

WOMAN VIOLENCE AND RESISTANCE IN “SWEAT” SHORT STORY BY ZORA NEALE HURSTON: FEMINIST APPROACH

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Abstrak

Zora Neale Hurston's short story is a story of women with different perspective. This revealed the violence toward women and women's resistance toward the construction of patriarchal. The violence was shown by a husband toward his wife in psychological, physical and sexual form. The theory used Beauvoir's theory (2012). The researcher analyzed the problem in feminist approach. Women who experience oppression took the resistance as a form of struggle over their existence as women. It was reflected toward the main character in this short story. This descriptive qualitative research was used in this short story. This method was used for looking at data contexts that were hidden from quotations in a short story. The findings showed that Delia was able to resist her husband named Sykes. Delia sought her freedom by escaping the scandal the cruel treatment of her husband. Delia's action contradicted with patriarchal construction that women had to be submissive and respectful towards men due to the women basically were dependent on men. Feminism appeared in this short story was concerned on women's resistance toward violence experienced in social life in order to get freedom, rights and opportunities as a human.

Key word: Women Violence, Resistance, and Feminism

1. INTRODUCTION

Violence against women is the cruelest act experienced by all women in the world. This is an anxiety that is feared by every woman from various perspectives. Violence can occur in schools, workplaces, public places and domestic violence committed by a friend, teacher, parent, villain man or a husband against his wife. The phenomenon of the forms of violence that often occurred in ancient times until now is violence against women. This is due to the rules that adhere to a patriarchal system in which men are superior or preferred while women are objects that are manipulated because of the weak nature of women. Abuse (2018) stated that patriarchy is the system based of male domination for

oppressed women. This domination is Said the rules of believe, attitude, though and views that men are the most powerful in the process of life society. Women have always been considered as weak people whose position is behind men. Women are more suitable to be a wife and housewife to take care of their children. In the past women were made slaves by men as a desire to satisfy their passions, and if there were women who opposed this there would be physical violence against him. In the past women did not receive an education to develop their insights due to the environment society which upholds the role of male head of household and power over women. Only men can get an education and have high intellectual values in the life of the community. Event, women

would be going to do what the men had done. Women were second to men because they were considered unable to do everything the same as men. Women were merely objects from time by the time because of the influence of the rules of social life that bind the society itself.

Deveaux (2014) stated that she agreed with theory of Foucault's statement that women must be able to take action for against power of men. They take action that do not mean the women are domination more than men but it is the action to vanish or less subordination with greater possibilities to make against by women. Thus women must actively take action in various ways so as not to be oppressed by men. Women have intellectual power equal to men from various fields. Therefore the purpose of this study is to elevate the degree of women so that they are no longer underestimated by men through short story literature.

Related to the above objectives, researchers criticized the violence and resistance of women through literary works from short stories. One of the reasons the researchers used literary works was because literary works were the right media to criticize real and implicit social life. The short story was analyzed from Zora Neale Hurston's *Sweat* in 1926 in the middle of the 20th century. In this short story she got many honor awards in African-American. To remember the *Sweat Short Story*, African and American artists always celebrate the togetherness of black culture and diverse cultures in Harlem.

The *Sweat Short Story* told of a woman named Delia facing the hardships of life as a woman who received violence from her husband named Sykes. Delia works as a washer

in the Floridian area. Her husband forbade Delia to wash black clothes so her husband felt ashamed of Delia's work. Sykes did not work because he was only at home like a boss man. Sykes had committed psychological, physical and sexual violence. Sykes even tried to kill Delia with a snake trap but the plan always failed and was opposed by Delia. Sykes's actions led to resistance by Delia as a form of freedom against Delia. Delia put up a fight against Sykes by ignoring Sykes's life when he was in a difficult and helpless situation. Delia faced various difficulties that she had from her husband during their fifteen years of marriage. Delia in the end defied the rules made by her husband against her by going to seek freedom as a strong and independent woman.

