



Gender Inequality in *Galaksi Kinanthi* Novel by Tasaro GK

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ABSTRACT

The aims of this research are to identify the types of gender inequality experienced by the main character and to analyze the main character's strategies to free herself from gender inequality. This research uses formalism theory by Boris Tomashevsky and uses Simon de Beauvoir's Existential Feminism theory and Mansour Fakhri's Gender Inequality theory for the support theory. The methodology is applied in this research is the qualitative research method to elaborate on the phenomenon that occur. This analysis is supported by the data acquired from journals, theses, books, and novel as the data source. From this research the researcher found there are 4 gender inequality experienced by the main character that are, marginalization, subordination, stereotypes and violence. The researcher also found the main character's strategies to free herself from gender inequality that are, women can work, women can be intellectual and women can work for the social transformation.

Keywords

Gender Inequality, Feminism, Existential Feminism



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INTRODUCTION

In literary works, novel is a form of literary work that is very popular and much in demand by readers, because novel is a written works of fiction in prose that has a broad size. The broad size here can means that the novel has more variety of characters, the story has a complex plot, complex themes, diverse story settings and stories (Abrams, 1984). And through novel, readers will also understand more about human life. According to (Wicaksono, 2017) novel reveals the conflicts of the lives of the characters more deeply and subtly. And usually in a literary work women are the objects that become the allure of an author to develop his inspiration in his work. The attractiveness of women lies not only in their beauty and intellectualization, but also on sexual issues that become social conversations among the community so that it attracts the attention of an author to make women the theme of a literary work.

Talking about women, women's lives are always paradoxical. On the other hand, women are needed and exalted, but on the other hand women are considered weak and undervalued, marginalized and subordinated. Whereas

theologically, between men and women were created to have the same degree. In this era of globalization, there are still many women who experience unfair treatment by men and a culture that prioritizes men or called, patriarchy. Patriarchy is a perspective that aims to emphasize that men and women have class differences. Patriarchy cannot be separated from women, because women have been designated as objects, wherever they are, men always position themselves as first class and women second class. Patriarchy as system of social structures and practices, in which dominate, oppress, and exploit women (Walby, 1991). The patriarchal system that grows in society causes gender inequality.

Galaksi Kinanthi novel created by Tasaro G.K tells about the main character's struggle, namely Kinanthi in gender inequality that befell her. Kinanthi is a beautiful girl who was born in a poor family, since childhood, Kinanthi has accepted the gender inequality. The gender inequality she receives include being humiliated because of her low social status, being treated unfairly by her parents by exchanging Kinanthi for 50 kg of rice to other people, getting sexual harassment, physical violence, torture and so on. But Kinanthi did not give up on her fate, Kinanthi is able to fight against gender inequality by being able to show her existence by being a successful person, Kinanthi's success is marked by the crowning of Kinanthi with a professor title and becoming a famous writer in America.

The author of *Galaksi Kinanthi* novel is Taufik Saptoto Rohadi. He has a pen name, Tasaro GK. Tasaro is an acronym for his name, Taufik Saptoto Rohadi, behind his name is added GK which stands for Gunung Kidul, where he was born. Tasaro GK is an imaginative, young writer who has won the best writer award and published 8 books, namely *Di Serambi Mekkah*, *O Achilles*, *Muhammad Lelaki Penggenggam Hujan*, *Muhammad 2*, *Lelaki Penabuh Hujan*, *Nibiru*, *Galaksi Kinanthi*, dan *Kinanthi Terlahir Kembali*. Dan novel *Galaksi Kinanthi*. And *Galaksi Kinanthi* Novel also won a *National Best Seller*.

Gender inequality is a form of treatment difference based on gender reasons, such as limiting roles, exclusion or favoritism that results in violations of the recognition of human rights, equal rights between men and women, as well as basic rights in the social, political, economic, cultural fields. Gender inequality is caused by unequal social treatment between men and women or gender differences. The gender difference causes one of the parties between men and women to feel disadvantaged. Usually, women are often the victims of this gender injustice, because women are social beings who are considered weak by men. Women are the most disadvantaged parties in social and cultural interactions, both within the family and society so that the problem of creating

gender justice is more directed at the interests of women. To understand how gender differences cause gender inequality, it can be seen through the various manifestations of existing inequality. (Fakih, 2013) Gender inequality is manifested in various forms of inequality, namely: Marginalization or the process of economic impoverishment, subordination or the notion of being unimportant in political decisions, stereotypes or through negative labeling, violence and double burden.

