



Equality of Gender Rationality in the Novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus

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Abstract

Knowledge about gender should focus more on various circles. In this study, it aims to describe the rational form of equality of gender in the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method by analyzing the novel. Data were obtained from various sources, including a related novel titled *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus. The results of this study show that of all the existing gender equality, the most appropriate equality is to know the characteristics of each gender itself. Various roles in life are already supposed to be studied and applied in life, in accordance with the social constructions taking place and pay attention to the social, political, economic, cultural and other spheres. However, in reality, there are many cases of gender equality that are still the same as in the novel. There is no awareness of their respective roles, especially in terms of households.

Keywords: Equality, Gender, Novel

Introduction

Feminism is a women's movement that requires the emancipation of women or an equal level of justice for women's rights as men. Feminism is made as a bridge to equal rights between women, and men in every aspect. There are several opinions discussing the emergence of the feminism movement, one of which is feminism in the United States which can briefly be called the American feminism movement. This forerunner of American feminism was, grounded by, the political activities that were then in 1776 the American people proclaimed its independence. The declaration includes the sentence, "*All men are created equal*" without mentioning or offending the gender of women, so it triggered feminism to assume that the

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American government disregarded the interests and rights of women. Finally, in 1848 which was marked as the *Women's Great Rebellion*, feminist figures proclaimed another version of the American declaration of independence that read: "*all men and women are created equal*"(Djajanegara, 2000).

Based on the explanation above, the purpose of feminism is to raise the degree and equalize the position of a woman with that of men because women also take part in all activities related to the social, cultural and political spheres. This is in line with Rose's opinion (in Juanda & Azis, 2018) that considers the feminism movement as an attempt to generalize the position in order to be and or equal to men. Another understanding of feminism is expressed by (Madsen, 2000) Feminism comes from the Latin word "femina" which means to have a face about womanhood. Feminism is an ideology and understanding of equal rights between men and women.

The study of feminism is divided into several aspects: liberal feminism, radical feminism, Marxists and social feminism, feminism related to psychoanalysis and gender, existentialist feminism, postmodern feminism, and multicultural and global feminism (black feminism) (Musrifah, 2018). In this study, researchers will present the research found in the novel Ihsan Abdul Quddus' novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* using the study of Liberal feminism. According to (Tong, 2017) liberal feminism began to emerge in the 18th century when there was no underlying difference between a man and a woman. Whereas 19th-century liberal feminism fought for economic rights for women to be equal to men. In the 20th century, liberal feminism has more than one movement in the field of forming organizations, which are devoted to women in order to be able to fight sexual discrimination in the political, economic, social, and personal fields. The use of liberal feminism is based on its advantages and one of which is because the aspects of liberal feminism are more specific and it is important to help produce a detailed or complete presentation.

In Tong's study of liberal feminism, there are several concepts of feminism in it, each of which is conceptualized in several stages, namely: the concept of a liberal feminist view which is related to educational activities, and it arises from a reconstruction of an idea that women will begin to move or make changes optimally and will have the same position as men if there they are also given the same education as men (Tong in Musrifah, 2018). Then, it is followed by the concept of liberal feminism which is related to the equalization of rights between women and men, which is not enough if only given the same education, but must also be given equal opportunities in civil rights which include the right to socialize and organize, freedom of every opinion, the right to remain elected, and personal rights. Tong (Musrifah, 2018). Later, this perspective is then developed on the idea that women should

have more movement, and they are able to acknowledge their own limitations and correct the idea of liberal feminism found in the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus.