This celebration remembers the events that occurred in the short story *Sweat* who considers the black people in the 20th century as a marginalized community and were not considered as residents who were equal to white people. This celebration was a breakthrough that equalized the rights and obligations of the white people and black people. The celebration is held routinely every year to unite all the diversity and differences that exist between the people of Africa and American society in Harlem. This story was related to feminist theory that refutes the opinion of society in general that women were weak and dominated by men because of the superiority that men have in social life. In fact women can be independent and have intelligence that cannot be doubted today. Women have the same right to determine their rights and can take the fight against oppression given by men against women.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The approach used in this analysis is the Feminist approach. Which is Feminism derived from word femme that means woman. So feminism means women who willing to fight for woman in social class. So the purpose of feminism is for sexual equalization. The position and role of the female character in literary work show the domination of male. Male were gave power because they were considered to be tough and sturdy than women. Women were not authorized because of their position as objects that are under the rules of society. The theory of feminism raising the degree of women was equal to men. Men and women have the same intellectual abilities and rights to express their rights and opinions in the general public. A woman deserves what she should be able to do something that is beneficial for many people. Women should not sit and only be oppressed by men but women must work and expand their knowledge better and not to be fooled by the perception of society that dominates men as a subject.

Therefore, the understanding of feminism must to be aware the inequality of gender in literary works, just like what can be seen in daily life of society. The existence of reader's perception that shows the relationship between male and female is simply because of the biologist and socio-economic. The perception is opposite if feminist's perception that believes to have equal rights and chance with the male. Female is able to join in any social activity that male can. Women have abilities that were comparable to men. Women have the same power as men in terms of knowledge and social environment. Women active were important role of being a mother and social life today.

Nur (2017) stated that she agreed to Beauvoir theory explanation that men and women are different status based on society life that believe women has power more than women because women are weak. But women and men in the real situation are the same as a subject. Society must think that women cannot be compare with men of many aspects that women can do. Society must have a balanced mindset towards women's rights. Women are part of the social fabric that has the same equality and obligations as men. Researchers see the current state of society slowly supporting women to be independent in working and does something better in social life.

Feminism is a movement of women to prosecute equal rights to men in various fields as political, social life, education, culture and economic. Women rights must equal with men. Gender inequality occurs because of the complex differences of views of society that consider men as the most important subject because they have authority over women. This is a false assumption of human equality to get the same rights. Women cannot be categorized as objects to be mocked and considered weak in social life. Women from ancient times to the present have fought hard to achieve their ideals of the rights and equality they must obtain. Women have intellectuals who are able to change social life for the better in this life.

The theory of Beauvoir (2012) in his *Second Sex* stated that feminism has been used to solve research problems that focus on the role and position of women in all aspects of life. This theory is also used as a scalpel for inequality that feminism has been used to solve research problem that focuses on the role and position of women and all aspects of life. This theory is also used scalpel for inequality that occurs between women

and men. After centuries of being ignored, pushed aside and underestimated by the patriarchal discipline, women try to become objects of inquiry. Traditional theories are often modified by feminists to explain the oppression of women. Oppression of women is wrong and violates women's human rights in public life. Oppression was cruel act that shifts the position of women in the second position of women who should be treated properly as an equal subject with men. Women are not ornaments which were placed at home as objects of sexual desire and objects of oppression of men, but women should be placed in a psychiatric equivalent to men who have equal rights and obligations in community life.

2.1. Violence of women

Violence against women is a phenomenon that has occurred from then until now. Sexual violence and gender equality always prioritize the main victims are women. Every act of violence is a violation of human values, according to (Dayanti, 2011), the impact of violence on women is very complex in addition to physical pain, and mental disorders, victims also have the urge to commit suicide. Violence is a form of coercion that is tangible in the form of persuasive or physical or both. This form of crime is considered as violence that comes from the prejudice of certain people who want to commit crimes against women. Women are used to reacting with physical actions that cause mental disturbance to women's thoughts and character as weak objects of men.