From many women who are victims of gender inequality, a women's movement has emerged to reject something that is marginalized, demeaned, subordinated as an "object", and subordinated to the dominant, economic, social culture, both in the public and domestic fields namely, Feminism. And Hooks (2015) also 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. Feminism focuses on the struggle of women to elevate their status to be equal to men and free women from the confines of the patriarchal world that makes women as "objects". In line with existentialist feminism by Simone de Beauvoir in her book *the second sex*, she sees the oppression of women because of their otherness (Liyan) as object that cannot determine the meaning of their own existence. If a woman wants to be a Self, she must make herself what she wants (subject) (Tong, 2010).

Based on the data, the researcher knows that the gender inequality against women especially in Indonesia has increased, as for gender inequality experienced by women such as marginalization, women trafficking, sexual harassment, violence, stereotype, subordination, and always used as an object. The discussion of gender inequality against women is something that is often discussed, including in a literary work, because literary works are a depiction of human life, for example a novel. Like novel that researcher researched entitled *Galaksi Kinanthi* by Tasaro GK. This novel tells about the form of gender inequality accepted by the main character namely, Kinanthi. And this novel also tells about Kinanthi's strategies to free herself from gender inequality so that she succeeded in showing her existence as a famous professor in America.

The researcher's reason for analyzing this topic is as a knowledge for the society that the existence of gender inequality is detrimental to someone who experiences it. Then, the researcher hopes that this research can increase society awareness of gender inequality that occurs in women and does not make women as a weak objects.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses qualitative research methods. (Creswell, 1994) defines qualitative research as a process of inquiry to understand a social or human problem based on constructing a complex, holistic, worded picture, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting.

Data sources consist of two namely, primary data source and secondary data source. Primary data source in this study is data obtained from the main source or object that has been studied by the researcher, namely the novel entitled *Galaksi Kinanthi* by Tasaro G.K which was published by Salmadani in 2009 with a thickness of 438 pages. While the secondary data source in this study is a literature study conducted by reading and citing written sources such as books, articles, journals and others related to the researcher's research.

In this research the process of collecting data taken by using library research method. According Creswell (1994) Library research is research conducted with a step-by-step process to collect, analyze or evaluate information obtained from primary sources.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Types of Gender Inequality Received By the Main Character

In this part, the researcher analyses the types of gender inequality in *Galaksi Kinanthi* novel based on gender inequality theory.

a. Marginalization

The process of marginalization that results in poverty, in fact, occurs a lot in society and the state that afflicts men and women, caused by various events, such as evictions, natural disasters or exploitation processes.

Data 1

"Bapak sudah bersemadi. Eyang Suryo Singodimejo, kakek buyutmu menemui bapak. Beliau mengatakan, bapak harus melepaskanmu agar memperoleh kehidupan lebih baik."

"Nanti, kalau kamu sudah menjadi orang berhasil, kamu pulang kerumah ini. Kalau kamu punya banyak uang orang-orang tidak akan berani lagi menyepelkan keluarga kita lagi." (Tasaro GK, 2009: 79)

Data 2

"50 kilogram beras itu bisa buat makan 3 bulan, Pak."

"Iya tetapi Kinanthi tidak bisa dibeli, Mbokne."

(Tasaro GK, 2009: 80-81)

In the quotation of data 1 and data 2, it shows that there is gender inequality received by the main character, namely, marginalization. This can be seen in the Kinanthi's incident, which her parents wants exchange her for 50

kilograms of rice, in the hope that Kinanthi will have a better life. Kinanthi's parents are more willing to let their daughter, Kinanthi, than their son, Hasto. Because women are considered unimportant and are considered the cause of poverty. This is what makes marginalization so that women are excluded and impoverished by the power that controls them.

