

RESISTANCE TO PATRIARCHAL CULTURE IN NAWAL EL-SAADAWI'S *MEMOIRS OF A WOMAN DOCTOR*

Andriadi

UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu

andriadi@mail.uinfasbengkulu.ac.id

Muthia Rahmi

UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu

Muthiarahmi2002@gmail.com

Abstract

*This study aims to describe gender inequality in the novel *Memoirs of a Woman Doctor* by Nawal El-Saadawi; and the ideology of women's resistance to achieve gender equality amidst a strong patriarchal culture. The results of the study show that the novel *Memoirs of a Woman Doctor* by Nawal el-Saadawi shows gender inequality which is very detrimental to women's lives, among which women are treated differently in their own families, educated to be able to do domestic work, restrictions on women's freedom, the differentiating roles between men and women in the public, and men's efforts to dominate women. The form of resistance carried out by the main character in the novel *Memoirs of a Doctor* against these inequalities is by having the courage to oppose the restraints on women that shackles their progress, trying to get out of domestic activities by taking education to a higher level, fighting all form of discrimination, improve self-quality, and raise awareness that men and women have the same role in the public.*

Keywords: *Resistance, Patriarchal Culture, Novel *Memoirs of a Woman Doctor*.*

Introduction

*... In short, I must be smarter than any boy
and that I can do every act that my father did, even many more.
(El-Saadawi, 2005: 18)*

Women are placed in a marginal position in a patriarchal society. Their roles are limited to the domestic. The practice of patriarchal culture has a significant impact on women's lives where it is difficult for women to develop and become economically established because women are placed as entities that do not have rights and authority to regulate themselves. As a result, there is inequality in women's social life. They lose various opportunities to develop themselves which in the end they do not have good knowledge and adequate professional skills. This condition makes it difficult for women to become independent individuals and depend on men who have long been legitimized to be superior and higher than women. This stereotype has grown and taken root in almost all cultural systems in the world.

The practice of patriarchal culture which is still applied in world society is to place women at the lowest level of subordination. After marriage, women have a role as

housekeepers and are tasked with serving their husbands (Karim & Hartati, 2022). This kind of role places women as human beings who are shackled by domestic work and reinforces their stereotype as weak and difficult to develop.

In addition, women are placed as complements, entertainers, and objects. Women are positioned as objects in opposition to subjects. As a subject, men have the legitimacy to control women who are objects to be controlled. The position of men and women becomes unequal because women occupy subordinate and complementary positions. As a complement, women become men's objects and finally women surrender their bodies and destiny to men (Amala & Ekasiswanto, 2022). The existence of women is determined by their relationship with men, not because they have their own identity, women are measured not because of their own qualities.

Women are restrained and still receive discriminatory treatment in various aspects of life. Many women are given the choice to continue their work in the world of work or take care of the family and become housewives. The patriarchal cultural factor still evaluates a woman with higher education even though it is better to concentrate on the domestic world, namely taking care of the household. The patriarchal cultural system limits the space for women to take part or have a career to achieve their goals like men who have the right to achieve their desires without having to be faced with difficult choices (Prastiwi & Rahmadanik, 2022). Sometimes, in certain cultural contexts, women are discriminated against in terms of payment or wages in the world of work.

Violence against women also often occurs, especially in the domestic, from physical violence, verbal violence, to sexual violence. Sexual violence is a crime which includes physical, verbal and psychological violence which is generally perpetrated by men against women as an attempt to show their dominance (Salam & Ntelu, 2022). This is evidence that women are often targeted rather than perpetrators. Male domination makes women weak and powerless and ultimately leads to neglect.

In Arabic literature, patriarchal culture is very strongly depicted in the novel *Memoirs of a Woman Doctor* (abbreviated as MWD in this article) by Nawal El-Saadawi which was written in 1957. This novel caused controversy and received censorship from the government because its content criticized patriarchal cultural practices. In Egypt, especially the striking gender inequality, low respect for women, to the exploitation of Egyptian women (Elsadawi, 2009). Through this work, the author tries to prevent patriarchal cultural practices by instilling gender values in women and proving that women can leave the domestic space and have the

courage to take positions, dare to appear and play a role in the public (Prastiwi, 2022). The MWD novel proves that apart from being biologically different, men and women have the same position and role socially and culturally.

