ABSTRACT

Since the term of “Feminism” comes up in people’s mind, many women try to break the differentiation between male and female roles which is related to inequality position. This inequality terms focused on traditional gender roles which describe that women should be inferior to men. Moreover, this globalization era proves that many modern women are successful to elaborate their ability in double jobs, domestic and public area. Therefore, this study attempts to discuss the portrayal of modern women represented by Emma Morley’s character in David Nicholls’ novel entitled One Day. To elaborate the portrayal of modern women, this study will apply Liberal Feminism. Using this theory, the writer analyzes Emma’s character in order to prove that well-educated woman who has double jobs is still being trapped by patriarchal systems. However, she can survive with her conditions and become the one who takes control; and her movements in public area as a modern woman become an inspiration for other women who want to compete with men’s skill.

Keywords: Feminism, Liberal Feminism, Modern Woman, Patriarchal Systems

1. Introduction

Since the aim of the study focus on the portrayal of modern women in David Nichols’ novel, the writer will analyze women’s personality in order to show their existence in public area. Hence, many women try to build some new concept towards increasing their position, for instance in education, because education itself becomes women’s main problems. In the previous era, education was banned for them, because the people still believe on the patriarchal system. For instance, women should stay at home and not be able to work outside or gain the same opportunities to school, because outside is a symbol of men’s domination and power. Patriarchal refers to power relation, in which women’s interests are subordinated to the interests of men (Jenainati, 4).

Furthermore, women want to try to break the patriarchal system and changes the world’s perspective by feminist movement which emerged in 1960s. Feminism is the struggle to end sexist oppression (Jenainati, 3). In the other word, feminist studies bring new movement for women who felt under pressure by men’s rules. The power of globalization era has been developed through women’s movement in public area. As a result, many governments in some big countries try to give a law for equal position between male and female. Moreover, there are no space and distance between men and women. Consequently, there are many independent women who are successful in both domestic and public’s jobs.

Independent women especially in modern time can be seen in David Nicholls’ novel entitled One Day. It is based on Emma Morley’s character who is very ambitious and smart because she has double degree. This novel published in 2009 and got the first winner as Galaxy Book of Year in 2010. Feminist study is the most appropriate theory to analyze this novel, because Emma’s character represents as modern woman and also related with Mary Wollstonecraft’s book, A Vindication Of Right Of Women:

I am a woman, I would not lead my readers to suppose, that I mean violently to agitate the contested question respecting the equality and inferiority of the sex; but as the subject lies in my way, and I cannot pass it over without subjecting the main tendency of my reasoning to misconception, I shall stop a moment to deliver, in a few words, my opinion (36).

Feminist studies have emerged in the 1960s. The term of Feminism is related with the study which focuses on women’s life. According to Charles E. Bressler, Feminist criticism is its focus on patriarchy, the rule of society and culture by men (167). Feminist literary criticism wants to make equal position for women in all aspects such as social, culture, economics, political and education. Men’s dominance builds a power of women to gain same position. The focus on feminist is about liberal feminism in major character which explains about women’s movement in modern time. Liberal Feminism is a key for analyzing the main character.

Women should have the same legal rights as men and the same educational and work opportunities. Liberal feminism accepts and works with the gender system, with the goal of purging it of its discriminatory effects on women (Lewis, 27-28).
The Portrayal of Modern Women in David Nicholls’ One Day

Liberal feminism is the only way to formulate the issues behind the story and the closest theory that show women’s movement through their education and political situation. Tong cited in her book, Mill and Taylor also explain that if society is to achieve sexual equality, or gender justice, then society must provide women with the same political rights and economic opportunities as well as the same education that men enjoy (Tong 16). In the other word, Liberal feminism is not trying to fight with men’s perspective; the purpose of its ideology is focused on women's equality. Thus, this study applies Liberal Feminism as the appropriate term to analyze the woman character in the novel.

There are some writings which focus on women’s movement, such as Septiana Prasetyowati entitled Lilo Topchev as A Symbol of Woman’s Power in Philip K. Dick’s The Zip Gun, Susan de Young and F.G. Crane who tells about Females’ Attitudes toward the Portrayal Women in Advertising, and Claire Wolfe who describes about the major character in One Day’s novel by using intrinsic element. Those are having the same issues about women can be superior over men. Related from this explanation above, the writer found the other sides from women’s perspective through analyze the novel. The writer will analyze a modern women who has double job in a public and domestic area but still being trapped by patriarchal systems.