Data 3

"Jadi gajimu, teh, sabaraha, Thi? Berapa?"

"Nggak tahu? Atau nggak mau ngasih tahu?"

"Aku ndak digaji, Is"

"Hah? Yang bener?"

Kinanthi mengangguk sambail menunduk.

"Wah, keterlaluan itu namanya." (Tasaro GK, 2009: 97)

The quote above describes the process of marginalization that results in poverty. Indirectly Kinanthi was forced to work without receiving a salary because Kinanthi was educated and given a proper place. This should not be justified and included in gender inequality. Kinanthi, who experienced a process of forced marginalization, had to accept this situation. In essence, this is not justified because Kinanthi's rights must be fulfilled because she has carried out her obligations.

b. Subordination

Subordination departs from thoughts and awareness of unfair gender such as degrading women from education and work.

Data 4

"Mereka tidak pernah mengajak perempuan, baik dewasa maupun remaja, saat berbincang; seolah-olah mereka menganggap kami tidak ada" (TasaroGK, 2009: 231-232).

When Kinanthi became a speaker in a seminar on human trafficking that occurred in Saudi Arabia. Kinanthi was asked to share her life experiences. At that time the moderator opened the page of Sold's book and read one of the paragraphs as quoted above. The quote above shows evidence of subordination to women. In Arab culture, men think that women are only a complement in married life and not a male companion. Decisions made and decided in a family or household are only based on the men's side, because according to Arab men women do not need to know the affairs which according to them are men's affairs. The situation when women are considered unimportant by men, causing gender inequality.

Data 5

Kedua alis Kinanthi terangkat, bibirnya tersenyum satire. Kalimat yang dibaca moderator menguatkan apa yang dia katakan sebelumnya.

“Dalam budaya Jawa, tempat lahir saya, perempuan di identikkan dengan dapur, sumur dan kasur. Jika anda membaca Sold, anda akan menemukan praktik itu di eksekusi dalam aktifitas yang lebih memprihatinkan.” (Tasaro GK, 2009: 232)

Based on the quote above, Kinanthi tries to explain her life experience when she lived in her village, when Kinanthi was a speaker in a seminar. In the seminar, Kinanthi said that in Javanese culture, women are always identified with the kitchen, mattress and well. With that view, women are considered unable to lead and therefore women must be placed in unimportant positions. This view is what causes the subordination of women.

c. Stereotype

Stereotypes are negative marking or labeling of women, for example, women are gentle and obedient creatures.

Data 6

“Kinanthi ndak punya teman, Pak. Kasihan.”

“Nah itu kowe sudah tahu, kalau anak-anak lain ndak mau main sama Kinanthi, kok, kowe mau? Seperti ndak ada teman yang lain saja. Kinanthi itu anak penjudi, ibunya baulawean (mitos jawa: perempuan yang setiap menikah, suaminya meninggal), mbak dan masnya nakal. (Tasaro GK, 2009: 27-28)

From the quote above, it shows that there is a form of gender inequality received by the main character, namely, stereotype. It can be seen from the words spoken by Ajuj's father (Saepul) who forbade his son to be friends with Kinanthi. According to Ajuj's father who is a Rois and also famous in his village, that a child of a gambler and a baulawean (a Javanese myth: a woman who gets married, her husband died) is not worthy to be friends with his son. Kinanthi is a victim of the treatment of her parents, Kinanti is negatively affected as she is restricted from being able to play with Ajuj by Ajuj's parents. Even though Kinanthi is a well-behaved girl.

d. Violence

Violence is an attack on a person's physical or mental integrity. Violence against fellow human beings basically comes from various sources, but one of them is violence against one particular gender which is caused by gender assumptions.

Data 7

“Ternyata, selama ini kita memelihara sundal, Pa. Perempuan tidak bener.”

“Sudah disekolahkan gratis. Diberi makan enak. Kamu benar-benar tidak tahu diri, Thi!”

