THE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN REFLECTED IN NOVELS
ENTROK, MARYAM, AND PASUNG JIWA
BY OKKY MADASARI

Sumarah Suryaningrum1; Sarwiji Suwandi2; Herman Joseph Waluyo3

1,2,3Post Graduate of Indonesian Education and Literature Department, Universitas Sebelas Maret
Jl. Ir. Sutami No. 36-A, Kentingan, Surakarta 57126, Indonesia
1sumarahsuryaningrum@student.uns.ac.id; 2sarwijiswan@yahoo.com; 3herman.jwaluyo@yahoo.co.id

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ABSTRACT
This research aimed to find out the discrimination against women in Indonesia, especially reflected in novels Entrok, Maryam, and Pasung Jiwa written by Okky Madasari. Over centuries, women in Indonesia had faced various forms of discrimination that happened because of the strong influence of patriarchal culture, norms, customs, and even religion. That viewpoint then caused men and women to have different roles, both biologically and socially. Women had roles to keep house, family, and children, meanwhile, men had roles to provide for living and protection to the family. The discrimination problem, especially for women, was still the most discussed topic due to the lack of public awareness about women's roles in community life. This research was a descriptive qualitative research using feminism approach. The data in this research were in the forms of sentences, paragraphs, dialogues, and discourses that reflect discrimination against women. The data analysis technique used in this research was content analysis. The research result shows that there is discrimination towards women in the sectors of economic and social based on the utterances from these three novels by Okky Madasari.

Keywords: women, discrimination, novel, feminism

INTRODUCTION

Literature works are not just writing reflecting the social, cultural, and historical life of society, but it also reflects the values of life. In this context, literature works not only to entertain the readers but also have the meaning which can influence the readers’ viewpoint or perception towards life. This means that a text is said to have value because it gives meaning to its readers (O'Hara, 2006). Literature works such as novels also have value as a medium of communication with messages delivery even though not as direct disclosure (Gora, 2015). This is also reflected in novels Entrok, Maryam, and Pasung Jiwa by Okky Madasari. In these novels, the author raises the social conditions of the community at that time when inequality between women and men was an issue. The discussion about women sometimes makes women as image objects, have two sides of perception, both positive and negative. It happens because women have two sides that one of which is women is a form of beauty.

When talking about women, it seems unfair not to mention feminism. Literature plays an important role in feminism. Studies about women or feminism in novels generally try to bring women to the surface, so that justice and gender equality can be realized. Moore (1988) has stated that the social construction, which formed men domination role in culture and society in general or in patriarchal, legitimizes the gender relations between men and women in the form of masculinity and femininity. The feminism movements affect many aspects of women’s lives, starting with the development of social, economic, politics, and culture.

Feminism is a women’s movement that appeared due to the awareness that women have the same position as men. As stated by Webster and Geofe (1993) that feminism is an organized activity fighting for women’s rights and interests. This means that if women have the same position as men, therefore women have the same rights as men to divine their own fate. Feminism aims to end the domination of men over women by disrupting cultural structures, all laws and rules that are placing women as weak and helpless victims. This was accepted by women as marginalization, subordination, stereotyping, and violence (Rokhmansyah, 2014). Furthermore, Djajanegara (2000) has said that the main
purpose of feminism is to increase the women’s position and the degree to be the same as men’s. Heroeopoetri and Valentina (2004) have added that feminism intends to fight for humanity for women as independent human (women demanding their full rights as human beings).

In Indonesian culture, there is still inequality of position between women and men. This seems to be a habit and grown in society. Talking about women related to gender cannot be separated from the social construction regulating and placing women in different positions with men (Derana, 2016). The stereotype found in Indonesian society has resulted in women’s losses and injustices. This stereotype then leads to widespread discrimination against women, such as government regulations, religious rules, culture, and community habits.

Discrimination or common term referring to differences in treatments is something familiar. According to Theodorson and Theodorson in Fulthoni (2009), discrimination is an unfair and unbalanced treatment carried out to distinguish individuals or groups based on something that is usually categorical, distinctive attributes such as race, nationality, religion, or membership. Discrimination is one of trending issues and the most discussed topic among Indonesian society, happened not only in the past but also until this day, especially relating to the gender issue.

Gender itself refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that are considered suitable for men and women by certain communities (Shastri, 2014). The Indonesian people believe both women and men have different roles and some main responsibilities that they must do and fulfill. Physically, women’s role is only related to housekeeping, kitchen, and bed. Meanwhile, men’s role is as a wage earner and a family protector. All of these ideas make women have a lower position than men do and often considered weak until they lose their equal rights over men.