Various forms occur in women in the community at large. A variety of destruction that occurs in women happens all the time. Therefore, through the short story Sweat researcher explain that the woman is not weak. Woman can be independent like a man. Women do the same work as men. Without help

from men, women can do everything independently and responsibly without relying on men.

2.2. Resistance of Women

Fight against women who are protected by physical and psychological success every day. Short story from Delia's dream by Sweats who wanted to break out of the oppression during their fifteen years of marriage. Delia decided to free herself from delaying Sykes by putting up a fight. She had various kinds of debates by disobeying Sykes's rules which he calculated worked as a black cloth washer man. This is related to economic problems (Profile, 2006) stated that gender is dominated by men for women. Challenging household. Women who struggle to overcome the rules of women are women who work independently to meet the shortcomings experienced. Women who dare to oppose the rules of social life are women who dare to oppose their actions to resist the rules of society which considers men to be stronger and superiority.

Women resistance Women's resistance is a form of present day emancipation that is carried out to oppose gender differences between women and men. This breakthrough has been stated by many experts that gender equality between men and women is equal and gets the same rights.

Social assumptions generally emphasize women as weak creatures under the authority of men. Researchers conducted a resistance analysis of the Sweat Novel to explain that the woman was not weak. Women are not slaves to a man. Women are not used as mere objects for men's satisfaction and then will not be oppressed at by men. Women are subjects that are equal to men so as not to be discriminated against by society's assumption that men are superior. Therefore researchers analyzed

the theory of feminism to oppose men who oppress women from time to time.

2.3. Previous of the research

There are some journals that give much contribution in developing ideas in this article. The first journal was written by Muhammad Husbi from Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Negeri Watampone from his title *Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan Menurut Tinjauan Agama dan Sosiologi*. Husbi (2017) stated that religion from Islamic comes from the God that it is not created from man to distinguish. Islam explains that the basic in there is not superior strength between men and woman. Islamic faith gives equal by the aims of Islam argues that most of man was *taqwa* to God. Sociological sees, society is considered as an important social role to adhere to religious norms by behaving properly, strongly and correctly.

The Second journal was written by Ayurshi Dutt from School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, Scotland, United

3. METHOD RESEARCH

This research was descriptive qualitative research. Creswell (2010) said that descriptive qualitative suitable for the research with using describing and analyzing of phenomena in textual version and reduction. It is the reason for researchers using descriptive qualitative. The data source of this research was the short story entitled "Sweat" by Zora Neale Hurston. Researchers used observation non-participant method collecting data (Sugiyono 2013). For the technique of collecting data, the researcher used nothing after reading the short story deeply. This method used for looking at data context that are hidden from

Quotations in a short story by reading the data deeply. This research used this method because the researchers

Kingdom from his title paper *Locating Patriarchy in Violence against Women in India: social, Legal and Alternative Response*. Dutt (2018) stated that feminist analysis which stands up male dominance, gender power relation, and women subordination. This paper, analyses the legal criminal about to bring justice system by women in India to endure patriarchy system and continue violence against women. This journal is different with the articles above. This journal focused on violence toward women and women's resistance toward the construction of patriarchal. The violence was shown by a husband toward his wife in psychological, physical and sexual form. It used theory of Beauvoir (2012). The research analyzed the problem in feminist approach. Women who experience oppression will take the resistance as a form of struggle over their existence as women. It can be reflected toward the main character in this short story.

explained the data in words descriptively rather than in numbers or table. The finding was taken after the research analysis is done.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 The violence toward woman

In this analysis researcher found violence and resistance of woman occurs when female character get unfair treatment because her existence for being a woman. Short story by Zora Neale Hurston attempts to shows woman confronting the destiny to get the freedom. Then, the researcher found oppressed toward to Delia. She was oppressed by her husband names Sykes. He abused Delia for fifteen years. Delia has to endure emotional or psychological and physical abuse and made against to

Sykes. It can be seen from the quotation below:

She squatted in the kitchen floor beside the great pile of clothes, sorting them into small heaps according to color, and humming a song in a mournful key, but wondering through it all where Sykes, her husband, had gone with her horse and buckboard. (Hurston, 1992, p. 1)