Tamparan keras Eli memanas pipi Kinanthi. Gadis itu menahannya dalam isak tertahan. Dia tidak berkata apa-apa. Percuma. (Tasaro GK, 2009: 121-122)

From the quote above shows the existence of gender inequality received by the main character in the form of physical violence against minors. The incident where Kinanthi was slapped by Edi's wife shows the existence of gender inequality, because Kinanthi was accused of being an unrighteous woman. In fact, Kinanthi only defended herself from the treatment of her friend (Gesit) who wanted to rape her.

Data 8

Zaskia menghamburi Kinanthi, mencopot paksa kerudungnya dan mulai menjambaki rambutnya. Kinanthi menjerit-jerit sambil berusaha meloloskan diri. Kali ini dia tidak berani melakukan pembalasan. Dia menikmati jeritan Kinanthi dan bernafsu untuk melipatgandakannya. Kuku-kuku tangannya mencari wajah Kinanthi kemudian mencekik lehernya dengan sekuat tenaga. (Tasaro GK, 2009: 183)

Revenge against Kinanthi was not finished yet. This is clearly seen in the quote above which describes that Kinanthi was tortured by her former employer in the form of several physical abuses that resulted in Kinanthi's physical and mental injuries.

Data 9

"Kinan."

"Mereka memperkosa saya."

"Kinan.... Anda tidak perlu...."

"Listen to me, please....."

"Mereka memperkosa saya... bergantian... Azzam, Ali, dan suami Zaskia... sama-sama pura-pura tidak tahu satu sama lain."

Isak sang professor pecah. Beban yang ditimbun bertahun-tahun ambruk seketika."Saya sempat hamil... dan keguguran." (Tasaro GK, 2009: 284)

From the quote above, Kinanthi tries to tell about what happened to her best friend that Kinanthi was raped by her three male employers and Kinanthi also got pregnant and miscarried. This shows that there is gender inequality received by Kinanthi, namely, violence in the form of forced rape.

The Main Character's Strategies to Free Herself from Gender Inequality

In this part, the researcher analyzes the main character's strategies to free herself from the gender inequality in *Galaksi Kinanthi* novel based on existentialist feminism theory.

a. Women's Employment

Data 10

Sampai disitu, Kinanthi tidak terlalu peduli. Dimaki-maki sudah menjadi bagian langsung dari hidupnya selama ini. Tidak apa-apa. Sebab, dia memiliki impian

besar terhadap tanah Arab. Tidak seberapa perlakuan orang-orang di bandara dibandingkan masa depan yang dijanjikan. (Tasaro GK, 2009: 129)

From the narration above, it shows that Kinanthi has the spirit to work hard. Kinanthi doesn't care about how people treat her like being insulted and humiliated. Kinanthi must not lose the opportunity to work hard because she has a dream to achieve and to be able to affirm Kinanthi's status as a subject not an object that always despised.

Data 11

Kinanthi semakin di kenal oleh para petugas KBRI. Rekor keluar masuk paling tinggi. Berbeda dengan kebanyakan TKW lain, Kinanthi pandai berbicara dan mulai membuka diri sebanyak-banyaknya.

Pengalaman dengan berbagai macam majikan memberi perjalanan berharga baginya: mau menyerah atau melawan. Kebanyakan majikan Arab memang menganggap TKW sebagai budak. Budak artinya seseorang yang halal untuk diapakan saja. Mau dibentak, dipukul, disetrika, disiram air panas, ataupun diperkosa, bebas saja. Menyerah atau melawan sama saja. Jadi, lebih baik melawan. (Tasaro GK, 2009: 168)

Kinanthi's spirit for working hard to achieve her dream can be seen from the narration above which states that Kinanthi has the highest entry and exit record, it means Kinanthi never gives up and keeps trying. She is not just resigned to the situation and she prefers to be someone who is more open and starts to show her strength, which is good at talking.

b. Women's Intellectual

Data 12

"Anda percaya, itu perbuatan makhluk selain manusi, Prof? Alien penunggang UFO?"