Nawal el-Saadawi is an Egyptian doctor, novelist and writer who advocates for Arab women's rights. He is a graduate of the Faculty of Medicine in the city of Cairo. He was born in a village called Kafr Tahla on the banks of the Nile in 1931 and died in Cairo, Egypt in 2021. He qualified to become a doctor in 1955 and began his career in medicine by starting his practice in rural areas, then spreading to various hospitals in Cairo. His career skyrocketed since then until he became the Director of Public Health in Egypt. However, in 1972, he was relieved of his duties as director, chief editor of Health Magazine, and also as assistant general secretary of the Society of Doctors in Egypt due to the publication of his first non-fiction book entitled *Women and Sex* which caused opposition among the highest ranking official's politics and religion. However, this did not prevent her from continuing to write and publish books on status, psychology and female sexuality.

From 1973-1976, Nawal El-Saadawi did research on women and neuroses at the Faculty of Medicine, Ain Shams University; from 1979-1980, she was an adviser to the United Nations Program on Women in Africa (ECA) and the Middle East (ECWA). Then in 1980, as the culmination of her struggle for women's rights socially and intellectually, she was imprisoned under the government of President Anwar Sadat. Since then, she has devoted her time as a writer, journalist and speaker on women's issues around the world. The books he published and the papers he wrote were confiscated and his name was put on a government blacklist. His works which were censored by the Egyptian Censor Board and banned in Saudi Arabia and Libya were published in Lebanon. She rejects the boundaries of religious oppression as well as colonization of mostly women who come from the countryside. Nawal el-Saadawi during her life has received three literary prizes.

The novel *Memoar of a Woman Doctor* tells the story of a female character that is fed up with social conventions that emphasize various advantages or special rights for men, harassment and intimidation of women and other patriarchal cultures that occur around her, even this culture is also preserved by his own family. The main character in the MWD novel aspires to become a doctor. His wish was inspired by his experience of witnessing his family pleading with respect for a doctor to cure his father. That's what causes him to want to be treated that way. He also wanted to prove that men and women have the same roles and rights in society. The character "Woman" has experienced failure in her marriage but in the end she

found her true love. The struggle of "women" figures in fighting for women's rights and gender equality was ultimately successful. The MWD novel was written as a form of protest and resistance to patriarchal cultural practices that occurred in Egypt in the 1950s.

Literary works are socio-cultural documents that can be used to see a phenomenon in society at the time the work was created, this kind of literary function is called literature as a reflection of culture or the spirit of the times (Swingwood, 1972). That is, by reading literary works, readers can see what was happening in society at that time. Literary works are connected with the phenomena that occur when the work is created so that social patterns can be understood and described. Literary works as a product of authors are the result of a description of their social environment as members of society (Andriadi, 2019).

The reality displayed by the author in a work is not completely the same as the reality in the real world, but an ideal reality based on understanding, values or ideas, as well as the goals that the author wants to convey based on his response to the reality he sees in real terms. The reality displayed by the author is presented while still paying attention to its aesthetic elements (Wahyudi, 2013). These ideas are a reflection of the author's ideology which is represented through the dialogue of the characters, the character of each character, the setting of the story, as well as the events that occur in the literary work. The ideologies presented in literary works are not far from the ideologies that emerge from the conditions under which the literary work was created. Not only presenting ideology, the author also tries to try to negotiate the ideology that existed at the time the work was created with the ideology that he presents in his work.

Ideology has the meaning as a set of values, ideas, norms, beliefs, and beliefs that are owned by a person or group of people which form the basis for determining attitudes towards the events or problems they face (Rokhmansyah, 2019). Ideology can also be interpreted as a belief system to explain and change the world (Wiyatmi, 2019). All ideologies make certain statements or assumptions about individual characteristics, the relationship between individuals and society, the individual's environment and the physical environment, the characteristics of society, and about the meaning/meaning of history. Ideology embedded in a literary work can be a tool to strengthen or undermine a certain belief system or culture (Paramita, 2021).

