

THE EFFECT OF PATRIARCHAL SYSTEM ON WOMAN: A SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE APPROACH IN ALICE WALKER'S THE COLOR PURPLE

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Abstract

Patriarchy is a social system that puts men in charge. Patriarchy also occurs in novels. One novel that features patriarchy is Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*. Alice Walker is an American novelist who often defends women's rights in her works. This study focuses on the effects of patriarchy on female characters in the novel *the color purple*. In this research, the writer uses theory of Welleck and Warren who state that there are three kinds of the sociology of literature. It consists of the sociology of the writer, the sociology of the literary work, and the sociology of the reader or audience. Researcher found three effects of patriarchy, namely marginalization, gender discrimination, and oppression.

Keywords: Effect, Patriarchy, Sociology of Literature.

INTRODUCTION

In daily life, men and women undoubtedly receive different treatment, both in the public and private sphere. People believe that women have fewer opportunities to participate in social life (Farid, 2019). In general, women have only limited responsibilities in limited spaces, such as in domestic area, where they are limited to becoming mother who exclusively take care of their children, and serving men needs (De'Beauvoir, 1949). This relates to Wardani's (2016: 7) statement that women have nurtures and diligent, and are not suitable for being the head of household. In contrast, men are perceived as being stronger and more rational than woman, which allows them to carry out their activities in a wider range of social life. In society, this issue is known as the patriarchy system.

Patriarchy is a social system concept based on the dominance of men over women, and has been present in the world. Patriarchy sets social, political, economic, and cultural life, and gives men the power to control all aspects of women's lives. This system is supported by some factors, such as religion, power, law, and social norms. Patriarchy views men as a leader, while women are the follower of the men. Patriarchy also creates gender inequality, which makes women will get a violence, harassment, and discrimination (Sakina, 2017).

One of the literary works that can be used as a medium to illustrate the effect of patriarchy is a novel. The writer chooses a novel which is entitled *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker as the object of the study. The novel was published in 1982 and won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1983. This novel tells the story of the life journey of an African-American woman named Celie,

who lives in the United States in the early 20th century. Celie is a teenage girl who lives in very difficult conditions. She grew up in a violent family and suffered sexual abuse.

This novel explores many strong themes such as racism, sexism, harassment, domestic violence, and the search for identity. Through Celie's experiences and transformations, the novel teaches about the importance of forgiveness, gender equality, sisterhood, and the power of women.

LITERATURE BACKGROUND

Sociology of literature is an interdisciplinary field of study that examines the relationship between literature and society from a sociological perspective. More specifically, Sociology of literature addresses how literary works are reflected by society, how literary works influence society, and how society produces literary works. the sociology of literature helps in understanding literary works as cultural and social products, as well as understanding the role and influence of literary works in society. Sociology of literature also addresses social, cultural, and political issues related to literary works, such as gender, identity, social class, conflict, and social change.

In this research, the writer uses theory of Welleck and Warren who state that there are three kinds of the sociology of literature. It consists of the sociology of the writer, the sociology of the literary work, and the sociology of the reader or audience (San: 1987).

One of the thinkers that give the definition of Patriarchy is Silvia Walby. She is sociologist who defines “patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women” (Walby 1990:20). She explains patriarchy as a system because this system helps to reject the notion of biological determinism, which says that men and women are naturally different because of their biology or bodies and, are, therefore assigned different roles.

Patriarchy effects to some aspect such as economy, education. According to Walby (1990: 180-190), patriarchy effects to some aspects. Some of the impacts of patriarchy.

First is gender inequality. Patriarchy creates gender inequality and puts men in a more advantaged position and women in a lesser position. Second, violence against women. Patriarchy is also associated with violence against women, including sexual violence, domestic violence, and other violence. Third, Patriarchy also creates stereotypical gender roles and limits choices and possibilities for individuals who do not conform to those gender roles. Fourth, unequal decision-making. Patriarchy also tends to create unequal decision-making, where men are more likely to hold leadership positions and make important decisions.