The first data explains the poor life of Delia. She worked hard without stopping to make a living for his family every day even it was a Sabbath day where people went to worship and vacation, the circumstance emphasizes how his struggle to work hard. She ponders his misfortune every day because she has to face many difficulties that she experiences every day. In the real situation woman got treated every day will feel pressured and overwhelmed in him. Woman will feel like a fooled who has to do things she shouldn't do. Bad circumstances force a woman's condition to suffer to work tirelessly and incessantly. This event illustrates the reality that occurs in people's lives.

"Sykes, what you throw dat whip on me like dat? You know it would skeer me--looks just like a snake, an' you knows how skeered Ah is of snakes." (Hurston, 1992, p. 1)

The second data describes one of Sykes's heinous actions tried to kill Delia with a snake. This shows how Delia was treated unfairly by her husband for those who tried to harm him. This incident shows the mischief and violence in Sykes who oppress Delia to die slowly. Woman that oppressed by man certainly not treated preferentially in their household. She will always be in the wrong position and suffer from the oppression he received by man. This is a form of unilateral oppression which harms a woman. Women basically will

feel pressured if oppressed every day with a situation that is so complicated in front of him.

There's plenty men dat takes a w certainly not treated preferentially in their household. he will always be in the wrong position and suffer from the oppression he received by a man. this is a form of unilateral oppression which harms a woman.ife lak dey do a joint uh sugar-cane. It's round, juicy an' sweet when dey gits it. But dey squeeze an' grind, squeeze an' grind an' wring tell dey wring every drop uh pleasure dat's in 'em out. When dey's satisfied dat dey is wrung dry, dey treats 'em jes lak dey do a cane-chew. Dey throws em away. Dey knows whut dey is doin' while dey is at it, an' hates theirselves fuh it but they keeps on hangin' after huh tell she's empty. Den dey hates huh fuh bein' a cane-chew an' in de way."(Hurston, 1992, p. 4)

The third data explained how Sykes treated Delia like a weak object and was easy to play. This incident shows the actions of men in general who only want the body of a woman. After he got what satisfies his lust, men will oppress women as he pleases. In fact some men want women only as satisfying lust only. After satisfying his lust, men will treat women roughly with physical violence. This happens because a man feels power over a woman.

Delia's work-worn knees crawled over the earth in Gethsemane and up the rocks of Calvary many, many times during these months. She avoided the villagers and meeting places in her efforts to be blind and deaf. But Bertha nullified this to a degree, by coming to Delia's house to call

Sykes out to her at the gate.
(Hurston, 1992, p. 5)

The fourth quote describes Delia's distresses and struggles like Jesus figure that carried the burden of the cross of life to atone for the sins of mankind. Before Jesus was handed over to carry the cross, at night Jesus was betrayed by one of his beloved disciples, Judas Iscariot. As well as Delia's life which was full of suffering to carry the burden of her life because it had to be betrayed by her beloved husband. How cruel and humiliating Delia was that Sykes could bear to oppressed his own wife. Delia sacrificed herself to be oppressed and betrayed by Sykes. Woman who surrendered to the difficulties he faced at the time also made his mind very devastated by the situation involving him to work hard alone in his married life.

4.2 Resistance of woman

Delia went clear to the rail without answering him. A triumphant indifference to all that he was or did. (Hurston, 1992, p. 3).

In the first quote above Delia began her actions not to care about the circumstances of Sykes. Delia ignored her husband and began planning to rebel against the pressure and sexual harassment she had endured. Delia regained her strength firmly to face Sykes courageously without fear of her husband. As a form of woman resistance she will come out of the oppression of a man to be free and get the happiness he deserves in his life without misery again.

