movement that demands the women emancipation, equality and justice of rights. Feminism theories as women’s device to struggle their rights are closely related to class and racial conflict especially gender conflict. It means that between class conflict and feminism have the equal assumptions; deconstruct the system of domination and hegemony, opposition between vulnerable groups and a stronger group. Feminist refuses injustice as a result of patriarchal society, history and philosophy as a discipline centered from men, subject as ego-centric (use notion), and women as heterocentrik.

Feminism is a women movement that happens almost all over the world. As Hooks (2015: xii) said that feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression. The movement is triggered by the awareness that the women have equal right

with men. The women through the movement and feminist theory demanding that cultural awareness which always discriminate women can be changed so the equilibration can be dynamic.

“Women at Point Zero” Novel has perspective gender problem that is an interesting phenomena in giving description and contribution in feminism, gender and literature. The analysis needed to be discussed in feminist literature review in order to be able to find some problems in gender equality, inequality and to see the relation in society of *Woman at Point Zero* Novel.

UNDERLYING THEORY

Delmar (1986: 5) in Dickinson (2003: 114)Women suffer discrimination because of their sex, that they have specific needs which remain negated and unsatisfied, and that satisfaction of these needs would require a radical change. Feminism associated with women’s deliverance of men’s oppression. In other word, feminism known as emancipation and can be defined as awareness of oppression and extortion to women in society, at work, in family and awareness of women or men to change the condition.

Moreover, DeVault (1996:31) in Prus (1999: 42) stated that feminism is a movement, and a set of beliefs, that problematize gender inequality. Feminists believe that women have been subordinated through men’s greater power, variously expressed in different arenas. In addition, Tong (1998:1) in Dickinson (2003:114) assumed that feminism as “intellectual and political commitments to women”. Feminism is belief to the equality of social, politic and economy for women. It is a movement which is controlled based on the belief that women are not defining factor that form social identity or someone’s social politics and economic right.

In feminism, women ask for equality or emancipation and they struggle for any unequal treatment done by society. Moreover, as stated by Paludi (2010:4) that feminism is the belief inequality of social, economic, political, and judicial for certain principles. For environment that serves traditional society, women and men are given different treatment which inclined to treat men than women.

Feminism seems a reasonable feminism seems a reasonable and long-overdue corrective to the historical lack of access women to continue to experience (Paludi, 2010). It means that feminism wants the women access to explore them to have more experience like men. Therefore, they cannot separate to certain activity that they are forbidden to do. However, in society it is not always easy to be applied. Some societies still uphold most traditional views that repute they do not need to fix the concept about.

METHODOLOGY

Methodology of the research used in this research was descriptive qualitative. Creswell (2010: 93) stated that in qualitative research, theory usually used as description of behaviors and attitudes. Descriptive qualitative means no coefficient about variables relationship. "Woman at Point Zero" novel by Nawal El-Saadawi was used as subject of the study. Feminism analysis was used to describe the data. It was analyzed by qualitative design and the data was presented descriptively.

RESULTS

Novel "Woman at Point Zero" is a novel that tells about a woman that was often abused and tormented by men. The woman named Firdaus. She often abused sexually by men around her. All cases happened from she was a kid until she finally ended her life on gallows.

The problems came up because she was born as a woman in which she was treated differently by her parents. She got sexual abused by her uncle who was presumed he was good. She was married with a sixty-year-old widower by her uncle. Firdaus never felt better in her life. She fled from her husband because she often tormented physically by her husband. After that she became prostitute since she met a man who found her on the street. At the end of the story, she had to kill a pimp who wanted to price her.

From the story, it was found that Firdaus assured that she seemingly accepted the similar treatment with men. However, she did not fight for her rights in the society. She was a strong woman unfortunately because she is a woman, it made her seem strengthless. She became a passive woman as weapon to fight the sexual abused done to her included her passiveness to accept the death penalty. As quoted in her statement that:

Everybody has to die. I prefer to die for a crime I have committed rather than to die for one of the crimes which you have committed.(p.111)

The statement showed her resistance to men. She never felt chagrined of what she has done.

Another form of her passiveness and resistance to men was by saying:

"My skin is soft, but my heart is cruel, and my bite is deadly"(p.54)

Because she is a woman, many people especially men thought that she was weak and can not do anything to refuse what they did. In fact, she was a strong woman that can kill anyone that hurts her. No one knew that in her heart and mind, she had a plan to destroy men who looked down to her.

Besides that, Firdaus felt that she never found that she accepted in the society. She actually missed everything that was better than her life now. She wanted to say that she also needed to be appreciated by people around her. She said:

"All my life I have been searching for something that would fill me with pride, make me feel superior to everyone else, including kings, princes and rules"(p.9).