There have been many studies using the novel *Memoirs of a woman Doctor* as the object of research material. Kaprisma (2018) conducted research with a focus on sexual issues in female stereotypes as shown in a comparison of the female doctor character in the novel

Memoirs of a Woman Doctor by Nawal El Saadawi and the character Hiroko in the novel *Namaku Hiroko* by Nh. Early. The results of the study show that the stereotypes reflected in the two novels have a value against patriarchal culture. Furthermore, Bishara (2019) conducted research with a focus on comparative interconnectivity between women's novels and their autobiography where Nawal El-Saadawi was the sample. The results of the study show that in Nawal El-Saadawi's autobiography, the author is not afraid to talk about her personal life or to reveal hidden experiences in her life. Nawal Al-Sa'dawi talks about 'women' and her suffering when speaking out is forbidden. He spoke of women as weak creatures. The story repeatedly talks about the woman's suffering, reveals hidden facts and uncovers invisible to people's eyes and minds. This approach that El-Saadawi adopts is meant to be a call on the conscience of the reader to help her stop the injustices perpetrated on women.

Daher-Nashif (2022) re-reads this work in the midst of the co-19 outbreak. The results of the study describe the development of his existential questions as a human being and a doctor throughout his life and interactions with patriarchal socio-cultural. Following a crisis in his professional identity, dr. El-Saadawi questions the meaning of medicine, the doctor-patient relationship, and life and the absurdities of death and alienation. Cysbya (2017) reveals that this novel was inspired by a true story of rebellion against male domination in the country and also reveals the values of women's emancipation.

So far, previous researchers have discussed the patriarchal culture represented in the work, women and their suffering, re-reading the work to produce patriarchal socio-cultural interactions, and reflecting on the true story of the author's rebellion against male domination. However, previous research did not describe in detail gender inequality and the ideology of women's resistance to achieve gender equality amidst a strong patriarchal culture. Therefore, this research deserves to be examined in order to fill in the gaps in the study of the MWD novel.

Method

This study used a qualitative method with sociology of literature approach. In qualitative research, researchers study the meaning of people's lives or real-life conditions, represent people's views and perspectives, provide insight into existing or emerging concepts that can help explain human social behavior, and seek to use multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2011). This study interprets gender inequality in the novel *Memoirs of a Female Doctor* by Nawal El-Saadawi so as to provide insight into gender inequality in patriarchal culture

which will reveal human social behavior regarding gender issues and describe the ideology of women's resistance in order to achieve gender equality.

The primary data source in this study was a novel entitled *Memoirs of a Woman Doctor* by Nawal El-Saadawi which was published in 2005. Secondary data was obtained through library research needed to support analytical work such as books, papers, journals and research reports related to study object.

Data collection was carried out by reading holistically on the novels being studied to obtain words, phrases, sentences, dialogues, or narratives related to research needs to support analytical work. Text data that has been collected is analyzed through several stages. First, the data reduction process is based on thematic. Second, the level of analysis used is: restatement, description, and interpretation. Third, the analysis technique used is content analysis.

Result and Discussion

After thoroughly reading the *Memoirs of a Female Doctor* by Nawal El-Saadawi, the results of the research found a description of gender inequality and a form of women's resistance to achieve gender equality amidst a strong patriarchal culture.

1. Portrait of Gender Inequality in Nawal El-Saadawi's *Memoirs of a Woman Doctor*

In the novel *Memoirs of a Woman Doctor*, the gender disparity shown is the difference in treatment between men and women in the family environment. This difference in treatment has been carried out by his family since they were small. Men are given special privileges, their lives are not filled with many restrictive rules, and their lives tend to be freer, while girls' lives are filled with rules, starting from how to eat, how to look, and how to act and behave.

..., my brother can take a bigger piece of meat than me and then eat it very voraciously, he swallows the soup loudly... I am a girl who must be very careful in making every body movement, must also be smart hide the desire if at any time you want a type of food, you have to eat it slowly and swallow the soup without making a sound. (El-Saadawi, 2005: 2).