Literary works are an interesting idea of creativity and imagination which represent the real forms of life. Nurhayati (in Darmining, 2019) argues that, a literary work is an image or the result of one's imagination. Literary works appear suddenly among society which is the result of the author's imagination and his reflection on a social phenomenon happened around him. For a long time literary works have been ingrained and become a *culture regime* and a strong allure to Endaswara gender issues (2013, p.143). Literary works have quite a large coverage, and one of which is in the form of a novel. The novel is one of the literary works that is quite popular today. It is based on a positive form of acceptance by the wider community. Since centuries ago, novels are a form of literary work that is easier to find and obtain by the wider community. Novel according to Abraham (in Nurgiyantoro, 2015) is a short story that in Italian is referred to as *novella* while in German it is called *novelle*. Literally, the word *novella* means a new item, having a small form and then they are interpreted as short stories in prose. Aminuddin (in Armiami, 2018) gives a unique opinion about the novel. A person who enjoys literary works, especially novels, is usually motivated. In fact, in reality women have double duty especially when they have become a household women not only carry the burden related to careers, relationships between communities and also the family economy but also about how she should be able to provide the best education and care for her child. by the goal of obtaining life lesson found in the novel. In addition, by reading a novel, someone will feel entertained, find a useful activity to spend their free time, obtain new information or knowledge and be able to receive knowledge of sociocultural value from the era in which the work was published.

Discussing gender issues and literary works, in this case Ihsan Abdul Quddus invited the wider community to also read and feel through the writings he included in a literary work in the form of a novel with the title *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan*. Ihsan Abdul Quddus tries to show a how the responsibilities that women have to bear which, not only contextualizes on a woman's career but, in the realm of a broader scope. In this case, women, are often the object of jokes and laughter by men because they are often considered unable to maintain responsibility as a woman or housewife. In fact, in reality women have double duty especially when they have become a housewife, they will not only carry the burden related to careers, relationships between communities and the financial condition of the family, but they also need to know how to provide the best education and care for their children. However, in reality, especially within the society, men do not understand the double

burden that women have to bear. For men, women are considered incapable in many aspects, and therefore stereotypes about women are increasing, and the gap between men and women becomes wider.

In fact, the meaning of equality itself is, justice. Equality is the main goal and mission of human civilization in achieving the welfare of the world, building harmony in life. Rationality (the Great Dictionary of Indonesian) is a matter of fact. Rational in this discussion according to the mind as well as a logical (reasonable) consideration; according to a sound mind; as well as matching reason. Thus, equality of rationality in gender equality is defined as a commonality of roles that can be considered sensibly, and logically in the mind. A job is not distinguished from which is heavy or light, as long as it can all be done by women or men, it can be done and it is part of the equality of rationality. Gender equality or gender justice made between men and women which then refers to the equal rights of life, responsibility, opportunity, and treatment that does occur in men and women. Gender equality means that there is an opportunity on all sides of people of different ages so that they can succeed in life. This means that humans must have access to benefits and needs in the development of life for the better.

The results of studies have shown that there is still gender injustice that occurs between women and men, especially in the family sphere. Therefore, a critical analysis of liberal feminism is needed in the construction of equality of rationality. Since women are rational beings, it is appropriate to have the same abilities and potentials as men.

Research on feminism has been carried out by several other researchers. Some of the themes or titles of the study include, Juanda and Azis (2018) "*Penyingkapan Citra Perempuan Cerpen Media Indonesia: Kajian Feminisme*". Muhammad Youssef Suwaed (2017) "*The Exploitation of Women and Social Change in the Writing of Nawal El-Saadawi*". Purwati Anggraini (2016) "*Citra Tokoh Perempuan Dalam Cerita Anak Indonesia (Sebuah Pendekatan Kritik Feminisme)*". Musrifah (2018) "*Feminisme Liberal Dalam Novel Sepenggal Bulan Untuk Mu Karya Zhaenal Fanani*". Yuni Sulistyowati (2020) "*Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Lingkup Pendidikan Dan Tata Sosial*". Alan Sigit Fibrianto (2016) "*Kesetaraan Gender Dalam Lingkup Organisasi Mahasiswa Universitas Sebelas Maret Surakarta Tahun 2016*".