In this statement, it was explicitly stated that nobody can appreciate her as it should; In spite of the fact that, she wanted and needed to be appreciated by people around her.

Firdaus thought that she became worthless because she is a woman. She could let every man enjoy her body since she did not have force to escape from men. Man was considered as people that can do whatever they want, neither did the woman.

"However, every single man I did get to know filled me but one desire: to lift my hand and bring it smashing down on his face. But because I am a woman I have never had the courage to lift my hand."(p.10)

Indeed, she could not lift her hand; it was like all of the society unappreciated women. Her passiveness was also shown by her demeanor that let the men got her body and she guaranteed the men could not make she felt pleasure, glad and throb. She could never confound her feelings to men who slept with her. It caused the men became curious and

anxious. Firdaus was passive to save her life without giving anything. It was one of the ways for her to defend.

Firdaus tried to be passive to save her self without doing anything. For the statement:

“Each time I picked up a newspaper and found the picture of a man who was one of them, I would spit on it.” (p.9)

The statement shows that in her opinion, none of men is kind, and a good person. Men have broken her life and her future. She showed her resentment by spitting on the men pictures. She can feel better whenever she spit the men even though it was a picture. It can be one of her struggle the inequality and injustice that she got.

In another Firdaus statement, she said:

“Yes, no matter who she might be. I was no more than a successful prostitute, and no matter how successful prostitute is, she can not get to know all men.” (p.111)

In spite of the fact that she was a prostitute, she was a woman that was success. She has strong desire to high up her hand by killing a man though she had to be on gallows. The man she killed was a pimp who priced her for some money. She had to go with the men, eventhough she did not know them. It caused her upset and enraged since she did not like to do it. She felt satisfaction for fighting all that she refused in her life.

Some people said that Firdaus was an inconsideration woman. She can express her feeling by doing something that was unpredictable and frightening for men. Actually men were afraid of the type of the woman, like Firdaus, because whenever she felt uncomfortable, she can kill the men. They felt threatened by her demeanor, because they knew that she did not like men; therefore they wanted Firdaus to be hanged. As quoted:

“They said, “You are a savage and dangerous woman”. I am speaking the truth is savage and dangerous.”(p.110)

Based on the statement the word “they” refers to all men involved in her life - like father, uncle, husband, journalists, pimps, doctor – and all men of all profession. She knew that all of them wanted her to be on gallows. In contrary, she said that, in fact the men were

dangerous. The men only diverted the truth. However, since they fear to be blamed, they had to get rid of Firdaus.

In contrary, Firdaus did not fear of death. She can do what she needed to do were able to make her feel better than before. By killing one of the men, she felt she defended her right and others as a woman.

"I have triumphed over both life and death because I no longer desire to live, nor do I any longer fear to die. I want nothing. I hope for nothing. I fear nothing. Therefore, I am free."(p.110)

She did not have parents that would cry if she died. She said that she felt free by avoiding man that often destructed woman. When the men around her fear to die, she never felt fear to die.

Moreover, many hard things come in her life. It was not live if she had no problem. She lick one's lip every problems visited her. Whereas it was a greatly problem, she enjoyed each process. When she was in the prison she felt free than before and she felt lucky to be free in situation that perhaps many women could not feel like her feeling about freedom in the prison.

"A prostitute, however, is a little better off. I was able to convince my self that I chosen this life of my own free will. The fact that I rejected (men's) noble attempts to save me, my insistence on remaining a prostitute, proved to me this was my choice and that I had some freedom, at least the freedom to live in a situation better than that of other women."(p.89)

Freedom assumed as her feeling that she did not stand, sit, and sleep around men that she extremely hate. She emphasized that she will be free after she got executed because of the case. She refused and ignored helps that offered by anyone who wanted to help her to be free from accusation. Since, after she was on gallows, she would be out of the world.

DISCUSSION

The novel describes how hard the condition of a woman who wanted to struggle her rights, not only as a woman but also as human. Firdaus wanted to show that if woman is lack of courage to take risk in her life and do not have dare to struggle her rights, it only made she becomes unappreciated by men and then it can caused her chagrined later.

A lot of inequality in this life can encourage us to think eternally for what we need to do to avoid them. Firdaus and many others women besides her became passive for fighting for it and it did not have any better satisfied result and condition after it happened. In other hand, it caused her rights neglected from many people especially men. Become passive is the movement of the women to struggle for their life. At last, Firdaus had to end her life without any worthy and reasonable justice for herself.

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