Privileges are only given to brothers, namely taking larger portions and eating loudly while female characters have to eat gently, taking smaller portions than their brothers' portions, and harboring their desires if he so desires. Some kind of food. Eating larger portions and even to the point of excess is a form of greed, and also from a social perspective, eating with loud noises can disturb the comfort of the people around it. Such education is only imposed on women, not for boys. Girls are required to behave well, and conversely boys can behave as freely as they want, even violating ethics.

The difference in treatment of women in the family is also carried out in the way they look.

My brother's hair is cut short, it just comes off and is often not combed anyway, while my hair is allowed to grow longer and my mother likes to comb me twice a day ... (El-Saadawi, 2005: 1-2).

Female characters are prohibited from cutting their hair and the hair must always be maintained. Unlike his brother who has the privilege that he is free to treat his hair as he wants. Women are charged with long hair to make it look elegant and beautiful with the consequence that women must have enough time to take care of their hair. In contrast, men have short hair to be more practical in their activities.

Women's attitudes and behavior are also regulated by their families. Attitudes and behavior of women in socializing are not the same as men. Women are taught to be more guarded, closed and limited.

My brother is free to play, jump around, somersault as he wants, while I can only sit and be careful not to let my dress be exposed even one centimeter above my thighs ... My brother can go out on the street to play without having to ask permission from my parents first, then they can go home whenever they want, while I can only travel if my parents allow me. (El-Saadawi, 2005: 2)

Female characters are also treated differently in the way they behave towards them and also the limited opportunities for them to leave the house. If seen positively, the use of women's clothing and restrictions on permission to leave the house are regulated to anticipate acts of harassment that could potentially occur to women because Egypt is one of the countries with the highest levels of harassment in the world. *"Social acceptance of daily sexual harassment impacts all women in Egypt, regardless of age, profession or socioeconomic background, marital status, clothing or treatment,"* said Noora Flinkman of the Egyptian campaign group HarrassMap (BBCNews Indonesia, 2013). And there is also international news that says:

A woman in Egypt could be discriminated against in the workplace, regularly harassed by strangers on the street, medically violated, abused at home, or a combination of those things. (Egyptian Streets 2020).

The two news stories above were broadcast in the last 10 years. If it is related to the time when the MWD novel was created, this shows that Egyptian women can experience harassment anywhere and by anyone, even today. Harassment can still occur even though attitudes and behavior have been maintained and the body is properly covered.

... I was sitting alone on his wooden bench watching the movements of my brother and his friends who were playing in the street. ... But suddenly I felt his rough fingers stroking my thighs and then running up under my clothes. I jumped in fear and ran away from him. Apparently this scary man has noticed my feminine traits too! (El-Saadawi, 2005: 6-7).

It shows that women in Egypt often experience harassment wherever they are, the factors that cause this harassment are the perpetrator's personal motivation and supportive opportunities.

... It seems that even this scary man has noticed my feminine features! (El-Saadawi, 2005: 7).

The first factor that prompted the perpetrator to commit harassment was the perpetrator's motivation to carry out the action because he had seen a biological sign in a female character indicating that she had entered puberty, namely her breasts had grown. Here are the supporting quotes:

I got out of bed, forced myself to stand in front of the mirror and stared at the two small hills growing on my chest. (El-Saadawi, 2005: 5).

Another factor is opportunity. The perpetrator abused the female character when he was watching his brother and friends playing and at that time he was sitting alone. This shows that the reason for the perpetrator to commit harassment is that there is an opportunity to support this action. When the atmosphere around him is not too crowded, he feels safe from people's eyes, and the female character is sitting alone so that also supports her actions because there will be no one else to prevent her actions.

Women are also required to be neat people and maintain the cleanliness of everything that is in themselves and around them and that of other family members.

My brother wakes up in the morning and is okay to leave his bed crumpled as it is, whereas I am supposed to clean and tidy mine and his bed. (El-Saadawi, 2005: 2).

