

Women's Access to Education: a Patriarchal Culture Creates Gender Equality in Nawal El-Saadawi Woman at Point Zero

Nurul Huda¹, Hidayati², M. Hudri³, Edi⁴, Ilham⁵, Winda Sari⁶

^{1,2,3,4,5,6}Departement of English Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,
Muhammadiyah University of Mataram, Indonesia

nurullhuda29@gmail.com¹, hidayatinail73@gmail.com², hudrimuhammad01@gmail.com³,
edi.dompu.80@gmail.com⁴, ilham.ummataram@gmail.com⁵, sariwinda911@gmail.com⁶

Keywords:

Patriarchal culture;
Gender equality;
SLR.

Abstract: A patriarchal culture is inherent in a society that believes the boy is the most important person who should receive an education. This makes it difficult for women to access education because of the cultural problems of society. The method used in this research is the SLR (Systematic Literature Review) and data collection techniques related to the topic. The results of this study aim to find out how in society, there is an assumption that women do not need to go to school high, they will eventually go to the kitchen, Therefore, this perspective makes allowing men to dominate women in all walks of life.

Kata Kunci:

Budaya patriarki;
Kesetaraan gender;
SLR.

Abstrak: Budaya patriarki melekat dalam masyarakat yang percaya bahwa orang terpenting yang harus menerima pendidikan adalah anak laki-laki. Hal ini menyulitkan perempuan untuk mengakses pendidikan karena masalah budaya masyarakat. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah SLR (Systematic Literature Review) dan teknik pengumpulan data yang berkaitan dengan topik. Hasil penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana dimasyarakat, terdapat anggapan bahwa perempuan tidak perlu bersekolah tinggi, pada akhirnya mereka akan pergi ke dapur. Oleh karena itu, perspektif ini memungkinkan laki-laki mendominasi perempuan disemua lapisan masyarakat.

Article History:

Received : 06-07-2023
Online : 16-08-2023



This is an open access article under the [CC-BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license



A. INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, the term "patriarchy" has been reintroduced to understand the origins and conditions of men's dominance over women. It was coined to represent the father's power as the family's head but has now come to refer to the post-feminist system of male supremacy and female subjugation. In other words, patriarchy is a male-dominated society in which women are oppressed through social, political, and economic systems. Feminist theorists claim that a sex-gender system and a system of economic inequality exist in any historical form of patriarchal society, whether feudal, capitalist, or socialist. As a result, they define it as an inequitable social system that oppresses women (Benoumhani & Yallaoui, 2021). Generally speaking, "patriarchy" is a social system in which men control family members, property and

other economic resources and are the main decision-makers in all family and community affairs. The belief that men are superior to women and women must be under men control, since they are in fact part of men's property, is rooted in this social system (Giti & Yusefi, 2019). Further, patriarchy is frequently used to describe a system in which men exert some power over women with whom they do not have a family relationship. This patriarchy as institutional male dominance is related to the conventional patriarchy of familial authority, but they are distinct and follow separate paths.

Patriarchy is the social system structurally constructed by men. It is the social system where men are the primary authority figure and their decisions are central to social organization. In this system, women are not accorded much recognition; they are seen as suzerains to be owned, either by the father, an uncle, or a husband. Patriarchy has invented women in its own terms as unworthy of social relevance; in this patrimony, women occupy the object position and are denied subjectivity by the males who control them. Patriarchy leads to gender inequality and the subordination of women, to the extent that women cannot even control their own sexuality (Ezenwa-ohaeto, 2018). Patriarchy is a system whereby women are kept subordinate in a number of ways such as discrimination, disregard, insult, control, and superior to women. In society, the power of decision-making and to dominate is given to the males of the society (Al-masuodi & Patil, 2018). Meanwhile, women will become concubines who serve the king, as if they only function as mere lust gratification. This is none other because the culture in society is considered something of value and worth. A culture's existence strongly influences society's behavior and habits. One of the cultures that has historically been attached from hundreds to thousands of years ago, which consciously or unconsciously has always emerged in society, is patriarchal culture (Istifadah & Rohmana, 2022). Many have noted that patriarchal mentalities must be eschewed for values that promote and respect gender parity. A critical aspect of women's right that is hindered by patriarchal orientations and practices is in land right. However, there is an enormous divide between land access for men and women (Chigbu, 2019). This ideology renders women powerless in the patriarchal society and enables men to maintain overwhelming power over women. The educational empowerment affords men the opportunity to dominate women in every ramification of life (EDACHE, Ogwuche Moses, Jude Zeal ADEGOKE, 2021).

