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THE PORTRAYALS OF WOMANHOOD AND OPPRESSION IN NAWAL EL SAADAWI'S *PEREMPUAN DI TITIK NOL*

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Abstract || This study aims to determine the forms of the female image in Nawal El Saadawi's novel *Perempuan di Titik Nol* and to identify the forms of discrimination portrayed in the novel. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method. The primary data source utilized in this study consists of words and sentences from Nawal El Saadawi's novel *Perempuan di Titik Nol*, while the secondary data sources include relevant books and journals. Data collection was conducted using reading and note-taking techniques. The data analysis utilized content analysis techniques.

The results of this study found 33 instances of female imagery, which are categorized into three types: physical image (14 instances), psychological image (10 instances), and social image (9 instances), with the physical image being the most dominant. Meanwhile, regarding the forms of discrimination, 30 instances were found, divided into five aspects: marginalization (5 instances), subordination (5 instances), negative stereotypes (7 instances), double burden (3 instances), and physical and psychological violence against women (10 instances). The most dominant form of discrimination found was physical and psychological violence against women.

Keywords || Discrimination, Female Image, Nawal El Saadawi, Violence Against Women, Perempuan Di Titik Nol

Abstrak || Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana bentuk-bentuk citra perempuan dalam novel "Perempuan di Titik Nol" karya Nawal el-Saadawi dan untuk mengetahui bagaimana bentuk-bentuk diskriminasi dalam novel "Perempuan di Titik Nol" karya Nawal el-Saadawi. Jenis penelitian ini yaitu deskriptif kualitatif. Sumber data dalam penelitian ini menggunakan sumber data primer yaitu kata dan kalimat dalam novel "Perempuan di Titik Nol" karya Nawal el-Saadawi dan sumber data sekunder dalam penelitian ini yaitu buku-buku dan jurnal. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan teknik baca dan catat. Teknik analisis data menggunakan teknik analisis isi. Hasil penelitian ini di temukan 33 data bentuk citra perempuan yang terdiri dari 3 citra yaitu citra fisik 14 data, citra psikis 10 data, citra sosial 9 data, dan yang paling mendominasi adalah bentuk citra fisik. Sedangkan bentuk diskriminasi di temukan 30 data yang terbagi menjadi 5 aspek yaitu marjinalisasi 5 data, subordinasi 5 data, *stereotip negative* 7 data, beban ganda 3 data, juga kekerasan secara fisik dan psikis terhadap perempuan 10 data, yang paling mendominasi adalah kekerasan secara fisik dan psikis terhadap perempuan.

Katakunci || Citra Perempuan, Diskriminasi, Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan, Nawal El Saadawi, Perempuan di Titik Nol

Introduction

Literature is the product of an author's thoughts or imagination, expressed in written form to create a work that can be enjoyed by the public. According to Hayati (as cited in Nurlian, 2021), literary works reflect the social values of a community. The concept of literature is deeply intertwined with social life because it constitutes a cultural product found across all layers of society.

A novel is a series of narratives about life that depicts human characters based on realistic scenarios. As a form of reading material, it provides entertainment to its readers. According to Tarigan (as cited in Hutabalian, 2022), "A novel is a fictional story of a certain length that depicts characters, movements, and realistic scenes."

An image is a reflection of an individual's life. The female image in the real world is parallel to that in literature, which serves as a reflection or self-portrait of a woman, typically depicted as a character in a story. According to Sugihastuti (as cited in Todiho, 2019), "The female image is the manifestation of mental, spiritual, and daily behavioral traits expressed by female characters, encompassing physical, psychological, and social aspects." Furthermore, Sugihastuti (as cited in Anshory, 2024, p. 120) categorizes the female image into three primary aspects: physical, psychological, and social.

Discussing women is inseparable from feminist studies. According to Zulaiha (as cited in Aspriyanti, 2022), the term *feminism* originates from the Latin word *femina*, which translates to *feminine* (pertaining to womanhood). With the addition of the suffix *-ism*, it becomes *feminism*, an ideology that advocates for gender issues and the fate of women across all aspects of life. Ultimately, feminism strives for women's equal rights and status with men in all spheres of life.