"Saya percaya ada kehidupan diluar angkasa. Monotheis pun menyebut Adam diturunkan ke bumi, bukan? Artinya, dia bukan penduduk asli planet ini. Saya saykin ada kehidupan diluar sana. Crop cicel tentu menjadi objek studi yang menantang untuk membuktikan hal itu." (Tasaro GK, 2009: 201)

After a long time Kinanthi has experienced a difficult time in the form of gender inequality that she has received. Kinanthi managed to become a highly intellectual person. It can be seen from the quote above, Kinanthi managed to get the title of professor. And in the conversation between Kinanthi and her friend (Zhaxi), Kinanthi can also be considered an intellectual because Kinanthi is able to think, define and answer her friend's questions with the knowledge she has as an intellectual.

Data 13

"Saya pikir, saya bisa. Sebelum kembali ke New York, saya akan ke sana."

Mendengarkan lagi.

"Okay. Anytime," katanya sebelum menutup pembicaraan.

Zhaxi menoleh. "Undangan seminar?"

"Well, tampaknya perjalanan kita akan semakin panjang sebelum kembali ke New York."

"Washington?"

Kinanthi mengangguk. "U-Dap, Tacoma. Kuliah umum. Lagi pula, saya punya kepentingan proyek saya bersama beberapa teman."

"Proyek?"

"Penggalangan dana untuk biaya kuliah mereka yang tidak mampu tapi pandai untuk meraih gelar Ph.D." (Tasaro GK, 2009: 212)

Kinanthi's intellectuality can also be seen from Kinanthi's activities in giving public lectures and working on several fundraising projects for underprivileged but smart students to get a Ph.D. degree, as in the quote above.

c. Women's Social Transformation at Work

Data 14

"Saya datang kemari karena Hasto"

"Kamu ma uterus sekolah, kan, Le?"

Hasto menoleh kepada bapak dan simboknya. Tidak ada tanggapan. Hasto menatap Kinanthi dengan gamang.

"Kamu harus terus sekolah, Hasto. Aku pengen kamu nerusin sekolah di Yogya. Di sana, kan, sekolahnya lebih bagus. Jadi, kamu nanti bisa lebih siap untuk meneruskan ke perguruan tinggi."

"Tidak usah bingung. Besok kita bareng-bareng ke Yogya. Pendaftaran sekolah, kan, masih terbuka. Swasta tidak apa-apa yang penting bagus kualitasnya." (Tasaro GK, 2009: 303)

Data 15

"Bapak simbok bisa, kok, pindah sekalian ke Yogya. Sya carikkan rumah yang layak disana. Jadi, bapak dan simbok tidak perlu berpisah dengan Hasto." (Tasaro GK, 2009: 304)

Based on the data 14 and data 15, it can show that Kinanthi can work for social transformation. This can be seen from Kinanthi returning to his village and taking the initiative to send his younger brother (Hasto) back to school in Yogya, because according to Kinanthi, the schools in his village do not have sufficient facilities. And Kinanthi also took the initiative to buy a house for her father and mother in Yogya as well, so that her father and mother would not be separated from her sister.

CONCLUSIONS

From the novel Galaksi Kinanthi, we can draw the conclusion that without realizing it, there are many gender injustices especially for women that are happening around us. In Indonesia itself, especially in Java, gender inequality in women is clearly visible from the mindset of the people who view that women do not need higher education. Women are only placed as housewives who only take care of the house and family. Gender inequality in women occurs not only in Indonesia, but when she becomes a TKW abroad, most employers consider the TKW as a slave who can be treated as they please.

Many Indonesian migrant workers experience gender inequality in the form of physical, mental and sexual abuse. This phenomenon occurs in the main character of the novel Galaksi Kinanthi, namely, Kinanthi Hope, Ph.D. In the process of her life journey, Kinanthi has experienced many incidents in the form of gender injustice, ranging from being ostracized in her place of residence in Gunung Kidul as a child from a poor family whose parents are known to have bad behavior, being sold by her parents because of the economy, being tortured when she was a TKW to experiencing sexual harassment.

The intelligence and unyielding spirit of a Kinanthi Hope, all the bitter events that happened to her ended with she is becoming an intellectual, Kinanthi managed to become a Professor in America, became a lecturer, seminar speaker, famous writer in America and Kinanthi also got the nickname as Queen New York. Kinanthi also works for social transformation by sending her brother back to school, buying a house for her parents and helping her little friend's medical expenses while in the village (Ajuj).

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