One of the inequalities in women's access to education is caused by patriarchal culture that mostly exists in parts of the world including Indonesia. Societies that embrace patriarchy place a role Men are more dominant in everything than women (Sobri et al., 2019). Therefore, gender equality in some areas is still difficult to implement. Overall, the Human Development Index 2022 data in Indonesia shows that there is still a sufficient difference between the development of men and women where the development of men reaches 76.25 out of 100, while women's development only reaches 69.59 (Dzukroni & Isnaini, 2023). Women should be can be autonomous person, able to stand alone and without having dependence on men who are always portrayed as figures who superior and his degree is above women. The state of women is described as such has an impact on women's vulnerability to oppressive measures from stronger entities (Ariani arian & Lamusiah, 2021). In fact, if we look at the position of women, there is a wide range of constraints and obstacles that impede women's progress and limit their ability to hold public office and to participate in socio-economic and political life, or else to occupy leadership positions whether in government, public or even private sectors. The relationship between male and female is socialized to the extent that the former is groomed to be a conqueror while the latter is trained to meet his needs at all levels (Ouarodima, 2019).

Therefore, women should be free from patriarchy the capitalist shackles of society. The various kinds of patriarchal culture contained in the novel *Woman at Point Zero* by Nawal El Saadawi consist of Patriarchal culture creates gender equality in education. Patriarchal culture in this novel is also depicted in the figure of men who control both small and big things and the power position in society.

B. METODE

The method used in this research is SLR or systematic literature review. Systematic literature review is a term used to refer to a specific research or research methodology and development conducted to collect and evaluate related research on a particular focus or topic (Astuti et al., 2021). With this method, the researcher reviews and identifies structured journals and each process follow the steps that have been set. The benefits of research with SLR are able to identify, review, evaluate and interpret all available research with a topic focus on a particular phenomenon of interest (Rusdiana et al., 2022). To collect this research, researcher collected journal articles on the Google Scholar, the articles collected are only articles published in the 2018-2023 period. From various articles, the researcher chooses 50 articles related to the keyword. The next step, the researcher agglomerates related articles that *Women's Access to Education: A Patriarchal Culture create Gender equality in Nawal El-Saadawi Women at Point Zero*. After that, the researcher reviewed and analyzed the article in depth, especially regarding the results of the research presented in the discussion and conclusion section. At the end of the study, the researcher compared the findings presented in the article and gave conclusions.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The concept of Patriarchal Culture

Patriarchy is a concept and practice that varies broadly between countries (and societies within countries) because it comes in different forms, patterns, and shapes. It is defined in different ways in feminist literature. used patriarchy to refer a historical specific male-power over women and younger men to refer to male ideology over women (Chigbu, 2019). Patriarchy is a system in which women are made invisible and less influential. Men with power, direct pressure, or through rituals, traditions, laws, languages, customs, etiquette, education, and division of labor determine roles which should be for women, and where women are subordinate to men (Zuhri & Amalia, 2022). Patriarchy deprives the girl child or women their rights and subjects them to harrowing experiences on account of their sex. In a number of patriarchal societies, the birth of a girl child is not celebrated as that of the boy child (Shafi, 2022). Women are a part of society, and Society is inseparable from its connection to culture. The existence of such a relationship makes the position of women often questioned by the community that is still holding the dominant culture. For example, patriarchal societies tend to view people men as superior and dominate women, while women are positioned as subordinates. Subordination is defined as a condition that is not too important or ignored and not too focused (Sari et al., 2021). Patriarchy positioning the men with many privileges comparing to the women. The impact of patriarchy for instance are the injustice between the men and the woman rights, then the patriarchy is caused the marginalization of the women in any scope of life (Santari, 2020). The Physical violence experienced by Firdaus in the novel *Women at Point Zero* is proven by incidents:

"On one occasion he hit me all over with his shoes. My face and body became swollen and bruised. I tell them that Uncle is a person who honorable, learned in matters of religious teachings. Therefore, it is impossible to have the habit of hitting His wife. He replied, "That it is precisely the people who Understanding religion is what likes to beat his wife. Religious rules allow such punishments. A wise wife is not worth complaining about Her husband. His duty is perfect obedience". (63)

