

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL

FRAMEWORKS

2.1 Review of Related Theories

To conduct an analysis, theories are needed to support and answer the research questions. In this research, Radical Feminist theory will be used as the core theory. At the same time, Contemporary Feminism and Feminist Literary Criticism brief explanations will be given to get a better understanding of the radical feminism approach.

2.1.1 Contemporary Feminism

Feminism is a political, cultural, and economic movement that grants women equal rights and legal protection. It is a reaction against patriarchy and sexist culture that was designed solely to benefit males in society. Feminism refers to political and social ideas and philosophies that discuss the issue of gender differences, as well as the movement that supports gender equality and women's rights.

The persistence of conventional sex roles is one reason why feminism exists. The norm that males are intellectual, powerful, protective, and decisive while women are emotionally or sarcastically irrational, weakly, nurturing, and obedient is established by traditional sexist roles (Tyson, 2006). Women are the property of males; a single woman is the property of her father and married

women are the property of their husbands. Women have no power as legitimate constitutions are dominated by powerful men; therefore, women are often put in a weaker or vulnerable position. Therefore, feminism remains to promote and assist women in all social, political, economic, and psychological sectors through their voices.

Feminism's primary objective is to center women; the experiences, sexuality, job, and family demands that they face necessarily pose challenges to conventional roles they have to fill in society. The three main conceptions of feminism according to Humm (1995) are that gender is a social construction that oppresses women more than men, patriarchy affects this construction, and women's experienced knowledge serves as the foundation for a society free from sexism in the future. These insights give rise to two goals for feminism: opposing the patriarchy and critiquing it. Feminism lacks a purpose if it does not work to change the system that was designed exclusively to favor males.

Discussions about feminism cover a variety of subjects. The first three are reproduction, representation, and the sexual division of labor. Second, feminism is a political movement that may be found in the majority of nations and is a very multidisciplinary stream of thought. Third, feminism has developed a new vocabulary and ideas such as 'sexism' and 'sexual harassment' to address gaps in existing knowledge as well as the societal discriminations described by these terms. The fourth is the sharing of women's subjective and objective experiences in the formation of knowledge.

A lot of times, political issues arise from personal ones as a way of bringing people's awareness to them (Humm, 1995).

These subjects provide feminism a special interest in the cultural construction of gender, particularly those found in literature. Literature's cultural practices are prevalent in schools, higher education, and the media. The social notion that men and women are not valued equally is influenced by literary representations of gender differences. Women frequently become feminists through being aware of and challenging the power of women's symbolic misinterpretations.

2.1.2 Feminist Literary Criticism

The first modern work of feminist criticism was found in Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929). It addresses the serious issue of female differences in social, literary, and cultural aspects. Woolf demonstrated that interpreting literature using feminist lenses requires a twofold viewpoint. Because women's social realities (along with men's) are influenced by gender, she demonstrated how the portrayal of the female experience in literature is gendered. She also demonstrated how, even when women are not shown with their traditional characteristics, women's representation in literature has the potential to upset the patriarchal language or symbolism (Humm, 1994: 2).

During the 60s and 70s, women did more feminist criticism through broad lenses; cultural, social, political, and psychological. The second wave was the forerunner of literary feminist critique. *The Second Sex* (1949) by

Simone de Beauvoir, is a famous work analyzes the patriarchal social construction of femininity and the oppression of women. She believed that society sets up males as “positive” while setting up women as “negative,” “second sex,” or “Other.” De Beauvoir employs literary analysis to support her critique of the feminine myth that pervades society as a whole and to demonstrate her philosophical viewpoint. De Beauvoir argued that male authors share a strong conservatism toward women and how this viewpoint on women really teaches women more about themselves (p. 36-39).

The focus of *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan (1963), which is regarded as a classic of American second-wave feminism, is similar to that of de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*: how women accept the patriarchal cultural stereotype of femininity. The “mystique” refers to women’s problems; the emotional discomfort experienced by women who were engrossed in household affairs and had no careers outside of them. The book explores the inner suffering of many white middle-class American women who were unpaid housewives and consumers in the late 1950s. The book appeals to readers with its straightforward treatment of women’s history, condensed explanation of Freud, and descriptions of well-known instances of gender-based discrimination in society and education. Her fundamental tenet is that people have the right to make their own decisions about their lives and occupations and that their social histories have been progressive and evolutionary (p. 39-40).