Discrimination refers to unfair treatment or attitudes toward individuals or groups, violating human rights or depriving them of their fundamental rights. Widodo (as cited in Aulad et al., 2019) outlines the indicators of gender discrimination against women, which include: (a) Marginalization: the exclusion of women in economic, social, educational, cultural, political, or legal fields; (b) Subordination: positioning women as secondary to men; (c) Negative Stereotypes: negative portrayals of women that affect their mental well-being and lead to criminalization, ultimately resulting in systemic injustice; (d) Double Burden: the expectation that women working outside the home

must still manage domestic chores; and (e) Violence against women, encompassing both physical and psychological abuse.

Nawal El Saadawi's novel *Perempuan di Titik Nol* explores the dark reality faced by women in Egypt, a society heavily entrenched in patriarchal values. The narrative centers on Firdaus, a prostitute who murders her rapist. She is ultimately imprisoned and sentenced to death in the 1970s for defending herself. Firdaus endures profound injustice and desperately seeks a safe haven from Cairo's patriarchal society. From birth to death, her life is marred by suffering inflicted by men abandoned by her father, abused by her uncle, sold to an abusive and parsimonious older man, and subjected to violence by her family, husband, friends, and society at large. Struggling to find safety, Firdaus fights to reclaim her rights, freedom, and dignity.

Therefore, this novel highlights the crucial need to uphold women's rights, free from discrimination or the deprivation of one's agency. Based on these issues, this study intends to examine the injustices experienced by the main female character, Firdaus in *Perempuan di Titik Nol Novel* as the research object. The phenomena occurring within this novel serve as a poignant reminder of the paramount importance of human rights and the inherent value of women.

The objective of this research is to identify the forms of female imagery and the forms of discrimination depicted in Nawal El Saadawi's *Perempuan di Titik Nol*. This study is expected to provide theoretical and practical benefits for readers in understanding female representation and systemic discrimination. The significance of this study lies in its ability to raise readers' awareness regarding the importance of recognizing the female image and eradicating discrimination, as discriminatory acts remain prevalent in education, family, society, and the workplace. Thus, analyzing "female representation and discrimination" in this novel is both compelling and highly relevant.

1. Literary Works

Literature is a creative work of art that expresses feelings derived from human experience. According to Kokasih (as cited in Milawasri, 2017), literature is a written work or composition that contains values of goodness, written in beautiful language. Hayati (as cited in Nurlian, 2021) also argues that literary works depict the social values of a community. The concept of literature can be analyzed through a social lens because literature reflects the culture found within society.

2. Types of Literary Works

Literature is defined as the result of an author's creativity. According to Tarigan (as cited in Al-Ma'ruf, 2017), authors, as creative members of society, aim to share their experiences through written works. Aristotle (as cited in Rohman, 2018) categorizes literary works into three main types:

a. **Poetry:** According to Herbert Spencer (as cited in Rabani, 2024), poetry is a form of expressing ideas that possesses emotional qualities while considering aesthetic effects. Herman J. Waluyo (as cited in Pitaloka, 2020) defines poetry as a literary work that imaginatively expresses the thoughts and feelings of the poet, constructed by concentrating language on its physical and inner structure.

b. **Novel:** According to Khusnin (as cited in Mardliyah, 2021), a novel is a work of art closely related to human life, depicting the journey of human existence. Nurgiyantoro (as cited in Kholifah, 2021, p. 2) states that a novel expresses ideas freely, presenting detailed and extensive narratives that involve complex issues. As a free-form work, it incorporates literary elements that elaborate on various life problems.

c. **Drama:** According to Harymawan (as cited in Anggraini et al., 2023), drama is a story of human conflict presented in dialogue form, performed using conversation and action before an audience. Waloyo (as cited in Anwar et al., 2019) adds that a drama script is a literary work parallel to prose and poetry. However, unlike prose and poetry, a drama script has its distinct form written in dialogue based on inner conflict and intended for stage performance.

3. The Benefits of Literary Works

Literary works transcend mere written text by offering a profound blend of aesthetic value, imaginative exploration, and intellectual entertainment. Through the artful use of language and narrative structure, authors craft worlds that invite readers to temporarily step outside their own realities while simultaneously engaging with universal human experiences. However, the true value of literature lies in its duality. According to Sudjiman (as cited in Lafamane, 2020), literature does not merely entertain; it acts as a vital medium for conveying profound moral messages, social critiques, and educational values. By immersing readers in complex character arcs and diverse societal settings, literature fosters empathy and critical thinking, allowing

readers to extract valuable life lessons and broaden their cultural perspectives.