Culture is a pluralistic way of life with its particular paradigm of social, economic, political, feminist and ethnic, etc. representations (Akhter & Hayat, 2021). Patriarchal culture refers to the socio-cultural conditions that provide the view that men come first, and exercise control over woman (Sobri et al., 2019). Women in a patriarchal culture tend to be defeated by male domination. In the perspective of gender studies, women and men are the same figures. They are figures who can fight together in various ways, even in terms of war which is said to be more dominated by men (Ahmadi, 2021). The dichotomous human perspective on women and men begins a patriarchal civilization model. The patriarchal perspective creates a stigma that the strong can oppress the weak. Men who are strong can oppress women who are weak (Dzukroni & Isnaini, 2023). Men often know the lexicon that highlights masculinity, energy, strength, offensiveness, and tendency to use logic; Otherwise female Formed must have a feminine, weak, and defensive appearance (Setiawana, 2020). As a social system, patriarchy enables men to hold primary power, and dominate in every aspect of the society (EDACHE, Ogwuche Moses, Jude Zeal ADEGOKE, 2021). Since women oppression and molestation are perpetrated by both the women and the men in an essentially male-dominated society, it thus becomes very glaring that women's emancipation in this society might be difficult to achieve (Idris et al., 2018). Oppression of women is still a problem in today's society. The fact that we live in a modern world with huge technological advances has not changed the reality that women are discriminated against and oppressed by patriarchal shaped structures. The cultural beliefs traditions, and religions of most societies more attention to patriarchy and thus ensure the continuation of female superiority and oppression. Any attempt by women to protest against men's injustice and discrimination is a challenge to eternal tradition and culture, which is considered sacrilegious. Therefore, he is forced to accept his inferior and second-class status.

2. Realizing gender equality in Education

Gender theory began to develop Since the early 80s in feminist thought both in the field of history, anthropology, philosophy, psychology and natural sciences by making a shift (change) from women-focused investigations in the years 70s; such as investigations on women's history, gynocriticism and women's psychology, to the study of gender relations involving women and men. Change That paradigm had a very radical, transformational influence on several disciplines of women's studies. From this it can be seen that "gender" is a new thing (Zuhri & Amalia, 2022). Right from traditional society to the modern, gender plays an essential role in forging relationships in the Neocolonial society (Shafi, 2022). Gender is the social attributes and capacities assigned to persons on the basis of their sexual characteristics. Gender thinkers adopt a feminist stance and see no difference between genderism and feminism. The gender paradigm centrally addresses the problems of equality and liberty rights. The same can be said to feminism whose ideology basically consists of power, women, rights and equality. Feminism advocates change and generates political movements in form of women's movements in order to gain enough power and influence to effect the changes it advocates (Okpala & Utoh-Ezeajugh, 2018). Gender is seen as a cultural concept used to distinguish roles, behaviors, mentalities and

emotional characteristics between men and women develop in society. In reality society, injustice and gender discrimination continues to occur in various parts of the world, the assumption that men are stronger, smarter, and rational, while women are weaker, less intelligent, and emotional is simply the perception of a gender stereotype (Sari et al., 2021). Gender is shaped by aspects socio-cultural, for example, men as figures the mighty, while the woman as the maternal and meek figures. This condition implicates the use of words that Identifying one of these parties tends to can be observed through the characteristics of the second speech sides. Gender distinction between men and women are based on values and behavior (Setiawana, 2020). Gender discrimination in social life creates differences between men and women. In areas that are still thick with patriarchal culture, women are generally more disadvantaged than men in the fields of health, education and the economy. This happens because the norms that exist in patriarchal culture often harm women by placing them as "second-class society" (Kesuma et al., 2022). That indicates the second class in the novel *Woman at Point Zero*. The evidence experienced by Firdaus the following dialogue:

"With a high school diploma and a suppressed desire for lust, I entered middle grade. My birth was classified as the lower class."