The female character is required to keep her bed clean every morning as well as her brother's bed. This shows that a woman must always be tidy and maintain cleanliness as is the stereotype against women that has been widely circulated in society that women must always maintain cleanliness, tidiness, and have an attractive appearance, unlike their brothers, who are free not to clean their bed. Cleaning her brother's bed also shows that women are trained from a young age to do domestic work as well as to take care of the family because one day she will get married.

Women have been indoctrinated and trained since childhood to be able to do domestic work because one day they will get married so it is mandatory for them to be able to do this.

One day you will get married! You must learn how to cook. You're getting married...!
(El-Saadawi, 2005: 8).

Since childhood, the female character has been indoctrinated that when she grows up she will get married and it is obligatory for her to be able to do domestic chores, one of which is cooking. Egypt is known for its strong patriarchal culture. Quoting from an international news portal which states: *In a study conducted by UN Women in 2017, 86.8 percent of Egyptian men and 76.7 percent of women stated that a woman's primary role in society is at home cooking and caring for the family ...* (Egyptian Streets, 2020)

This shows that the Egyptian state from the past until now has a very strong patriarchal culture that shackles women, indoctrinating women that their main task is to do household (domestic) tasks and serve their families. Women's lives are really limited by their families, even a grandmother and a mother who are actually women also limit the lives of their daughters. Women are prohibited from going against what has been ordered for them.

My grandmother suddenly stopped talking when her eyes landed on my chest. ... Then he whispered something in my mother's ear and immediately I heard my mother say to me, "Wear that cream-colored dress and immediately meet your father's guests..." (El-Saadawi, 2005: 8).

When a female character has entered puberty and one of her characteristics has appeared on her body, namely her breasts are starting to grow, the woman is ordered to wear a cream-colored dress, which according to the author's analysis the beige color matches the skin color of the Egyptian people and is also supported by quotes another is that the cream-colored dress has pleats which make the female character's chest look even more plump.

... The shirt is new but I hate to look at it. There were strange pleats in the front which made my chest look even more plump. (El-Saadawi, 2005: 9).

This shows that her grandmother and mother indirectly taught the female character to attract men's attention by capitalizing on her body beauty. Women don't seem free to make the choices they want, the female character doesn't like the cream-colored dress, but she is still forced to wear it and meet her father's guest even though he tries to refuse.

"I don't want to wear it," I said angrily

Mother saw the hint of protest in my eyes and said half regretfully, "Come on, don't furrow your brows like that." (El-Saadawi, 2005: 9).

From all the narrative excerpts above, it can be inductively known that the family is very shackled in the life of their daughters. The following quote can be used as a symbol that represents this bondage: ... *But for me, it is my mother who rules my life, my future and my body...* (El-Saadawi, 2005: 10).

Furthermore, as is well known to the wider community and it has even become a culture that is still sustainable today, the role of women in the public sphere is very limited, they are filled with the thought that their best role is to take care of their home and family (domestic domain). When a woman gets married, the one who manages her will be transferred to her husband. When she becomes a wife, her husband's space for movement will be limited.

"I am a man."

"I'm in charge."

"To this house, along with all that is in it, including you."

"I don't want you to go out every day," he said again

"I don't want you to go through men's bodies and take off their clothes."

"We don't need the money from your practice anyway," he kept pushing

"You must have time for your husband and household."

"Just close your practice!" (El-Saadawi, 2005: 65)

The husband of a female character acts to limit his wife's role in the public sphere, the reason being that he is a man and has been firmly entrenched in himself that men are stronger than women so he feels that earning a living and protecting his wife is his responsibility. The next reason is that because his wife is a doctor, she will automatically always have to deal with many patients, both men and women, from babies to old people. Because of that, her husband also told her to close the practice because he was afraid he would get less attention from his wife.

Husbands who have patriarchal cultural values instilled in them, they will always feel that they are superior, feel entitled to enslave their wife under the guise of being responsible for protecting her.

This is a weak point that a man likes to highlight in his attempts to dominate a woman: a woman's desire to be protected from other men. Jealousy of men towards women: a man pretends that he is afraid something will happen to his wife, when in fact he is afraid for himself; stated that they wanted to protect women with the intention of possessing them and then limited them by putting up walls around them. (El-Saadawi, 2005: 65).