The discrimination experienced by women in society is generally caused by the influence of a strong patriarchal culture in Indonesia, norms, customs, and people’s behavior and thoughts, which finally create an atmosphere of discrimination. Commonly, discrimination is more for women because they are considered as a lower and weaker part of men. In our society, women’s lives are truly shaped by a patriarchal culture that has been inherent for centuries, making it difficult to eliminate. Since childhood, women must comply with their father, and when married, they must comply with their husband.

In the field of economy or work, women only have a slight opportunity. Women’s potential is often ignored. This has made it difficult for women to have an equal position with men. Women are often considered too emotional and often make decisions based on their conscience, so they are not qualified to play the role of leaders. This assumption has resulted in women occupying a less important position in the field of economics or work by only being laborers in small industries or traders in traditional markets.

In the social sector, the problem faced by women is the assumption that women will end up only in the kitchen, so they do not need to go to higher education. Besides, education is a tool not only to get proper jobs but also to change one’s mindset in social life. This is in line with the research of Atmawati (2018) that has said the way of social thinking is determined by the differences of language choice, in which it develops in accordance with the education level pursued. If women do not get an education, it will not only make it difficult for them to find jobs and to improve their living standard but also inhibit their social life because they are considered not able to put themselves on the same level as educated men. In addition to lower education, the idea of women should be able to cook, maintain cleanliness, and serve their husbands and children, worsen the discrimination against women since it restrained women not to do other activities except domestic sector only.

Discrimination in the social sector also occurs when there is something or problem that needs solution together both in family or community, women’s voice seems to be not heard nor needed or being the last to be asked for an opinion. This causes a large gap between the position of men and women. Though as fellow human beings, both men and women have the same rights. Men and women are like two sides of the inseparable coin; they should support each other and work together to achieve goals.

The discussion about discrimination is often heard, and moreover, many literature works give their voice to lift the stories about the real fights in resolving discrimination against women. Some of the literary works, describing the efforts to fight for women’s rights in facing discrimination, is the novel by Okky Madasari; Entrok, Maryam, and Pasung Jiwa. Those novels are interesting to study because they can give a clear illustration of the discrimination against women at that time.

As humans, men or women have the same position. How good they are to get the same portion in performing a role. For example, a man can do housework, such as cooking. This also applies to women who can also play roles as office workers who are usually male-dominated. Discrimination regarding the position and role of women can be avoided if men and women try to respect and help each other’s roles. The involvement of both parties will certainly be able to reduce the existence of discrimination against women and minimize their impact.

Some relevant researches about discrimination against women have also been done. First is Ariesta and Mulaistuti (2017) who have discussed black women fighting for freedom from suppression. Second is Setyowati (2018) who has described Margaret Mitchell’s struggle to break the rules in her community, especially those dealing with women and economic life. This controversial action is considered as a constructive change because it leads to women’s empowerment and equality. The third is Khotimah (2009) who has talked about discrimination against women in the jobs sector. Fourth is Lin (2016) who has explained how Chinese women survive in a patrilineal society. The fifth is Handayani and Salim (2007) who have discussed the positive impacts that occurred due to the increasing level of women’s education. Also, the sixth is Ariyanto (2017) who has described gender equality through labeling Maung Geulis as a female supporter and how the manifestation of female supporters in football can get moral motivation for football players in the field.

In line with those researches, the researcher would also explain the forms of discrimination against women in Indonesia especially in economic and social sectors which are reflected in novels Entrok, Maryam, and Pasung Jiwa by Okky Madasari using feminist theory. With this research, it can increasingly open the horizons of all people about the impact of discrimination on the role and position of women in the internal (family) or external (social environment). Not only that, but this research will also raise awareness of both men and women that both can work together and share the same role without dropping each other.
METHODS

This research is a descriptive qualitative research using feminism approach. Feminism is a theory of equality between men and women in the political, economic, and social fields, or organized activities that fight for women’s rights and interests.

The fact that there are multiple definitions of feminism means that there are multiple feminist perspectives on social research methods. One shared radical tenet underlying feminist research is that women’s lives are important. Feminist researchers do not cynically ‘put’ women into their scholarship so as to avoid appearing sexist. Rather, for feminist researchers, females are worth examining as individuals and as people whose experience is interwoven with other women. In other words, feminists are interested in women as individuals and as a social category (Reinharz in Arrandell, 1995). This is in line with qualitative research, which is an approach accepted in social science.