Firdaus whose economic capital and symbolic capital were lower became "lost" in the sense that she was then entrusted to her uncle in the school dormitory until completion. The change of Firdaus's habitus began again when she entered the boarding school and mixed with her dormitory friends (Srikandi, 2018). The novel *Women at Point Zero* describes it:

"I began to love books, because each book taught me a new lesson. I can also know that all those who rule are men. The similarities between them are gluttony and distorted personalities". (39)

The importance of education so that when women are educated, they are able to use books to voice their concerns or to communicate with others: " Books are a weapon, a peaceful weapon perhaps, but they are a weapon" (Ouarodima, 2019). National education is a democratic education that aims to build a democratic society. In society, there is an assumption that women do not need to go to school High up, it will eventually go to the kitchen. Even in families that have finances are limited, so education will be prioritized to boys. Equality of education means providing equal opportunities to everyone to obtain education. Equality of opportunities to obtain education has two aspects, namely the aspect of equality and the aspect of equity (Sobri et al., 2019). Although women have been able to pursue education freely, if they are married, they must be able to divide their roles. This kind of gender bias arises because of the construction of the society itself so that society continues to view a good woman must be good at cooking, taking care of the household, or serving her husband (Kesuma et al., 2022). Education is the key to achieving gender justice in society, including those following a patriarchal culture. Because education is a means of transmitting society's norms, knowledge, and skills. In other words, educational institutions are formal vehicles for socialization and transmission of social values and norms, including gender values and norms. That is why it is necessary to strive for the realization of gender equality rights in educational institutions from the beginning.

D. CONCLUSION

Nawal El Saadawi through her novel *Women at Point Zero* illustrates how women are dominated by men through the figure of Firdaus. This dominance is presented based on gender problems that exist in Egyptian society in the form of the role of women and men. Not a few

practices show the backwardness of women experienced by Firdaus figures. The gender issue raised by Nawal in the novel *Women in Point Zero* indirectly reflects the culture of the local community which shows women as subordinates and cannot act as he pleases. When it comes to patriarchy, *Woman at Point Zero* reveals the social world of what it is like to grow up in a patriarchal society built on hierarchical divisions based on gender, social status and class. Saadawi focuses on the dynamics of unequal power relations and finds that systems of dominance and subordination are both structural and discursively constituted. This is reflected in the way he explores issues of social inequality in both personal and institutional contexts. In the novel *Woman at Point Zero* by Nawal El Saadawi consist of Patriarchal culture and social values almost everywhere in the world dictate that women are not educated. Women often receive discriminatory treatment due to gender inequality. Gender inequality in education, among others, manifests in the form of gaps Obtain consistent opportunities at every type and level of education.

REFERENCES

- Ahmadi, A. (2021). Law , Women , And Literary Studies : Understanding The Thought Of Nawal El-Saadawi In *Woman At Point Zero*. *Department of Indonesian Language and Literature*, 16(1), 1.
- Akhter, S., & Hayat, M. (2021). Socio - Cultural Representation and Politics of Exclusion : A Cultural Critique of Human Rights in Saadawi ' s *Zeina*. *Pakistan Journal of Languages and Translation Studies*, 9(2), 62–75. <http://www.pjlts.uog.edu.pk/>
- Al-masuodi, M. A. A., & Patil, G. M. (2018). Research Article The Study Of Arabic Female ' S Subjugation Under Patriarchal System By Nawal El-Saadawi : *Woman At Point Zero* Research Journal of English Language and Literature (RJELAL). *Research Journal of English Language and Literature (RJELAL)*, 6(3), 329–335. <http://www.rjelal.com/6.3.18/329-335 MOHAMMED ABDULLAH.pdf>
- Ariani arian, & Lamusiah, S. (2021). Kajian Feminis Dalam Novel Dwilogi Padang Bulan Dan Cinta Di Dalam Gelas Karya Andrea Hirata. *Kajian Feminis Dalam Novel Dwilogi Padang Bulan Dan Cinta Di Dalam Gelas Karya Andrea Hirata*, 2, 1–32. [file:///C:/Users/Asus/Downloads/COVER-BAB III \(2\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Asus/Downloads/COVER-BAB III (2).pdf)
- Benoumhani, C., & Yallaoui, A. (2021). Empowering Women In Nawal Saadawi ' S *Woman At Point Zero* (1975) Empowering Women in Nawal Saadawi ' s *Woman at Point Zero* (1975). *Literature & Civilization*, 7. <http://dspace.univ-msila.dz:8080/xmlui/handle/123456789/26366>
- Chigbu, U. E. (2019). Masculinity, men and patriarchal issues aside: How do women's actions impede women's access to land? Matters arising from a peri-rural community in Nigeria. *Land Use Policy*, 81(July 2018), 39–48. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2018.10.033>
- Dzukroni, A. A., & Isnaini, S. N. (2023). *Harmonizing Religious Discourse And Power In The*. 22(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.14421/musawa.2023.221.1-13>
- EDACHE, Ogwuche Moses, Jude Zeal ADEGOKE, and A. B. U. H. D. (2021). *Nexus between Patriarchal Oppression of Women and Freudian Psychosis in Nawal El-Saadawi's Woman at Point Zero*. 2(2), 102–116. <file:///D:/Journal interval 2018-2023/11 Nexus between Patriarchal.pdf>
- Ezenwa-ohaeto, N. (2018). *Exploitation and Girl-Child Abuse versus African Humanity Claims : A Study of Darko ' s Faceless and El Saadawi ' s Woman at Point Zero*. 6(2), 28–43. <file:///D:/Journal interval 2018-2023/7 Exploitation and Girl-Child.pdf>
- Giti, S., & Yusefi, F. (2019). *The feminist ideas of Nawal El Saadawi in light of the intellectual foundations of existentialism and socialism*. 9(1), 94–106.
- Idris, A. A., Talif, R., Termizi, A. A., & Juar, H. K. (2018). Depiction of Women as the Primary Architects of their own Oppression : A Masculinist Critique of El Saadawi ' s *Woman at Point Zero*. *Article History*, 7(4), 206–212.