The woman's husband's actions show that he is actually trying to control his wife covertly behind the excuse that it is the husband who is responsible for providing for and protecting his wife from various kinds of things that have the potential to harm him. The husband of the female character is also afraid of not getting enough attention from his wife. Her husband's actions actually represented that he was actually a weak creature.

"I want to have you."

"Here I rule. I am your husband!"

That feeble look full of desire has now vanished from his eyes and the thread that binds me to him has been severed. An all-encompassing harsh expression appeared in his eyes; but not the look of a strong man, but a weak man who is overcome by an inferiority complex, because he has become accustomed to seeing himself as the strong man on the street and realizing that he is the weak in his own home! (El-Saadawi, 2005: 67-68).

The woman's husband is said to be weak in his own house because when his mother was still around, all his basic needs and desires were always fulfilled by his mother, or in other words, her husband was a spoiled child. So, when his mother passed away, he felt that he had no more to hold on to in life, no more helpers who would always fulfill everything he needed and wanted, and felt inferior that no one served him anymore. Therefore, to fulfill his desire for superiority, he tries to dominate his wife so that she serves him like a king.

Smiling, he told me, "Mommy used to have a strong expression just like you..."

"She's my mother and I love her very much. Whatever He does, is for me..." (El-Saadawi, 2005: 59)

The female character always has her needs fulfilled by her mother, everything she does is for her child. This is what causes the husband of the female character to become dependent on other people to fulfill all his needs and desires.

The value that have been firmly ingrained in the wider community are the assumption that women are the second sex, weaker than men so that being involved in the public sphere is limited to only men, while women are fed the thought that their main task is in the domestic sphere, namely taking care of the house and also serving their family. Women's lives are very limited and filled with rules while men, on the contrary, women often get discrimination, exploitation, are treated arbitrarily and also they do not have the freedom to express opinions and choose everything they want. Supreme power is in the hands of men.

Indeed, man is supported by the whole world, and it is he who holds the scepter of the power of life in his hands. It is the man who owns yesterday, today and

tomorrow. Honor, respect and morality, all belonged to him – it was the award he got after fighting against women. He has spiritual and material power that exists in the world. (El-Saadawi, 2005: 79).

The patriarchal culture that unites men is supported not only by fellow men, but women also support this culture because it has been so firmly entrenched in them that they have made it a standard of living, swallowing these teachings whole. When women have been consumed by patriarchal culture, it is there that men feel victorious because they have succeeded in controlling women.

2. Women's Resistance to Achieve Gender Equality

The shackles experienced by women greatly hinder the progress of their lives. Inequalities experienced based on gender differences are very detrimental in various aspects of life, even though in fact women are very able to match men's abilities, be it social skills, critical thinking, earning a living, and many more. Indeed, in reality, women are not 100% equal to men, there are some natures that are only owned by women but not owned by men, such as pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding, but that is not an absolute thing that should be used to limit movement. their lives, they are also entitled to the same rights to carry out activities outside the domestic sphere. In the works analyzed, there are several resistances presented against gender imbalance as evidence that women can be equal to men. The first resistance was trying to fight against the restraints that shackle women's progress: *For the first time in my life, I once left the flat without asking my mother's permission. ... (El-Saadawi, 2005: 11).*

The female character in the MWD novel is treated differently by her family, one of which is that she is not allowed to leave the house unless she has obtained permission from her parents, while her brothers are free to enter and leave the house even without permission. The female character felt uncomfortable with the different treatment, so she decided to try to leave her house without asking her mother's permission. This shows that women must have the courage to make decisions to get out of bondage which can harm their lives, which keeps them walking in a place without any progress.

Women also have the right to freely express themselves, free to choose to wear clothes in the style they like, free to cut or keep their hair long, free to choose to work for a well-known company or simply focus on taking care of household affairs.

... Thus, I came home with firm steps and stood right in front of my mother with a new haircut.... This act of mine challenging power seemed to have turned me into an unshakeable force, ... (El- Saadawi, 2005: 12).