This dual function of literature is most classically summarized by the Roman philosopher and poet Horace (as cited in Nurhasana, 2018), who famously described the ultimate purpose of literature as being both *utile* (useful or instructive) and *dulce* (pleasing or entertaining). The "pleasing" aspect captivates the reader's emotions and imagination through aesthetic beauty and gripping narratives. Simultaneously, the "useful" aspect ensures that the reader departs with new knowledge, ethical insights, or a deeper understanding of the human condition. In the context of literary studies, it is precisely this balance of *utile* and *dulce* that makes literature such an effective vehicle for exploring and exposing profound societal issues, such as gender inequality, systemic oppression, and discrimination.

4. Feminist Studies

Feminism is the struggle of women to achieve equal rights with men. According to Moeliono (as cited in Rahima et al., 2019), feminism is a women's movement demanding full equality of rights between women and men. Fakih (as cited in Djami et al., 2023) asserts that feminism is not a rebellion against men, but rather an effort to challenge oppressive social institutions within households and marriages. It is an effort to end oppression and the deprivation of women's rights. According to Kurnianto (as cited in Agustina, 2022), feminism in literary research is regarded as an awareness movement against the neglect and exploitation of women in society, as reflected in literature.

5. Female Image

The female image is the perception of women indicating various factors shaped by their environment. According to Sugihastuti (as cited in Djami, 2023), the female image encompasses all mental, spiritual, and daily behavioral manifestations that display the distinct characteristics of a woman. Sugihastuti (as cited in Anshory, 2024) divides the female image into three aspects:

a. **Physical Aspect:** Describes distinct physical characteristics, such as menstruation, childbirth, beauty, and women's overall physical condition.
b. **Psychological Aspect:** Reflects a woman's inner attitude in facing adversities, such as resilience, patience, sacrifice, and hard work.
c. **Social Aspect:** Divided into family and community aspects. In the family aspect, the female image focuses on her role within

the household. In the community aspect, it focuses on her role in the social community and interpersonal relationships with society.

6. Discrimination

Discrimination is the unfair treatment of an individual or group based on race, gender, culture, ethnicity, belief, or economic status. According to Ihromi (as cited in Unsriana, 2014), discrimination is a form of attitude and behavior that violates human rights. Discriminatory acts occur in large corporations, domestic environments, and societies that are still deeply entrenched in patriarchal culture. *(Note: According to Charles E. Bressler [as cited in Susanto, 2015], patriarchy is a social condition that positions men as the primary individuals who serve as the center of control in social organizations).*

According to Theodorson & Theodorson (as cited in Harpiah, 2019), discrimination is unequal treatment or action against an individual or group based on categorical attributes, such as race, gender, ethnicity, religion, or social class. To identify forms of discrimination against women, Widodo (as cited in Aulad et al., 2019) outlines the following indicators of gender discrimination:

a. **Marginalization:** The exclusion of women in economic, social, educational, cultural, political, or legal fields.
b. **Subordination:** The positioning of women as inferior or secondary to men.
c. **Negative Stereotypes:** The negative portrayal of women that affects their mental well-being and leads to criminalization, ultimately resulting in systemic injustice.
d. **Double Burden:** The societal expectation that women working outside the home must continue to carry out domestic or household chores.
e. **Violence Against Women:** This includes both physical and psychological abuse.

Methodology

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method, as the research titled "Citra Perempuan dan Diskriminasi dalam Novel *Perempuan di Titik Nol* Karya Nawal el-Saadawi" aims to analyze and present data regarding the forms of the female image and discrimination found in the novel *Perempuan di Titik Nol* by Nawal El Saadawi, specifically in the form of words and sentences. According to Strauss and Corbin (as cited

in Bado, 2022), a qualitative approach is a research method used to explore community life, history, behavior, organizational functioning, social movements, or kinship relations. The data in this study consist of words, quotations, and paragraphs related to the forms of female imagery and discrimination in the novel *Perempuan di Titik Nol* by Nawal El Saadawi. The data collection technique utilized in this study is the reading and note-taking technique.