Qualitative research, characterized by substantially inductive and open-ended methods, is an important and accepted approach in the social sciences. Four specific features of a qualitative research are understanding research participants’ meanings, investigating the influence of the specific contexts in which the individuals and activities studied are situated, elucidating the processes by which these meanings and contexts lead to particular features or outcomes, and explicitly incorporating the subjectivity of the researcher are central to qualitative research (Maxwell & Reybold, 2015).

This research is conducted using the data collection technique carried out by content analysis. Content analysis is a research method which allows the qualitative data collected in research to be analyzed systematically and reliably so that generalizations can be made from them in relation to the categories of interest to the researcher (Haggarty, 1996). The data validation tests use data triangulation, theory, and methods. The data resources are primary data and secondary data. The primary data are in the form of excerpts from the novels by Okky Madasari; Entrok, Maryam, and Pasung Jiwa while the secondary data are cited from books, journals, and the internet as the theoretical frameworks to do analysis.

The things described in this research are the description of discrimination against women, especially in the economic and social fields found in the three novels of Okky Madasari; Entrok, Maryam, and Pasung Jiwa. These novels express determination, attitude, and how to have a clear position in various community issues that are clearly expressed so as to make a big impact on readers in making decisions. The three novels are able to open the eyes of the readers who want to accept differences and see how women have a big role in social life. The data collection technique used is literary review by obtaining theories about the discrimination and gender inequality that is required to solve the problems related to research activities, reading the entire text of the novels by Okky Madasari; Entrok, Maryam, and Pasung Jiwa. Then, a note-taking technique is used to record the data found related to sub focus and finally to analyze.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The three novels by Okky Madasari (Entrok, Maryam, and Pasung Jiwa) share similarities; discrimination in the economic and social fields. The first discussion is discrimination in the economic field. Entrok is the first novel by Okky Madasari published in 2010. Through the characters of mother and daughter named Marni and Rahayu, Okky expresses her anxiety about the hidden and forgotten history about women’s lives, thoughts, and struggles at that time. Although they are born in a different generation, they both show the different sides of women who are often considered weak and helpless. Marni has to fight against poverty, time after time she lives with sweat and without complaining. Having a husband who is a drunkard, a beggar, and a lazy worker, Marni patiently goes through. Teja comes as a complement for Marni. Teja is a stepping stone for Marni to be a brave woman and a defender. She does not want to surrender to men who know only about food and beds. Compared to her mother, Rahayu manages herself to get a higher education and fights for her true identity.

The male character is often considered important in a family as a life support and leader. When there is no male figure in the family, they would not be able to live well because no one could work for money. It can be seen from this utterance: “Ya, makanya itu. Kalau sudah tahu bapak saja tidak punya, ya sudah. Nggak usah neko-neko. Bisa makan tiap hari saja sudah syukur.” (Madasari, 2010: 19) “Indeed. You already know that you don’t have a father, just accept it. Don’t screw yourself. You must thank to God that you can still eat everyday.”

Javanese society at that time also had a stereotype that one who could work and deserve to get paid were only men. If there were women who work, then they would get paid with food or groceries.

“Simbok berkata, aku tidak akan mendapat uang. Kebiasaan di pasar, buruh-buruh perempuan diupahi dengan bahan makanan. Beda dengan kuli laki-laki yang diupahi dengan uang.” (Madasari, 2010: 22) “Simbok said, I’ll get no money. Usually in the market, women laborers get paid with food or groceries. It’s different from men laborers, they’ll get paid with money.”

That kind of stereotype makes women find difficulties for wanting something without men’s help. This condition is experienced by Marni, especially when she really wants an entrok. Entrok is a Javanese language referring to breasts cover or better known as a bra or BH (Madasari, 2010). The desire to have entrok is not agreed by the mother and Paklik (uncle). Her desire to have entrok leads Marni to meet Teja, one of the porters in the market. She wants to get paid with money, but Teja just makes fun of her. He thinks that women are not strong enough to nguli (lift things); women are only allowed to do easy jobs.


The utterance above seems to reinforce the stereotype toward women who are weak creatures and whose position will not be equal to men. Teja’s point of view does not scare Marni. She even wants to prove that she could do the job as a porter as any other men could.
Also lift up their own things (Madasari, 2013), the (have children) (Umam, 2015). “(Madasari, 2017: 18)

I am strong, Kang. I usually carry tenggok and goni. Many of those bakul also lift up their own things from their home to the market. It’s only priyayi who are not strong enough to lift up things.” (Madasari, 2010: 34)

After those arguments, finally Teja allows Marni to do the job as a porter. However, Marni’s mother does not allow her just because that job is only for men.