Female characters are treated differently down to even the smallest things, such as the way her food is regulated by her family and she is forbidden to cut her hair, while her brothers are treated the opposite of her. This condition makes the female character determined to confront the bondage she experiences, namely leaving the house without her mother's permission and violating her mother's rules which forbade her to cut her hair.

Furthermore, the stereotype that has been embedded in people's minds is the indoctrination of women that women's main task is in the domestic, namely dealing with kitchens, wells, and mattresses. In addition, the stereotype that is pinned on women is that women are seen as weaker than men and cannot do jobs that are usually done by men.

... In short, I must be smarter than any man and that I can do every act that my father did, and many more. (El-Saadawi, 2005: 18).

The next struggle undertaken by the female character to free herself from the shackles of patriarchy is by continuing her education to a higher level in order to increase her intelligence and self-quality to prove that she can also be equal to men in doing the jobs they are used to doing.

Education is an important thing and also a powerful weapon that can be used to fight discrimination because the higher the education one takes, the more advanced and critical a person's thinking will be and his actions in addressing a problem will be wiser and more structured. This shows that the more educated a person is, the more qualified he is. The higher the quality of a person, the more people will respect and flatter them; many people will be shy of intelligent and qualified people.

The field of medicine was a terrible thing, commanding respect and even partial adoration from my mother, brother, and father. That's why I decided to become a doctor, ... I wanted to prove to the world that I could overcome the limitations and flaws of the frail body that enveloped me, with all its embarrassing parts inside and out. ... (El-Saadawi, 2005: 19-20).

The female character wishes to continue her education to a higher level, namely to enter the medical faculty. He was determined to become a doctor because he was inspired by his own experience of witnessing many people pleading with respect to doctors to be able to cure illnesses and save the lives of them or their relatives, namely when he witnessed his family doing this when his father was sick.

Apart from being treated differently from men, women are also often looked down upon and belittled.

... Why should I look away when they look at me, why should I lower my head while they lift their faces, stagger when they walk steadily and confidently? I'm the same as them anyway, or maybe better, smarter. So, I straightened myself up. (El-Saadawi, 2005: 20).

The female character is discriminated against by medical students. She is stared at sharply, looked at with astonishment. In the novel, it is not stated with certainty whether the female character is the only female student at the medical faculty or not, but the author analyzes based on the available data that the female character is presented as the only female student at the faculty, so the students look at her in surprise, why can a woman study at the medical faculty, even more broadly, why can a woman go up the level of education at the university? Meanwhile, women are identified with a level of intelligence below men because women are more dominant in using feelings than using logic, and also women are indoctrinated not to need higher education, because their main task is to take care of the household. However, the female character continues to walk firmly and with foresight. She walks confidently. This is a form of resistance against discrimination against women which is often underestimated.

Apart from being taken for granted, women are also often seen as cowardly and lack courage because they often rely on men to help them.

I almost turned around and ran away from that place, but no, I'm not going to do that! ... So, I looked back at the body of the man from earlier, then I examined it calmly, ... (El-Saadawi, 2005: 21).

The female character mustered up the courage to still examine the naked male corpse. She tries to break the societal stigma against women that women are cowardly and always rely on other people, especially men. She wants to show that women also have a brave and independent spirit.

Women are seen as a symbol of weakness and humiliation, while men are seen as a symbol of power and strength.

Why, in fact, did my mother always make such sharp distinctions between my brother and I, describing a man like a god, whom I had to serve in the kitchen all my life? And why did the people around me always try to convince me that being a man is superior and an honor, while being a woman means weakness and something to be ashamed of? ... (El-Saadawi, 2005: 22).

Female characters are always compared to their brothers, their mothers always glorify their sons and the society around these female characters also applies, they exalt men, considering men to be a symbol of strength while women are symbol of weakness.

This thinking has long been formed in the minds of society, distinguishing between men and women under the pretext that men are strong and women are weak which is considered as an absolute natural thing, even though it is only the product of human thought. So, by taking higher education, female characters try to break this stigma.