From the explanation above, the writer chose this topic because nowadays there are many independent women who are successful both in domestic and public’s job, but unconsciously they are still being trapped by patriarchal systems. This phenomenon give a new perspective in women’s thought, because many of them didn’t know how to deal with their chosen.

2. Analysis

One Day is a romantic and wonderful novel from David Nicholls. The story begins when Emma and Dexter, the main characters, meet in the night after their graduation. They spend their night together and celebrate the St. Swithin’s Day which makes them hold a promise to meet each other on the same date, July 15. The time setting in this novel moves forward from 1988 until 2008. Dexter is a handsome, adorable person, but he is a playboy who has ambition to have an adventure around the world, while Emma is a beautiful, clumsy, and smart person who is trapped in a dirty restaurant in London. Both Dexter and Emma never ignore their feelings until twenty years later. However, their relationship has many conflicts such as idealism and arrogance caused by their individual characters. The last subchapter will analyze the portrayal of modern women through a character named Emma who has ambitious desire to change her life and also strong power to gain both career and individual’s relationship. According to this explanation, the writer showed the words and the parts from the novel based on Emma’s life which has similar attitude for modern women to gain their goals as a person with equal right in life.

2.1 Gender Stereotype in David Nicholls’ One Day

There are several women’s characters in One Day’s novel and most of them depicted as a weak person and under controlled by men’s domination. The stereotype of woman character in this novel is shown when she becomes object to see for men’s point of view. One of which and probably the most often can be found is women are presented as sexual objects. One of which is because we are living in patriarchal society in which men have control over women; they have dominant power. Sexual object refers to women’s body as visual for people who seeing it in terms of men, object to look, to attract men’s attentions. The matter of women as sexual objects actually have been discussed for a long time by feminist and it is in the second wave of feminism (Laughey, 11). Remind that for gaining the equal right in order to be equal with men, women have struggled hardly from the first wave of feminism until finally now they can get almost the same right as men. It is shown until now that they cannot get the equality completely. Nevertheless, they have much progress in it. It could be seen through the job positions; nowadays women can also become boss, even they now can give a command toward men whose job positions are below them. Today, they can gain their equal right; however, on the other side, the myths or stereotypes of them still exist and even still stick on.

“Gary kissed her for three stark, uncompromising hours at the last-night-party, waiting until four hours in before reaching across and absent-mindedly placing his hand on her left breast, Gary taking care throughout to ensure that he was in no way objectifying her.” (22)
According to that sentence, sex becomes the important things to men’s point of view, for some biological needs. The word “objectifying her” has close meaning with sexual object for men’s desire. It is show that stereotypes among people’s minds still exists.

Furthermore, women characters in this novel describe as women who follow the traditional gender roles. This role describes women in some negative ways that they should be inferior to men. Traditional gender roles also give some perceptions toward people’s mind that women should accepts their destiny for being second sex after men.

“Too much had happened to him, too little had happened to her. Was it some kind of sick revenge? Because she got a better degree than him.” “But you’ve got a double first! What happened to your double first?” (59).

This sentence describes the first moment when Emma is feeling depressed toward her life. She couldn’t change her life into a better way, just being trapped in London where she gets bored of that town because of jobless. She feels upset because she knows she got a better academic thing than Dexter. Her achievements when she graduated from her college seem meaningless because she could not apply this achievement in public area, so she did not have better jobs. Meanwhile, Dexter got better job even though he did not get good marks for his academic things.

According to the explanations above, there are some perspectives about male’s and female’s opportunity in public area. They have their each way to get access for gaining their own position toward their career. It can be seen that male are always considered as superior person than female. Here is the table to conclude the meaning of patriarchal society who described women as the second sex after men.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Man</th>
<th>Woman</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>Inferior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rude and impolite</td>
<td>Sexual Obj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rational</td>
<td>Irrational; emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>Less Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powerful</td>
<td>Powerless, controlled by men’s domination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give the command</td>
<td>Obey the command</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. The Differences between Men and Women’s characterizations Portrayed in One Day

2.2 The Portrayal of Modern Women in Emma’s Characterization

Modern woman means can have a career without the worry of finding a man to support her financially. Modern woman’s characteristics are strong, assertive, aggressive, tactful, expressive, and independent. A modern woman could ascertain her goals, achieve them, and maintain a strong household (Brown, 01). In the other hand, woman in modern era mostly have their position in social life for instance well education in engineering, science, law or even mathematics, and then gaining their dream jobs, in public organization. Many women give their potentials throughout for social activity without trapped in between for their domestic jobs.