The study above have things in common; they are all discussing feminism, however, all the research above use different objects and research focuses or perspectives. Therefore, the researcher intends to conduct a study that focuses the study on the equality of gender rationality in the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus.

Research Method

Qualitative research is a process that produces products in the form of descriptive data (describing) in the form of words, either in written or spoken form obtained from the object of research in the form of humans, writing or one form of behavior that is observed. To be able to display structured and accountable research, it is necessary to have a research method. The method used in analysing in this study is the qualitative method using theoretical data from factors that are the foundation of this study entitled *Equality Of Gender Rationality In The Novel Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus.

The source of the data in this study is a novel with the title *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus. The novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* published in 2012 by Alfabeta publisher. The data in this study is in the form of various words, phrases, sentences, clauses or fragments of paragraphs paraphrased which show data from the study, namely liberal feminism in the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan*.

The method analysis of this study uses a heuristic-hermeneutic method that explains the acts of practice and speech acts in the novel studied. According to Riffaterre (in Darming, 2019, 56) heuristic analysis is a form of analysis with a method of conveying meaning or meaning based on conventional linguistic structures. In addition, the language being analyzed is bahasa itself. The result of the heuristic method produces some form of understanding of meaning that is, literally, the expressed meaning, the actual meaning. Nurgiyantoro (in (Darming, 2019).

Results and Discussion

Literary Feminism Approaches and Gender Problems

Nowadays, there are still people who are still too confused about the terms feminist, *female* (female), and feminism. Toril Moi explains in his essay entitled *the Feminist Reader* that feminists are one of the political positions of a woman in taking on roles. Woman is a biological term and feminism is a series of characters that come from a culture. The feminist approach is a connection to the principle of the struggle of a woman's life. By documenting, recounting all the obstacles, life, feeling, coercion, sacrifice and also the struggle of a woman, feminist researchers against the existing ideological structures.

Although a woman has uniformity in many ways, the views they perceive regarding feminism vary. Although they have a feeling that they come from the same race but in terms of thinking they are still different. Oleh therefore, that feminism fosters awareness towards ideologies and practices that can harm certain groups.

The oppression of the women was then expressed through literary works. Literature became a field for writers and ideas that tended to be patriarchal. This then gives rise to many stereotypes that make society tend to have the same views towards women.

To analyze a feminist novel, we need to know about history. In addition, there is sense of thought of feminist theories themselves. Feminist theories complement each other. Therefore, a novel entitled *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* became an option of study in a feminist approach.

In the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* explaining in detail about the feminism. It all started with a woman who wanted to be a career woman. As a child, she enjoyed studying so much that one day she became one of the most respected members of the House of Representatives in his area. She was a brave woman. She has a standard for herself on when she should get married. Her job and career were the only things she thought of. Until one day she met a young man who asked her to get married. She accepted the proposal and got married, but she made an agreement with her husband that she did not want to have children soon. After a few months they were blessed with the born of a daughter. However, she did not want to take care of her daughter and instead focusing on her career. They were then divorced. After that she remarried to a doctor, but her second marriage did not last long. She became widowed after her second marriage.

Feminism in the novel entitled *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan*, is liberal feminism. In this case, a woman dominates the existence of power. This is a mistake in the use of both feminism and patriarchy. There are a few things to be aware of in liberal feminism. The following are views of feminism.

Feminism Perspective

Feminism is not a study about a monolithic thing. In its development, the study of feminism consisted of several different points of views. In the book *Hubungan Internasional: Perspektif dan Tema*, Jill Steans and Lloyd Pettiford identified several feminist perspectives. These perspectives are then divided into liberal, Marxist, radical, critical and postmodern feminism. However, the perspectives, which are feminism, have something in common in the process of analyzing, namely that from these perspectives they both aim to improve the status of women's justice in society. Therefore, the research used the theory of liberal feminism.