“Nduk, semua itu sudah ada jatahnya. Orang kayak kita bagiannya ngoncek telo. Nguli itu berat, Sudah jatah orang lain.” (Madasari, 2010: 34)

“Nduk, everything has its own place. People like us only deserve to peel off cassavas. Nguli is a heavy job. Let someone else do it.”

“Ini masalah ilok ora ilok-pantas-nggak pantas. Nggak ada perempuan nguli.” (Madasari, 2010: 35) “The problem is not about ilok ora ilok (good or no good). No woman does nguli.”

The first statement from Marni’s mother seems to emphasize that stereotype toward women are considered normal in society. That women and men have their own portion, especially in the field of work. Marni’s mother also argues that a woman does not deserve to do work that is usually done by men.

The second novel in this discussion is Maryam. This novel tells a story of Maryam Hayati who is born and raised by an Ahmadiyah family in Lombok. The novel tells the sufferings of an Ahmadi who is often banished and got problems in this country just because of faith. There is a marginalization (economic impoverishment) of women experienced by a female character named Nur. Nur gets that experience from her own husband. This is found in the following quote.


Previously, her husband had made an account at BRI sub-district. Her husband took her shipment every month. With that money, all of her family’s needs were fulfilled. Her children’s food and school. With that money, Nur’s mother’s house could be fixed a bit. Having a regular income every month from his wife’s job, made Nur’s husband be lazy to go sailing to sea.

Nur reveals in the quote that for the sake of meeting the needs of the family, she is willing to work far to Saudi Arabia. Meanwhile, at home, her husband, who usually works at the sea, becomes lazy because he has been receiving money from his wife every month. Nur’s expression gives the awareness that there is impoverishment for Nur’s husband.

The last novel in this discussion is Pasung Jiwa (Madasari, 2013). This novel tells about a story of Sasana and friends who are facing endless problems; violence, oppression, and various incarcerations against souls. Sasana, who is born as a man, loves dangdut and wants to become a singer. It is his desire, which leads him to become a shemale. He is not ashamed of his appearance, and in fact, he makes his look like a real woman that it is also the beginning of his experience. Living with many different people has taught him that his decision being shemale might be considered as a bad, improper, and crazy behavior, but he enjoys it. He then finds his friends who also have the same problem, and finally, they fight together to make their own dreams come true.

In novel Pasung Jiwa (Madasari, 2013), the workers get an unfair treatment by the power of the capital owner. The workers are used as a means to fulfill the needs of factory production. As human resources, the workers do not get an opportunity to develop their potentials. They are required to productively work every day, which caused them to lose their own human rights.


“Every day from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon, I stand up in front of this big table, wipe and put hundreds or even thousands of glass every day. I am losing my mind. I work without brain anymore. The important thing is that my hands keep moving, repeating the exact same thing every single minute. I am now a machine. Move only whenever asked to, only repeat what was done yesterday and the day before yesterday.

Not only economic discrimination, but there is also discrimination in the social sector in the three novels. In Entrok, it explains that there is discrimination against women in Java. The Javanese society generally has stereotypes that Javanese women are constructed to do the job. Let someone else do it. Not only economic discrimination, but there is also discrimination in the social sector in the three novels. In Entrok, it explains that there is discrimination against women in Java. The Javanese society generally has stereotypes that Javanese women are constructed to do the job. Let someone else do it.

“Samar-samar dalam ingatanku, terbayang Bapak memukul Simbok yang sedang sikat panas dan tidak bisa ke pasar.” (Madasari, 2010: 18)

“Vaguely in my memory, imagining Bapak hit Simbok who was sick and could not go to the market.”

“Dan laki-laki itu dengan seenaknya hanya menunggu makanan.” (Madasari, 2017: 18)

“And that guy just conveniently waited for the food to come.”

These utterances show that the men’s position is
above women so that men feel like have the power to do anything, including harm against women. Women do not have the rights to fight back because only men are considered having an important role in a family. The figure of men is important in the family as living support and leader. Those efforts are done by Marni to make a better living actually still get mockery. She often still gets negative stereotypes. People think that women who could work and get success must use negative things to achieve it.

Orang-orang bilang ibu memelihara tuyul. Makhluq halus berkepala gundul yang bisa membuat orang yang memelihara nya kaya. Kata mereka, "Bagaimana mungkin Marni kere bisa jadi sekaya ini kalau tidak punya tuyul?" (Madasari, 2010: 54)

People said that mother raised tuyul. A little bald-headed ghost who can make people who raising it become rich. They said, "How does poor Marni become this rich if she doesn’t raise a tuyul?"