Women are objects of male power. Men and women are positioned unequally. Women are placed in a subordinate position.

Male body! I remember the fear and toil of the mothers and young women who are busy in hot kitchens cooking food and carrying burdens like this day after day. ... (El-Saadawi, 2005: 23).

As objects of male power, women are free to be treated and ordered to do whatever they order. The female character remembers that she has personally witnessed the suffering of the women around her, both women who are married and have children or those who are not married. Related to the previous narrative quote which states that the female character is determined to continue her education to a higher level, the female character not only wants to fight against the discrimination she has personally experienced, she also wants to save other women who are discriminated against. Apart from that, she also wants to motivate and show that women are very capable of fighting and eradicating all forms of discrimination which are very detrimental to their lives.

Women must show that women also have the potential to develop their brain abilities as well. Women should not only focus on body shape, but also have to be able to develop their brain skills and compete with men.

"Then I'll tell you: because from a very young age a girl is brought up believing that she is just a body, nothing more. So, henceforth his mind is how to take care of his body and he doesn't realize that he also has brain abilities that must be maintained and continuously encouraged in order to develop. (El-Saadawi, 2005: 56).

Women can really compete with men in the realm of logic. So far, women have been discriminated against because women's thoughts are not equal to men's, are irrational, and use feelings more dominantly than logic. In the quote above when the female character is having a dialogue with her husband (in that quote they are not married) and he tells the form of discrimination experienced by women, namely women are discriminated against to believe that they are just a body so women have to take care of their bodies and they are legitimized not to need education tall. However, the woman's act of telling this to her husband is an implied form of effort to make men aware that in fact women are very capable of honing their brain abilities just like men.

Men are legitimized to dominate women so that men feel entitled to treat women however they want.

Because men, who hold control and an important position in life, don't want women to grow up to be anything but beautiful but stupid animals, but who can fulfill their wishes if they so wish. Men don't want women as fellow beings or equal partners; they want them as their subordinates and serve them. (El-Saadawi, 2005: 57).

By saying that to her husband, the female character wants to make men aware that women should be treated as equals to men instead of seeing women as dolls that can be treated as they please. Women also have the same potential as men to have positions in various fields and women; they can also play a role in the public.

Conclusion

The Memoirs of a Woman Doctor novel is a representation of the condition of the Egyptian state which is thick with its patriarchal culture at the time the work was created, namely around the 1950s. This novel was written by its author, Nawal el-Saadawi, as a means of protest and resistance against this culture. The gender inequality shown in this novel is that women are treated differently in their families; women are educated to do domestic work, restrictions on women's freedom, differentiating roles between men and women in the public sphere, and men's efforts to dominate women. The forms of efforts against this culture include the following: (1) Having the courage to oppose the restraints on women that shackles their progress; (2) Trying to get out of domestic activities by taking education to a higher level; (3) Against all forms of discrimination; (4) Improving self-quality; and (5) Growing awareness that men and women have the same role in the public. Many of the events presented in this novel still occur in Egypt in particular and throughout the world in general so that this novel, apart from being an entertainment medium, is also worthy of being a learning medium to make all people aware that women have the same potential to play a role in the social. public as well as men also have the freedom to run their lives but by still paying attention to their natural limits as women.

The results of this study imply that from the past weak stereotypes and limited roles in the public have been labeled for women so that women are shackled and difficult to develop, even conditions like this still continue to occur today in countries with a patriarchal system. This novel educates women to be brave in making decisions to oppose discrimination both in the family realm and in the broader realm. Education is one of the solutions to increase women's critical thinking so that they are able to escape the shackles and restraints of

patriarchal power. Good education is able to lead women to become active subjects and have good bargaining values in society so that their position is not positioned as subordinates.

Patriarchal culture which positions women as the second sex is very interesting to study. Every country with a different social system has its own way of oppressing women from various aspects. For future researchers, it is suggested to conduct research on women's resistance in facing discrimination both in the public and domestic spheres, as well as in a wider scope in order to provide experience and inspire women to continue to unite in opposing the strength of discrimination and shackles in the patriarchy cultural system.

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