- <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.7n.4p.206>
- Istifadah, I., & Rohmana, W. I. M. (2022). Patriarchal Hegemony in the Novel "Women at Point Zero" by Nawal El Saadawi. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Linguistics*, 7(2), 383. <https://doi.org/10.21462/jeltl.v7i2.838>
- Kesuma, A. S., Risdiana, A., & Ramadhan, R. B. (2022). Patriarchal Culture: A Study of the Lampung Muslim Women's Movements in Women Empowerment. *International Journal of Special Education*, 37(3), 1.
- Okpala, E. P., & Utoh-Ezeajugh, T. C. (2018). *Inter and Intra- Gender Discourse in African Prose: An Interrogation of the Female Image in Selected Literary Texts*. 19(2), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.4314/ujah.v19i2.1>
- Ouarodima, M. (2019). The Cost Of Being A Woman : An Analysis Of Nawal El Saadawi ' S. *International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature*, 7(4), 129–140.
- Santari, R. D. (2020). The Portrayal Of Firdaus Dilemma In Nawal El-Saadawi's Woman At Point Zero: A Care-Focused Feminism Analysis. *Thesis*, 2. <https://digilib.uin-suka.ac.id/id/eprint/39496/>
- Sari, C. I., Wardiah, D., & Fitriani, Y. (2021). Isu Gender dalam Novel Perempuan di Titik Nol Karya Nawal El- Saadawi Dan Novel Gadis Pantai Karya Pramoedya Ananta Toer. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 5(3), 1850–1856. <https://www.jptam.org/index.php/jptam/article/view/2717>
- Setiawana, I. (2020). *Gender Lexicon of Sasak Language: An Analysis of Semantic Componential*. 16, 143–155.
- Shafi, U. (2022). Matrices of Violence : A Post-structural Feminist Rendering of Nawal El Saadawi ' s Woman at Point Zero and Lola Soneyin ' s The Secrets of Baba Segi ' s Wives. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 7(4), 289–294. <https://doi.org/10.22161/ijels>
- Sobri, M., Sutisna, D., Syazali, M., & Widodo, A. (2019). AL-MAIYYAH Media Transformasi Gender dalam Paradigma Sosial Keagamaan Budaya Patriarki dan Akses Perempuan dalam Pendidikan. *AL-MAIYYAH: Media Transformasi Gender Dalam Paradigma Sosial Keagamaan*, 12(2), 16–26.
- Srikandi, C. N. (2018). Women's Resistance toward Discrimination in Egypt in The Novel Women at Point Zero using Bourdieu Perspective. *Globish (An English-Indonesian Journal for English, Education and Culture*, 6(1), 12–24. <file:///D:/Journal interval 2018-2023/2 Women's Resistance.pdf>
- Zuhri, S., & Amalia, D. (2022). Ketidakadilan Gender dan Budaya Patriarki di Kehidupan Masyarakat Indonesia. *Murabbi : Jurnal Ilmiah Dalam Bidang Pendidikan*, 5(1), 17–41. <https://ejournal.stitalhikmah-tt.ac.id/index.php/murabbi/article/download/100/99>