Not only being accused to have tuyul, Marni is also accused that she is a cruel and an evil loan sharks.


"Yu Marni, Kang Teja, we heard from many people that you are a loan shark. It’s not allowed in our religion. You’ve made people suffer.”

Not only that, Marni is also accused of being the person behind the single accident that has killed Bejo, her driver. They assume that Bejo was a tumbal (victim) of Marni’s wealth.

"Bejo jadi sajen. Sajen pesugihan" (Madasari, 2010: 121).

"Bejo becomes sajen (something in return). Sajen pesugihan (mystical activity to get rich)."

Sajen, pesugihan, tuyul, Gumung Kawi, selama bertahun-tahun orang-orang Singget telah menjadikan itu sema sebagai cerita yang disebarkan dari mulut ke mulut. Menjadi hiburan dan kesenangan di antara berbagai kesulitan (Madasari, 2010: 121).

Sajen, pesugihan, tuyul, Mount Kawi, over years that Singget people have made it all as a story spread by words of mouth. Entertaining and becoming pleasure among various difficulties.

In Maryam, it is explained that discrimination against women is caused by one of them due to patriarchal culture. The patriarchal culture, which still exists in Indonesian society causes women not so much to have room to move, even to have feelings. Parents would require their daughters to look for a life partner whom the parents thought is worth it and usually for this matter, parents already have someone they think would fit their daughter. If a woman has her own choice for marriage, then the parents would ask some questions to the man about his background and decided if it is acceptable or not. If the woman’s parents disagree, they would ask her to stay away from the man for the sake of her own good without considering their daughter’s feelings. It can be seen in the following quote.


“It’s better not to go on a date with outsiders. You’ll be disappointed. You both get hurt. It’s better to end now.”


Her father spoke louder. He asked Maryam to go home. “Many good men in the village!” he said.

“Those who are educated and raised in the same way will appreciate and love better than those outsiders who always feel right.”

In the novel Maryam, there is a subordination (an unimportant presumption or marginalization for women in household or politics) faced by the female character named Maryam. Maryam receives subordination from her own parents in law. This could be seen in the following quote.


.....The headman directs Alam and Maryam to shake hands with parents. To ask for blessing so that the new marriage life begins will be forever and always be blessed. There is a slight fear when Maryam kneels to the ground in front of Alam’s mother. There is a doubt when she kisses her mother in law on the hand. When Alam’s mother looks down to get closer to Maryam’s ears, Maryam’s heart beats fast. That woman whispers many advices. Asking Maryam to always comply and obey whatever her husband says. Making her husband to be the one and only role model. Staying herself away from everything that is not true.

This quote shows the existence of women marginalization or insignificant assumptions about women. This problem occurs when Maryam kneels to the ground in front of Alam’s mother. There is a feeling of doubt when she has to kiss her mother in law. When Alam’s mother looks down, she whispers something to Maryam, asks her not only to comply with her husband and make him as the one and only role model but also to stay herself away from any bad things and everything that is not true. This is what how women marginalization and not-so-important perception towards women in making a decision.

As for the Pasung Jiwa novel, it is explained that
there is no freedom for a child to argue and act according to his own will, everything is arranged by parents. Parents have the freedom to organize their education and future for their children. Children’s future and education cannot be separated from parents’ interference. A child’s freedom actually gets pressure from the family. In educating their children, Sasana’s conservative parents still believe in the tradition applied in their neighborhood. It is different from Sasana as a representative of a liberal group that requires freedom in making their own choices without getting interfered by their parents.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The conclusion obtained from the analysis is that there is a description of discrimination against women in the economic and social fields. The community basically cannot accept the presence of women’s roles in several aspects of life, considering there are still unclear roles and responsibilities among them. Specific naming and labeling for women in several aspects of people’s lives basically place women in positions that are excluded from the male domain because they are considered weak and unable. *Entrok, Maryam, and Pasung Jiwa* novels put forward various things about struggle, injustice, and violence experienced by women and marginalized people, both those carried out by the community, the state apparatus, and the white-robed warriors on behalf of religion and God. This work alone is able to expand and provide insight for readers’ critical thinking by making them aware of the potential of a woman to fight for equality, both in domestic life, economics, and social life.

There is also an effort by women to fight for their rights so they can have an equal position with men. The struggle is described in the form of verbal and attitudes. The discrimination against women has a negative impact, both for economic growth and social interaction. It would be better if women are given the same opportunities as men to show their potentials and abilities so that both women and men could work together to create a better life.

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