The data analysis technique employed by the researcher is content analysis. According to Krippendorff (as cited in Ernawati, 2022), this analysis technique consists of unitizing, sampling, recording, data reduction, drawing conclusions, and describing. The detailed explanations are as follows:

1. **Unitizing :** At this stage, the researcher collects the relevant data to be analyzed in accordance with the research objectives. In this study, the data analyzed pertain to the female image and discrimination found in the novel *Perempuan di Titik Nol* by Nawal El Saadawi, which are acquired through repeated and comprehensive reading.
2. **Sampling :** At this stage, the researcher strengthens the study by analyzing and classifying the data to synchronize the data samples. These samples consist of textual excerpts that have been thoroughly analyzed through careful observation.
3. **Recording** : At this stage, the researcher meticulously records data related to the research problems specifically, dialogue excerpts from the novel *Perempuan di Titik Nol* by Nawal El Saadawi that reflect the female image and discrimination. This process is done carefully to ensure the original meanings are not altered.
4. **Data Reduction** : At this stage, the researcher selects words and sentences relevant to the research problems by critically and repeatedly reading the entire content of the novel to ensure deep comprehension. Reduction is performed by eliminating data irrelevant to the study, such as novel excerpts that have no correlation with female imagery or discrimination. This process is conducted to ensure that all data strictly align with the research focus.
5. **Drawing Conclusions** (*Penarikan kesimpulan*) At this stage, the researcher synthesizes the data findings and formulates conclusions regarding the forms of the female image and discrimination identified in the novel *Perempuan di Titik Nol* by Nawal El Saadawi.

6. **Describing** (*Mendeskripsikan*) At this stage, the researcher presents and elucidates the results of the analysis in a narrative format. This narrative contains the essential information of the research obtained from the novel *Perempuan di Titik Nol* by Nawal El Saadawi.

Results

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach in which the generated data consist of textual excerpts illustrating the forms of the female image and discrimination. Based on the research conducted, data have been obtained regarding the forms of the female image and discrimination in the novel *Perempuan di Titik Nol* by Nawal El Saadawi. According to Sugihastuti (as cited in Anshory, 2024), the female image comprises several aspects: the physical image, the psychological image, and the social image. Furthermore, Widodo (as cited in Aulad et al., 2019) outlines indicators of gender discrimination against women, which are divided into several aspects: marginalization, subordination, negative stereotypes, double burden, and physical and psychological violence against women. The following is the result of the data analysis compiled and extracted from the novel *Perempuan di Titik Nol* by Nawal El Saadawi.

Table 1. Recap of Female Image Data

No	Aspect of Female Image	Number of Data Points	Percentage
1	Physical Image	14	42.4%
2	Psychological Image	10	30.3%
3	Social Image	9	27.3%
Total		**33**	**100%**

Table 2. Recap of Forms of Discrimination Data

No	Aspect of Discrimination	Number of Data Points	Percentage
1	Marginalization	5	16.7%
2	Subordination	5	16.7%

No	Aspect of Discrimination	Number of Data Points	Percentage
3	Negative Stereotypes	7	23.3%
4	Double Burden	3	10.0%
5	Violence (Physical & Psychological)	10	33.3%
Total		**30**	**100%**

1. Forms of the Female Image in the Novel *Perempuan di Titik Nol* by Nawal El Saadawi

a. Physical Image The physical image describes in detail a woman's physical characteristics or depicts a woman's attractive physical appearance, such as her face, body shape, and style of dress.

Excerpt 1 *"Firdaus remained a different kind of woman. Firdaus walked with an elegant demeanor, steady hand movements, and brown eyes. The way she walked, her courage, or the way she looked at me was very different from the others." (p. xxii)*

Analysis: The excerpt above illustrates the physical image describing the character Firdaus. It portrays Firdaus as having an attractive physical presence that distinguishes her from the other women encountered in the prison. She possesses a calm, elegant, and authoritative demeanor, yet is full of courage. She is depicted as having brown eyes and an intense gaze when looking at someone.

b. Psychological Image The psychological image represents a woman's inner emotional state and attitude when facing adversity, encompassing traits such as resilience, patience, sacrifice, and hard work.

Excerpt 1 *"Whatever happens, I must become a respectable woman, even if it costs me my life. I still have a school diploma, certificates of merit, and a sharp mind to find a respectable job." (p. 119)*

Analysis: The excerpt above demonstrates the psychological image of the character Firdaus. In this passage, Firdaus attempts to fortify herself after enduring insults from a man. She resolves to become a respectable woman in the eyes of society by relying on her intelligence and achievements. This psychological image illustrates how Firdaus

prioritizes her self-worth and dignity, showcasing her inner resolve and self-confidence.

c. Social Image The social image plays a crucial role in a woman's life, reflecting her role within the family and society. It encompasses a woman's circumstances and behavioral conduct in social settings.