Globalization era also give many positive effects especially in literary works, because there are many women become good author in order to express themselves as modern women. According to John Stuart Mill cited in Tong’s book “men’s and women’s intellectual abilities are of the same kind” (20). It shows that many women try to elaborate their potential to increase women’s power become strong people which deserve to live in the same condition with men. It also happens for male author’s perspective who describes women as their object in literary works, for instance David Nicholls who tells about women’s strength toward Emma’s personality to deal with her life.

Modern women should have big optimistic feeling for their life in order to explore their existence in public area; and Emma has a little bit one of the component as modern women. Even she knows, in the middle of her twenties, that she should have partner in terms of boy friend and getting married without confusing about job’s opportunity. Instead, Emma stays with her choices to build her own world without thinking about women’s destiny. She only spends her time to explore some other experience. It shows that Emma is capable to change men’s perspective in some patriarchal society which describe women as weak people and not depend on men’s help.

“I’m never getting married anyway. Just.. not for me, that’s all. As a matter of fact, I think there are more important things in life than “relationships”.” (69-70).
She is sounding for herself to be free by being unmarried person. For other women, become unmarried is supposed to be difficult things to do because mostly, women have a big desire toward their future by being married with their dream guy. Precisely, Emma show herself in front of men that she is capable doing anything by herself, show her power as an independent woman who survive for career instead of “relationship”. She tries to give another perspective toward patriarchal system that women are capable to build their own career even they already know it should be started from the bottom of life. Being tough, strong, and persevering are the element of modern women to show up their ability in order to compete with men in public areas.

Nowadays, modern women only concern of their existences in terms of public area which available for them. They are not pretending to become enemy or fight against men’s ability in order to show up their voice as modern women but they only fight for their goals. Women also focus on different perspective related to the Liberal Feminism movement which considered as the “tools” to compete with men, not trying to fight against men’s power. Liberal feminism suggest that women should be free to explore themselves in social world and gives their contribution in some aspects such as politics, socials, cultures, even in education systems as well as men (Beasley, 20).

In the beginning of thirty years old, Emma still fights for her skills in writing in order to prove her desire as a writer. She starts to write about older kids set in Leeds based on her successful drama Oliver. She never gives up; her ambition becomes her weapon to gain power in terms of struggling for her life. Even she has already sent the twenty thousand words and waits patiently until she gets rejection letter from many publishers; but she never gives up.

The hardest moment that comes in her life when she met Dexter, her best friend. She sees Dexter’s life as amazing moments because he has already had everything that he wants, good career, money, and girlfriends. Instead, Emma only stuck in one job as a teacher and tries to build her career as a writer; such an ordinary thing that she doesn’t want to share with him. However, she only tells about the different aspects through her life without showing her weakness in front of Dexter.

“Sympathy for the spinster. I’m perfectly content, thank you. And I refused to be defined by my boyfriend. Or lack of. Once you decide not to worry about that stuff anymore, dating, relationship and love, it’s like you’re free to get on with real life. I’ve got my work, and I love that. I’ve got I reckon one more year to really make a go of it.” (286).

According to this conversation, Emma gives explanation toward her life in front of Dexter, trying to convince him about her life with firmly sentence such as “refused to be defined by my boyfriend” which obviously shows she doesn’t want to be protected by men’s power. “Not to worry about that stuff dating, relationship, and love” which describes as freedom for her to be single and the word “stuff” refers to unimportant things for her to carry about. She doesn’t want being trapped by patriarchal roles; instead she only focuses on her job as a teacher and be proud of it. She shows herself as a modern woman who is strong enough to define her own desire.

Liberal feminism said that women should be free to experiment with their own desire, to follow their goals, and embracing men about women’s choices (Tong, 3). In the other word, women have their own way to catch their dreams without the rules of men. Emma as an independent woman defines herself to follow and build many experiment s through her life in order to gain her goals.

Emma has struggled hardly for gaining her goals. She started her job as a waiter in small Mexico restaurant for four years. Then, she moved to other job which appropriate for her ability, as a teacher in elementary school, teaching drama and English as her subjects. In 2001, the biggest moment has come for her. Finally, she launches her first novel entitled Big Julie Criscoll Versus the Whole Wild World both in French and UK. She moved to French to expand her ability and career toward writing novels, because finally she got some work contract to make her second and third novels. It is show that Emma has been struggle for long time toward her life.