Liberal Feminism

The root of liberal feminism lies on freedom and equality of rationality. A perspective pioneered by Mary Wollstonecraft argues that, women are equal to men. Women are able to develop an intellectual capacity that they have as well as their personality and existing morals. This means that women are also rational creatures such as men. A man has the right to follow public life, as well as to contribute to a discussion of political, social and moral issues related to human beings. It is better being a human who keeps silent and marginalized in a private space, which can be replaced or represented by men as 'heads of the family'.

Liberal feminists are making an interest in their efforts to improve the status of women around the world, increase women's participation in public life and gain access to power. In the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus explains that a woman also has space in the political, economic, social and other spaces. Women have many spaces including in the family roles. The position in gender equality is clearly visible even beyond the limits of equality. In this novel the most visible is about liberal feminism. A woman desperately wants to be equal to a man but she forgets her obligation as a housewife in the family. This needs to be revised because basically gender equality is a matter of gender justice. The meaning of fair in this case is to perform the roles in accordance with the sunnah.

Equality in Gender Rationality

According to Rianto & Amalia, 2010 in the journal *Islamic Economic Rationality*, rationality becomes a clear, straightforward topic and the problem of reason and thought. Rationality is impartial, reasoned, logical and has a certain purpose.

Whereas, gender etymologically can be interpreted as a difference in sex (a social construction) created by a person himself through a process of social construction that occurs in society through a long process. Gender equality has a relationship with the meaning of gender justice. It means that justice refers to equality i.e. doing something according to its roles, and that being fair does not necessarily being the same. Here is an analysis of rational expressions of gender equality in the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan*.

Excerpt 1

“...kini aku adalah salah satu anggota Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (DPR), ketua Asosiasi Wanita Karier (AWK), sekretaris Ikatan Putri Arab (IPA) dan masih banyak lagi. Aku Bintang di semua tempat.” (Quddus, 2012, p.1)

“... I am now one of the members of the House of Representatives (DPR), the chairman of the Career Women's Association (AWK), the secretary of the

Arab Women's Association (IPA) and many more. I'm a Star all over the place." (Quddus, 2012, p.1)

The excerpt shows that there is success produced by female figures by occupying many strategic places in the world of politics. Suad as a woman managed to break the stereotype of a weak woman by becoming a woman who can be useful and have an existence in her field. Other excerpts also describe the existence of gender equality. Here is an excerpt from the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus.

Excerpt 2 "...Ini bukan berarti bahwa aku menolak untuk cantik atau pintar sebagaimana umumnya perempuan. Aku hanya ingin menolak stigma tentang kecantikan dan kepintaran kaum perempuan..." (Quddus, 2015, p. 5)

"... This is not to say that I refuse to be as beautiful or smart as a female in general. I just want to reject the stigma about women's beauty and cleverness..." (Quddus, 2015, p. 5)

The above quote shows that women are people who are able to do things on a par with men. Suad in this case shows that she actually wants to be a good mother to her daughter by the way she occupied strategic places in the world of politics. She hopes that by having a strategic position in politics, her daughter and her family would be proud of her.

Excerpt 3 "Ini semua bukan merupakan hal penting yang membentuk diriku. Ada dua hal yang menjadi titik tolak kehidupanku sejak kecil hingga sekarang: ilmu pengetahuan dan jaringan kemasyarakatan yang luas." (Quddus, 2012, p. 7).

"This is not an important thing that shaped me. There are two things that have been the starting point of my life from childhood to the present: science and a wide social network." (Quddus, 2012, 7).

In the quote, the reader is directed to further deepen the meaning of gender equality which is mainly in the struggle for the rights of a woman. The gender sensitivity owned by Suad represents her concern for intellectuality related to the gender phenomena of the Egyptians.