The Female Eunuch (1971) by Germaine Greer explores historical preconceptions of women who exhibit traits like “castrate – timidity, delicacy and perverted sexuality.” She stated that literature offers crystal-clear examples of social roles and that all notable male writers, including Shakespeare, are overtly sexual in their writing. Instead than connecting feminism with race, class, or sexual preferences, Greer talked about how women are defined using modern cultural definitions of femininity. Due to its deradicalizing descriptions, Greer’s work in *The Female Eunuch* caused a number of challenges for feminist critique, but because of how significant her contribution is, it is still paving the way for feminist criticism. According to Greer, sexual liberation—whose first step will be individual revolt—will liberate women from the damaging mental reliance that the patriarchy breeds in them. She further advised that women should “promiscuously” alter this mistaken perception of femininity (Humm, 1994: 43-44).

Kate Millet in her *Sexual Politics* (1970) attacks the patriarchy through literary criticism by judging the author’s text and its relation to the author’s sexual history. According to Millet, patriarchal dominance is pervasive. There is a deeply ingrained politics of sexuality that permeates all cultural systems, starting with the psychological training of the family that perpetuates patriarchy. The contemporary feminist critique was made possible by Millet’s examination of the ways in which sexist beliefs function in literature. In *Sexual Politics*, where Millet analyzes gender inequalities in historical and present discourse, feminist literary criticism plays a vital role. There are three

main criticisms leveled against male authors according to Millet (1970): first, they misrepresent both male and female characters; second, they misrepresent sexuality by equating sexual defiance with “femininity”; and third, the narrative structures of fiction are said to mirror those of masculine society. The political advantage males enjoy over women amounts to a more basic political class distinction. She offers several examples from anthropology, psychology, sociology, education, and biology (p. 44-45).

The feminine preconceptions of how women are gendered and portrayed by virtue of their passivity are challenged by Mary Ellmann in her work, *Thinking About Women* (1968). Phyllis Chesler’s *Women and Madness* (1971) shows how psychotherapy and the practice of attributing feminine characteristics to mental diseases and labeling as hysterical women who defy dominant ideology are examples of gender stereotyping in psychology. In the essay *When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-vision* (1971), Adrienne Rich also outlined the purpose of feminist critique, arguing that it should dismantle the sexist structure of knowledge by revealing how it is constructed politically in the media, academy, and everyday life (Humm, 1994: 9).

Because of their innovative approach to feminism that pushes the limits of literary texts, these feminist literary criticisms are setting the bar for literary analysis. They address the fixed idea of patriarchy in literature, the language used for women in literature, and the deeply ingrained gender-based societal system it designated for women depicted in literary texts.

2.1.3 Radical Feminism Theory

The phrase *radical feminism* was used in the American women's movement of the latter 1960s to describe diverse feminist ideas that emphasize on the fundamental importance of oppression against women (Jaggar & Rothenberg, 1984). Radical feminist theory is women-centeredness; the theory of it is created *by* women and *for* women. While many feminist ideologies distanced themselves from radical feminism and shifted to simple libertarianism, emphasizing individual responsibility rather than a collective responsibility, or socialism with its pre-built framework to attack, they forgot that the primary cause of the fire is patriarchy—the men themselves (Rowland & Klein, 1996).

Radical feminism exposes the oppressive framework of male dominance known as patriarchy, which is used to control women in all aspects of their life, both public and private (p. 11). Through writing about women's life and the political system, radical feminists highlight patriarchy as the center of oppression by women; the core of a social gender construction is male power. Radical feminists declared that the system of patriarchy cannot, but must be dismantled. Radical feminists believe that women as a group have interests that are fundamentally opposed to those of males; these interests connect them in a collective sisterhood that transcends class or ethnicity, and that women should work together to achieve their own freedom. This implies that conventional ideas of power and politics are questioned and expanded to such "personal" aspects of life as the family and sexuality, both of which are

regarded as tools of patriarchal oppression (Bryson, 1992). Radical feminist groups have devoted considerable theoretical attention to the problem of the body, particularly male control over sexuality and reproduction of women, and the use of rape and violence by men to violate the body of women.

Millet (2016 ed.) explained the socialization of male and female are obtained through the consent of patriarchal culture when it comes to temperament, role, and status. Through male supremacy, males obtained the term superior since they are the privileged sex, while females as inferior. Patriarchal culture also created the stereotypical traditional gender roles of male and female. The temperament of a male is categorized as “masculine” and they are put in the dominant group. They possess personalities such as aggression, intelligence, force, and efficacy. While females are categorized as “feminine” and they are put in the submissive category which possesses personalities such as ignorance, docility, virtue, and ineffectuality (p. 26).