“So I’m told. Well enough for them to pay for two more. And we’re talking to TV people. For a show. An animated kid’s show based on my illustrations. I’m working in the media! I’m the Associate Producer!” (336-337).
Related to the explanation above, it shows the moment when she becomes a successful woman to gain her own desire as an author, famous author. She is working in the media as a symbol of her attraction toward people who enjoy her skill in writing. People starts to believe her skills in terms of writing, so that they give her space to explore her writing in media as Associate Producer to build her own illustrations.

After she got almost all her goals, Emma’s behavior obviously shows as tools for herself to get people’s respect. People will see Emma from different side; that is capable to solve her own problem without asking help for other people, especially men. Therefore, when Dexter has problem from his relationship, Emma becomes the only person who is capable to listen and take a control toward his problems. Based on this moment, finally she found her true soul-mate in terms of partner for her relationship. Dexter become her future husband and they start to build a new relationship. She chose the right time to build serious relationship with her true partner. It shows that her option for being taken with man is not only for biological needs but as partners who give some inspirations to each other. It is shown when Dexter didn’t have opportunity to gain a job, Emma as his partner tries to give supports and ideas to explore Dexter’s ability.

“Work. He is working again in his own business, though ‘business’ feels a little too high-powered a word at present for this little delicatessen-café on a residential street. It had been Emma’s idea. Emma’s presence helped. Dexter’s father liked Emma and for the first time in some years found himself liking his son because of her.” (356)

Dexter finally found his own job from his partner’s idea. It shows that Emma’s presence successfully helps him to gain his confidence again. The way she control and manage her position as a partner is very amazing. According to Mill and Taylor cited in Tong’s book, both of them claimed the ordinary way to maximize aggregate utility (happiness/pleasure) is to permit individuals to pursue their desires, provided the individuals do not hinder or obstruct each other in the process (16). In the other hand, both Emma and Dexter have their purpose to provide their goals, support each other, give a space and place to complete their desires. Thus, they will be a partner who always brings many inspirations to each other. This moment obviously explains that patriarchal systems toward their relationship seem disappear.

Liberal feminism tries to elaborate the way patriarchal systems influence society to believe that women have the same opportunity with men. Many modern women are still trapped by patriarchal roles which describe them as an object to see by men’s domination. Here, Emma’s personality shows herself as a modern woman who very ambitious toward her desire and very powerful to keep her words in order to show her ability in public areas. She never gives up with her life, and become the one who takes control toward people’s around her.

“All those failed business reminding him of what was at stake, how likely he was fail. But all the time Emma was there, pushing him on, keeping him convinced that he was doing the right thing. He has a partner whom he loves and desires and who is also his best-friend.” (357-358)

Those sentences based on Dexter’s perspective, it can be seen that men are also depending on women’s help. It explains that Dexter need a partner to give him spirits toward his life, once again, the patriarchal systems in this phenomena seems disappear. Related to the explanation above, Taylor also explains about women’s capability toward their husband in Tong’s book. Taylor argued that women needed to do more than read books and cast ballots; they also needed to be partners with men “in the labors and gains, risks and remunerations of productive industry” (17). In the other hand, as a partner, women have places in the society to expand their ability in front of men. They are not supposed to be sits and sees as unimportant person who are unable to do public’s job. Furthermore, women have an access to use their own reproduction in terms of access for pregnant. In this novel, show that the opportunity to give a child toward their life is from Emma’s side, she has fully opportunity to give a birth for Dexter based on her choice. It means that women’s voice and women rights is listened and obeyed by men.

According to those explanations above, Emma’s life is getting better from time to time, it can be seen when she gets many opportunities as well as men. The way she explores herself in both domestic and public area can be concluded in this table in order to shows her movement toward patriarchal systems as a modern woman.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Man</th>
<th>Emma Morley</th>
<th>Woman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>Both, gain the equal position with men</td>
<td>Inferior</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. The Portrayal of Modern Women in Emma Morley’s Characterizations.

3. Conclusion
To conclude this study, it can be seen that Emma’s personality as an independent woman, strong, and smart has her power to compete with men’s capability in both domestic and public jobs. Even though it also shows that well-educated woman who have double jobs is still being trapped by patriarchal systems, but she can survives for her conditions and become the one who takes control and her movements in public area as a modern woman become an inspirations for other women who wants to compete with men’s skill. Therefore, this study also shows Emma’s ability to improve the traditional gender roles, such as nurturing feelings which become her power to get people’s attractions toward her existence. She accepts the traditional gender roles but she also elaborates those roles in different sides in order to build another perspective toward women’s ability both in domestic and public areas.

4. Work Cited