"Aku berbeda. Sejak kecil aku tidak tertarik unytulk mengerjakan pekerjaan rumah. Aku tidak peduli dengan urusa dapur, mengawasi pembantu atau mengurus dekorasi atau meremehkan pekerjaan-pekerjaan itu, atau menyerahkan sepenuhnya kepada orang-orang yang di rumah." (Quddus, 2015: 6)

"I'm different. Since childhood I have not been interested in doing homework. I don't care about the kitchen, watching the maids or taking care of the decorations or belittling those jobs, or leaving them all completely to the people who are at home." (Quddus, 2015: 6)

Based on the novel quote above, we know that a woman's job is not only to cook but also to hone their intellectual abilities. However, there must be something to be revised from the sentence. While it is true if a woman must be aware of her rights and responsibilities as a woman both when she is still single and already married. Everyone, both men and women, must be aware of their own space and role in behaving and thinking.

Stereotypical Thinking of Male And Female

Behavouir and Luce Irigaray mention that women have always been striving to be ideal for men with all the standards given. The social construction that occurred later gave rise to various thoughts that existed in the crowd, and became a distinction between men and women. The stereotypes sometimes refer to "not feminine" for women and "not masculine" for men. This distinction appears from the birth of a baby. When a baby is born into the world, some people will distinguish the behavior of the baby into women and men. This stereereotype appears not only for men but also for the member of a certain race or specific job.

Many ideas regarding various kinds of activities carried out from men and women are based on the thoughts or opinions of experts. Stereotypes about women and men arise in society include; men are defined as being independent and assertive figures, ambitious about everything, logical and realist, good at analyzing, fond of adventure, able to be a good leader in every activity and position, and not easily emotional towards many things. Meanwhile, women are categorized as people who have a gentle, sensitive, diplomatic, religious, clean, reserved, are compassionate, and unstable in several ways.

This subordination originally arose because women were always used as objects, thus causing differences in rights and obligations between women and men. People's perspectives then justify these things, and these stereotypes then imprint on society as well as culture.

In the novel, what happens is also caused by subirdination which was previously one of the oppressions against women. In this case, the resulting impression of being an oppressed man is not even the existence of gender equality. Starting from the affairs of the child who is put aside and begins to be taken care of by the husband, the absence of affection shown by a wife, the domestic activities of a woman in the household that seem to be lost and so on. These things led to social inequality and the emergence of liberal feminism in the household.

Conclusion

Women is a biological term and feminism is a series of characters from a cultural design. The feminist approach is a connection to the principle of the women's struggle in life.

Although women have a variety of similarities, they have different views on feminism. Although they feel of the same race, in terms of thinking they are still different. Because of this, feminism can build awareness of ideologies and practices that harm certain groups. The oppression that exists in women is then expressed through literary works. Literature is a field for writers and thoughts that tend to be patriarchal. This then gives rise to many stereotypes that make society tend to have the same thoughts towards women. To analyze a feminist novel, we need to know first about the history and the ideas of feminist theories. The novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* became a choice of study in a feminist approach. In the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* it explains in detail about feminism. It all started with a woman who wanted herself to be a career woman. As a child, she enjoyed studying so much that one day she became one of the most respected members of the House of Representatives in her area. She was a brave woman. She has her own standard in marriage, and refused to marry before reaching the age standard she initially determined. Her job and career were the only things she thought of. Until one day she met a young man who asked her to get married. She accepted the proposal and got married, but she made an agreement with her husband that she did not want to have children soon. After a few months they were blessed with the birth of a daughter. However, she did not want to take care of her daughter and instead focusing on her career. They were then divorced. After that she remarried to a doctor, but her second marriage did not last long. She became widowed after her second marriage.

Feminism that takes place in the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan*, is liberal feminism. In this case, a woman dominates the existence of power-related aspect. This is a mistake in both feminism and patriarchy. There are a few things to be aware of in liberal feminism. International Relations introduced the relationship of feminism in the 1980s. Today, feminism is popular among today's generation. The definition of modern here means that there is a progress and human civilization by showing efforts to improve the status of women in the social system of society.

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