And the last, Patriarchy can also have economic impacts, including in the payment of unequal wages between men and women, women's difficulties in obtaining education and employment, and lack of support for the work done by women. Based on the explanation above, patriarchy gives some negative impact to the woman, such as gender inequality, violence, and marginalization.

METHODOLOGY

In analyzing the novel, *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker, the writer will use qualitative research. Qualitative research is descriptive study and tend to use inductive analysis approach. Bogdan and Taylor (in Moleong 1990: 3), state that qualitative research is research procedure which produces descriptive data such as written word or oral from people and behavior which can be observed. Thus, qualitative research is research procedure that produces descriptive data. Other definition comes from Kirk and Miller (in Moleong 1990: 3), they state that qualitative research is a certain tradition in social science which acts as a fundamental principle depend on human observe in self-area and relate with the people in language and his research.

The writer understands that qualitative research is the kind of research that may be used by social science student to observe the human behavior through human language. In order to collect the data, the writer uses library research. Library research is research by reading some books and journals that are related to the object of study. As George (2008: 6), says that library research involves identifying and locating sources that provide factual information or personal/expert opinion on a research question, necessary component of every other research method at some point. Thus, library research is important to get the information's that are needed by the writer. Because the writer uses the structural approach, thus the writer just has the primary data. Primary data are the main data of this research in this case the writer takes *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker as the primary data. It is published by Penguin Books in USA 1982.

FINDINGS

Gender inequality refers to the unequal distribution of resources, opportunities, rights, and privileges between individuals of different genders. It is a social and cultural phenomenon that manifests in various aspects of life, including but not limited to, economic, political, educational, and social spheres.

Harpo, she say. Harpo the oldest boy. Harpo, don't let Celie be the one bring in all the water. You a big boy now. Time for you to help out some. Women work, he say. What? she say. Women work. I'm a man (Walker, 1982 :12).

This quote captures the gendered expectations and inequality present in the society depicted in the novel. It serves as a lens through which to explore the impact of patriarchy on the division of labor and the reinforcement of traditional gender norms. Marginalization refers to the social process through which certain individuals or groups are relegated to the periphery or margins of society, resulting in their exclusion, disenfranchisement, and limited access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making processes. Marginalization often stems from various factors, including discrimination, prejudice, social inequality, and power imbalances.

And this house ain't been dean good since my first wife died. And nobody crazy or backward enough to want to marry you, neither. What you gon do? Hire yourself out to farm? (Walker, 1982: 105 -106).

This quote highlights the gendered expectations and limitations imposed on women within a patriarchal society. It underscores the narrow roles assigned to women, particularly in the realms of domestic work and marriage, and reflects the social stigma associated with deviating from traditional gender norms.

Oppression refers to the unjust and prolonged exercise of authority, power, or control over individuals or groups, often resulting in the deprivation of their rights, dignity, and opportunities.

They don't even look at women when women are speaking. They look at the ground and bend their heads toward the ground (Walker, 1982: 80).

This quote illustrates how patriarchy manifests as a system of oppression, wherein women's voices are silenced, their contributions devalued, and power is concentrated in the hands of men. It reflects the deeply rooted social and cultural norms that perpetuate gender-based inequality and limit the agency of women within such societies.

CONCLUSION

The research elucidated the profound effects of the patriarchal system on the female characters in "The Color Purple." By delving into the characters' experiences, relationships, and personal growth, the study brought to light the multifaceted ways in which the patriarchal framework restricts, oppresses, and shapes the lives of women. It highlighted the systemic injustices faced by the female characters and underscored the pervasive impact of patriarchal norms on their individual identities and collective agency.

In essence, this thesis contributes to the broader understanding of the intersection between literature, sociology, and gender studies. The analysis of "The Color Purple" serves as a poignant reminder of the real-world implications of patriarchal systems on women's lives. By fulfilling its objectives, this study not only deepens our comprehension of the depicted structures within the novel but also provides a nuanced understanding of the intricate and often detrimental effects of patriarchal systems on women, emphasizing the importance of continued discourse and activism in the pursuit of gender equality and social justice.

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