Excerpt 1 *"One day, the whole school went down to the streets to join a massive demonstration against the government. Suddenly, I was standing on the shoulders of the girls, shouting." (p. 37)*

Analysis: The excerpt above highlights the social image of the main character, Firdaus. The passage portrays Firdaus as an active participant who is deeply concerned with socio-political issues and demonstrates the capacity to motivate and lead others.

2. Forms of Discrimination in the Novel *Perempuan di Titik Nol* by Nawal El Saadawi

a. Marginalization One of the forms of discrimination is marginalization. Marginalization is the systemic exclusion of a group across various aspects of social life, including culture, education, economy, politics, and the law.

Excerpt 1 *"My father was a poor peasant, how could he trade his virgin daughter in exchange for a dowry." (p. 15)*

Analysis: The excerpt above indicates a form of discrimination in the aspect of marginalization experienced by Firdaus. The passage reveals the mistreatment she faces from her father, who is willing to exchange her for a dowry rather than receiving no monetary benefit. This form of economic marginalization illustrates how poverty and gender inequality lead to the exploitation and discrimination of a female child.

b. Subordination Subordination is a form of discrimination that positions women as secondary to men or places an individual in an inherently inferior status.

Excerpt 1 *"If one of his daughters died, Father would eat his dinner with relish, but if a son died, Father would beat Mother." (p. 26)*

Analysis: The excerpt above demonstrates discrimination in the aspect of subordination toward Firdaus and her sisters. It describes her father's discriminatory treatment, showing a blatant preference for his male children over his female children. For instance, if a son died, the father would violently take his grief out on the mother. This illustrates the

subordination of Firdaus and highlights how women are devalued and victimized by a discriminatory, patriarchal social structure.

c. Negative Stereotypes Negative stereotypes involve the adverse portrayal of women often affecting their mental well-being or criminalizing them which ultimately leads to systemic injustice or discrimination against women.

Excerpt 1 *"It is not easy to find a job when all you have is a school diploma. High school does not teach them anything. And she cannot stay in this house because it is small and life is expensive." (p. 55)*

Analysis: The excerpt above reveals discrimination in the form of negative stereotypes directed at the main character, Firdaus. In this passage, Firdaus's aunt (her uncle's wife) complains about the difficulty of finding employment with only a high school diploma, implying that high school education for girls is useless. After graduating, Firdaus lives with her uncle, but his wife rejects her presence. This illustrates how negative stereotypes limit a woman's opportunities and strain social and familial relationships.

d. Double Burden The double burden is a form of discrimination wherein a person, typically a woman, who works outside the home is simultaneously expected to bear the brunt of domestic or household labor.

Excerpt 1 *"At that time I was still young, carrying a clay pitcher full of water on my head, so I needed balance to keep it from falling." (p. 16)*

Analysis: The excerpt above points to discrimination in the aspect of a double burden placed upon Firdaus. The passage recounts how, as a young child, Firdaus was required to carry a heavy clay water pitcher on her head every day, forcing her to exert all her strength just to maintain balance. This depicts the double burden and highlights the heavy domestic labor imposed on women, even starting from early childhood.

e. Physical and Psychological Violence Against Women This form of violence is a severe manifestation of discrimination that violates human rights and inflicts long-term impacts on an individual's mental and physical health.

Excerpt 1 *"He hit me, then a woman appeared carrying a small knife and committed a cruel act by cutting the flesh on my thigh." (p. 17)*

Analysis: The excerpt above vividly demonstrates discrimination through extreme physical and psychological violence against the main character, Firdaus. The passage recounts Firdaus enduring physical abuse from her father, who hits her, followed by a traumatic event involving her parents and another woman wielding a small knife to mutilate her. This illustrates a profound form of physical violence against women perpetrated even by a parent against a child which leaves severe, lasting physical and emotional trauma on the victim.

Discussion

Discussion: The Interplay of Female Representation and Systemic Discrimination

The analysis of *Perempuan di Titik* Nol by Nawal El Saadawi, when examined through the theoretical frameworks of Sugihastuti regarding the female image and Widodo regarding gender-based discrimination, reveals a complex narrative of resistance against patriarchal hegemony. This study demonstrates that the protagonist, Firdaus, is not merely a passive victim of her circumstances but a dynamic figure whose identity is constructed through the interplay of physical presence, psychological resilience, and social engagement.