In *Sexual Politics*, Millet also outlined how patriarchal cultures encourage males to use violence since they are the only ones who are psychologically and physically capable of doing so. Patriarchal power also rests on a type of violence that is primarily sexual in nature and is most fully manifested in the act of rape. Rape is a sexually violent act that perfectly embodies the aggressive, hateful, contemptuous, and desire to harm or violate a person’s personality feelings (p. 44).

The radical feminism perspective claimed that feminism is not a theory of state but the theory of power. Considering patriarchy capitalizes on men

and male dominance is the center of patriarchy, Dworkin (1979) mentioned and explained the seven tenets of the male supremacy ideology that defines the power (p. 13-22):

1. Power is men entitled to have everything and women need to be lacking at it. If a man wants, a man takes it because when it comes to him, everything is given from birth. What a man owns is always too small and however small this woman has, it is always too big.
2. Power is physical strength that is used against and over powerless people. The male supremacy system dictated that men are stronger than women and men kept women physically weak in a patriarchal culture, men have the right to use physical strength because it is given to them.
3. Power is the capability to terrorize (harassment, violence, assault) and use any form of tool to terrorize (gun, knife, fist, and even penis) to force women into submission and conformity.
4. Men have the power of naming, which is one of the greatest powers. Language is one of the powers of force to make women submit by calling them names (bitch, slut, whore) when they are “behaving themselves”.
5. Men possess the ability to own. The ability to designate oneself as the one who takes gives rise to the power of ownership. Once a man gets it after taking and keeping it, it is his. The female is technically the male's possession.
6. Money is distinctly male power and it speaks a male voice. When men own money it signifies their worth and accomplishments while when it

comes to women they are greedy, unwomanly, and foul. In the sex trade industry, money exchange is used as a power of male dominance to bind women to prove the power differences. Poverty is a way to punish women for being born as women so they can depend on money from men.

7. Men have the power of sex. Sexual power is originated in the penis. When men claim that women have sexual power that can cause them to erect so they act (rape). They did it because it was natural and it is a masculine power of taking. Because of that, it stopped them from being responsible and taking the consequences of their own actions.

2.2 Previous Studies

For this research to be conducted, there must be previous studies that are related to this research. Thesya Widya & Asnani (2020) wrote for *Journal of Language* titled *RADICAL FEMINISM IN EKA KURNIAWAN'S NOVEL BEAUTY IS A WOUND*. They analyze the life of a prostitute during the Japanese colonial era who worked in a whorehouse under a female pimp. While the female pimp gave her shelter, she doesn't give any protection from the harm that comes to her. The result shows that women who work as a prostitute in the colonial era are oppressed as they experience oppression, suffering, and injustice.

Anis Miftakhul Ulfa (2017) wrote for her Airlangga University Bachelor's thesis titled *Women Exploitation as Seen in McCormick's Novel Sold*. She analyzes Lakshmi's fight against double oppression—she faced both patriarchal system and exploitation under the capitalist system in the brothel—by using

Evelyn Reed's Marxist-feminist theory. Marxist feminism is used to show how procurers employ prostitutes as slaves in the capitalist economy. This study showed that Lakshmi was able to fight against both forms of oppression through her battle and was persistent in her pursuit of freedom from the capitalist system by uniting with both men and women to topple it.

Yeremia (2017) for her Diponegoro University Bachelor's thesis titled *RADICAL-LIBERTARIAN FEMINISM OF THE MAIN CHARACTER IN KATE CHOPIN'S THE AWAKENING*. Yeremia analyzed the main character's actions that represent the radical-libertarian feminism ideology. The writer used Bressler and Djajanegara's feminist approach and Rosemary Thong's theory to analyze her research. The results showed that there is a tendency for feminist radical-libertarian in the main character.

From all three previous studies, there are differences with this study. The first study talks about prostitution in the colonial era, the second relies on the Marxist-feminist approach, and the third previous study third relays on the radical-libertarian approach and discussed heavily on the main character. While the first and the second studies' similarities with this study lay in the topic of the discussion there is still a slight difference. The first and second topics lay in the sex work industry of prostitution, meanwhile, this study discusses about stripping. Compared to the three, this study analyzes the struggle of a stripper that works in a society that favors, values, and glorifies men that make women prisoner by using radical feminism theory. Seeing the male dominance in their field of work,

they can easily be exposed to exploitation that includes physical, psychological and sexual violence.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

As it is discussed above, the use of theory for this research is necessary for the analysis to be conducted. Referring to the research questions and objectives of the research, the aim of this study is to analyze the male supremacy in the novel *My Bare Lady*. Radical feminism theory will analyze the domination of male and female exploitation in that occurs in the story. While the use of the contemporary feminist theory approach is to help analyze the sociological event in the novel and feminist literary criticism for the text of the novel.