In the second quote above explains how the beautiful appearance of a Delia was abused by her husband with physical violence, but this incident teaches Delia to be a stricter and stronger woman to face the oppression of Sykes. Delia proves with her obstinacy against the form of oppression of a man. Delia rose from the deterioration of her life as

a woman who is super tough. It can be seen from the quotation:

"Too much knockin' will ruin any 'oman. He done beat huh 'nough tuh kill three women, let 'lone change they looks,". (Hurston, 1992, p. 3).

From the quotation it can be clearly seen how Delia resisted the oppression carried out by her husband. All people who experience oppression will certainly be moved to take action. In this case, Delia shows that she is not a weak woman. She is able to be even more violent than men to maintain his existence as a woman. Delia was a strong woman that has been released from the grip of a man who for fifteen years oppressed his freedom to be independent. Her suffering was over because she had fought against her husband. This shows that Delia had ventured to oppose her married life which could no longer be repaired due to the oppression that she experienced.

Delia who was previously represented as submissive, subordinate and even helpless was not entirely correct. Because of the oppression that kept happening to her, Delia was moved and to fight and rebel in other ways. This can be seen from the following quote:

"Well, Ah done de bes' Ah could. If things aint right, Gawd knows taint mah fault." (Hurston, 1992, p. 8)

This quotation showed that Delia who was once a quiet, innocent and submissive woman has now turned into a strong woman to fight and oppose Sykes boldly before her husband on things contrary to Delia's justice. Even when Sykes was dying, Delia really did not care about her husband's condition. This proves that women can oppose men with the right actions to escape the oppression of a man. She took the right action in accordance with the dark events that have been experienced. Delia made up

her mind to believe that he ignored whatever happened to her husband. she did not care how many sacrifices she had done for her husband. Delia felt that her decision not to care about her husband who was being critical at that time would bring them to the end of the separation that would free her from her husband's oppression.

In the conception of the patriarchal construction thought, a man is imaged with the term of "self" and the sense that he can do anything without help from others. The short story turns the fact upside down. Her husband, when he suffering from a serious illness seemed to be a helpless person. Whereas all this time he always oppressed and violated Delia. Off course, Delia who has been oppressed shows that women have dominant power like a men. Delia ignored her husband can also play a subordination position. This can be seen in the following quote:

A surge of pity too strong to support bore her away from that eye that must, could not, fail to see the tubs. He would see the lamp. Orlando with its doctors was too far. She could scarcely reach the Chinaberry tree, where she waited in the growing heat while inside she knew the cold river was creeping up and up to extinguish that eye which must know by now that she knew. (Hurstun, 1992, P. 9)

This quotation reflected that Delia really did not care anymore with the current state of critical health. Delia pondered and decided to end their fifteen years of marriage. Delia believes this as a form of resistance against her husband with the oppression that Delia has been getting. This decision was carefully considered by Delia with her Christian beliefs. Ending a relationship is a tough decision for a husband and wife but to

get a fair life for a woman over the oppression that she experienced, this is the right act of resistance that must be taken in the life of a woman to get real freedom.

5. CONCLUSION

Hurstun's short story entitled Sweat indicates that perseverance helps to go through the miserable years as represented by Delia Jones's experience of facing her abusive husband, Sykes Jones. Sykes's insecurity as a jobless husband is covered in rudeness, cruelty, and mocks besides having another woman. For fifteen years Delia applies elements of perseverance, such as fearlessness, choice, discipline, clarity, life is life, just like me, and patience. She could survive against Sykes's domestic violence in the forms of physical abuse, psychological abuse, and threats of violence. Even Sykes's terror of rattlesnake, through at first has the potential to paralyze Delia due to her fright of snakes, could be overcome by Delia's growing fearlessness and clarity to observe the scary moment. Finally Sykes's arrogance, self-confidence, and evil plan made him be bitten by his poisonous rattlesnake previously set up to put Delia's to death. Delia's was free from her abusive husband at last. Her perseverance led her to a free life in the house she sweated so far to own and keep it. In the real life women were categorized as weak people. But over time the women carried out a movement to raise the degree of women equal to men. Even though many have been challenged and criticized by various groups, women have proven with the hard work and knowledge they have to advance social life today.

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