Applying the framework of Sugihastuti (as cited in Anshory, 2024), the construction of Firdaus's female image manifests in three distinct dimensions. Physically, Firdaus challenges traditional objectification; her demeanor is described as follows: "Firdaus remained a different kind of woman. Firdaus walked with an elegant demeanor, steady hand movements, and brown eyes. The way she walked, her courage, or the way she looked at me was very different from the others" (p. xxii). This description asserts a dignity that defies the prison setting where women are typically stripped of their humanity. Psychologically, her image is defined by an unwavering resolve. Her insistence on maintaining self-respect is evident when she states: "Whatever happens, I must become a respectable woman, even if it costs me my life. I still have a school diploma, certificates of merit, and a sharp mind to find a respectable job" (p. 119). This demonstrates an "inner resilience" that defies patriarchal societal expectations. Socially, Firdaus transcends domestic boundaries, as seen when she joins public protests: "One day, the whole school went down to the streets to join a massive demonstration against the government. Suddenly, I was standing on the shoulders of the girls, shouting" (p. 37). These dimensions illustrate a character who

constantly negotiates her existence against a society determined to define her solely by her gender.

However, this assertion of identity is undermined by the systemic discrimination identified through the indicators established by Widodo (as cited in Aulad et al., 2019). The research reveals a cascading effect of oppression. Firdaus experiences economic marginalization early in her life, where her father views her as a commodity: "My father was a poor peasant, how could he trade his virgin daughter in exchange for a dowry" (p. 15). This transactional view of women denies her autonomy from birth. Furthermore, the subordination she faces within the family structure reinforces her inferior status: "If one of his daughters died, Father would eat his dinner with relish, but if a son died, Father would beat Mother" (p. 26). This highlights how women are devalued within a patriarchal structure.

Additionally, the novel illustrates how negative stereotypes operate as a mechanism of control, limiting opportunities for independence. Firdaus encounters this when her aunt remarks: "It is not easy to find a job when all you have is a school diploma. High school does not teach them anything" (p. 55). This stereotype creates barriers that strain her social and familial relations. This is exacerbated by the "double burden" imposed upon her during childhood, where domestic labor is forcibly assigned: "At that time I was still young, carrying a clay pitcher full of water on my head, so I needed balance to keep it from falling" (p. 16). Finally, the violence that punctuates Firdaus's life serves as the ultimate tool of patriarchal enforcement, leading to long-term trauma: "He hit me, then a woman appeared carrying a small knife and committed a cruel act by cutting the flesh on my thigh" (p. 17).

The synthesis of these findings reveals that the female image in *Perempuan di Titik Nol* is inextricably linked to the discrimination Firdaus faces. Her psychological resilience is a direct response to the violence she endures, and her demand for a respectable life is a rebuttal to the negative stereotypes that seek to define her. Ultimately, El Saadawi provides a poignant critique of a society that views female agency as a threat to the established patriarchal order. This research highlights that the struggle for gender equity is an urgent necessity, calling for a dismantling of the structures that perpetuate the marginalization, subordination, and violence against women in contemporary society.

Conclusion

This study suggests that *Perempuan di Titik Nol* serves as a critical reflection of the systemic oppression inherent in patriarchal societies. The findings indicate that the construction of the female image within the novel is fundamentally shaped by the various forms of discrimination the protagonist endures. It appears that the protagonist's struggle for agency is inextricably tied to her resistance against the conditions of marginalization, subordination, and violence, suggesting that her identity is not fixed but is instead negotiated through constant adversity.

It is important to acknowledge that this research is limited to a textual analysis of a single literary work and relies specifically on the theoretical frameworks of Sugihastuti and Widodo. Consequently, these findings may not be fully generalizable to other works by Nawal El Saadawi or to different socio-cultural contexts. Furthermore, as the analysis is inherently interpretive, alternative theoretical lenses might yield different insights into the protagonist's experiences.

In light of these limitations, future research could potentially broaden the scope of this inquiry by employing a comparative approach involving other literary works or utilizing different feminist critical perspectives. Such inquiries might help validate these findings and offer a more comprehensive understanding of how gender-based discrimination is portrayed in contemporary world literature. Ultimately, this study underscores the necessity of continued discourse on gender equity, as the patterns of discrimination identified here seem to remain highly relevant in current societal discussions.

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