

FEMINISM ANALYSIS IN AUSTEN’S NOVEL
“PRIDE AND PREJUDICE”
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Abstrak

Jurnal berjudul Feminism Analysis in Austen’s Novel “Pride and Prejudice” bertujuan untuk menemukan isu-isu feminisme di dalam novel dan menganalisa efek-efek dari feminisme yang dialami oleh pemeran utama. Analisa menggunakan metode kualitatif dan Teori Feminis Modern dari Langermann dan Brantley (di dalam buku Ritzer dan Goodmann,2004) diterapkan pada studi ini. Hasil dari studi ini adalah penemuan-penemuan dari isu –isu feminisme karena adanya ketimpangan gender yang bisa dilihat dari sistem hak waris yang terbatas pada pewaris laki-laki dan isu sedikitnya peluang wanita untuk mengaktualisasikan diri. Dari aksi-aksi yang dilakukan pemeran utama dalam menghadapi ketimpangan gender, pemeran utama telah berhasil menyerukan Feminisme Liberal yang mendukung kesetaraan Gender.

Kata Kunci : Feminisme, Isu, Efek

1. Background of the Study

Many writers use novel to share their ideas on something. An English novelist, Austen shares her ideas about feminism in her novel entitled *Pride and Prejudice* which is first published in 1813. The story highlights the problems of treatment toward women in the era. According to Langermann and Brantley (in Ritzer and Goodman, 2004) women are treated differently in society; they experience gender difference, gender inequality, gender oppression, and structural oppression. Because of the problems, feminist brought her idea about feminism. In addition, Sandbach in an article entitled “*Society Versus the Individual: Feminism at Work in Pride and Prejudice*” (2008) says that Elizabeth, the main character of *Pride and Prejudice* is a perfect example of a feminist character.

2. Problems of the Study

Based on the background above, the problems raised related to this topic are:

1. What issues of feminism arise in the novel of *Pride and Prejudice*?

2. What effects of feminism are experienced by the main character of *Pride and Prejudice*?

3. Aims of the Study

The aims of the study are classified into two parts:

1. To find out the issues of feminism arise in the novel of *Pride and Prejudice*.
2. To analyze the effects of feminism experienced by the main character of *Pride and Prejudice*.

4. Research Method

Research method consists of data source, method and technique of collecting data, and method and technique of analyzing data. Data source were taken from statements and conversations found in the novel entitled “Pride and Prejudice” by Austen which published in 1813. The data were collected by close reading and note taking and were analyzed qualitatively by applying Modern Feminist Theory by Langermann and Brantley (in Ritzer and Goodmann, 2004), the book entitled “Teori Sosiologi Modern”.

5. Feminism Analysis in Austen’s Novel “*Pride and Prejudice*”

According to Langermann and Brantley (in Ritzer and Goodman, 2004) men and women are situated in the society not only differently but also unequally. Specifically, women get less of material resources, social status, power and opportunities for self-actualization than men share their social location based on their class, race, occupation, ethnicity, religion, education, nationality, or other any socially significant factors.

Langermann and Brantley state that Liberal Feminism is the response of gender inequality as Liberal Feminism claims gender equality. This claim has the relationship with the Declaration of Independence which states that all men and women are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable right. Those among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of

happiness. The appeal from Liberal Feminism is the values of individualism, choice, freedom, and equality of opportunity.

a) **Issues of feminism arise in the novel of *Pride and Prejudice*.**

Statement (1)

Mrs. Bennet : Oh! My dear, I cannot bear to hear that mentioned. Pray do not talk of that odious man. **I do think it is the hardest thing in the world that your estate should be entailed away from your own children;** and I am sure if I had been you, I should have tried long ago to do something or other about it. (Austen, 1984: 83)

Analysis:

According to Langermann and Brantley (in Ritzer and Goodmann, 2004) men and women are situated in the society not only differently but also unequally. The unequal treatment in the novel of *Pride and Prejudice* can be seen in the system of entailment. The main character faces the system of entailment, It can be supported by the statement of Mrs. Bennet **“I do think it is the hardest thing in the world that your estate should be entailed away from your own children”** this rule of society forces the main character to marry her cousin to keep her estate and secure her family in economic problem as her parents do not have a son. In addition, according to Langermann and Brantley (in Ritzer and Goodmann, 2004) women get less of material resources. By the system of entailment, it can be seen that woman is dependent on the property owned by her husband. However, Elizabeth refuses the proposal of her cousin, as she does not want to marry him for material interests.

Statement (2)

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of wife.

However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighbourhood, **this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered as the rightful property of someone or other of their daughters.** (Austen, 1984:1)

Analysis:

Langermann and Brantley (in Ritzer and Goodman, 2004) state that women get less of power and opportunities for self-actualization; it can be seen in the

system of matchmaking. In the era, family has an important role to find men with large fortune to make their daughter well married. The statement **“this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered as the rightful property of someone or other of their daughters”** reflects the thought of parents to marry their daughters and expect them well married. The statement **“It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of wife”** claims a rich man needs a wife and a woman will be the object of family to marry a rich man to secure the family’s economy as a woman can get material comforts only through her husband’s property; therefore, woman cannot freely choose her spouse and is always dependent on family choice.

b) **Effects of feminism experienced by the main character of *Pride and Prejudice*.**

Statement (3)

Elizabeth :Indeed, Mr. Collins, all praise of me will be unnecessary. **You must give me leave to judge for myself, and pay me the compliment of believing what I say. I wish you very happy and very rich, and by refusing your hand, do all in my power to prevent your being otherwise. In making me the offer, you must have satisfied the delicacy of your feelings with regard to my family, and may take possession of Longbourn estate whenever it falls, without any self-reproach.** This matter may be considered, therefore, as finally settled. (Austen, 1984: 147)

Analysis:

According to Langermann and Brantley (in Ritzer and Goodman, 2004) Liberal Feminism claims gender equality. The appeal from Liberal Feminism is the values of individualism, choice, freedom, and equality of opportunity. The main character claims individualism by saying **“You must give me leave to judge for myself, and pay me the compliment of believing what I say. I wish you very happy and very rich, and by refusing your hand, do all in my power to prevent your being otherwise. In making me the offer, you must have satisfied the delicacy of your feelings with regard to my family, and may take**

possession of Longbourn estate whenever it falls, without any self-reproach” as it expresses that she has right to choose and make her own decision. She prefers to give her Longbourn estate and refuses the help from Mr. Collins as she does not want to sacrifice her own happiness to marry a man she does not love because of the system of entailment. By this way she also claims the equality of man and woman in freedom of choosing their mate to pursuit happiness and at least by this way she has an attempt to avoid the system and keep her decision with her but by the feminism she does, she also experiences quarrel with her mother as she is very disappointed with her refusal to Mr. Collins. It expressed in her statement **“I should never speak to you again, and you will find me as good as my word. I have no pleasure in talking to undutiful children”**. (Austen, 1984:154-155)

Statement (4)

Elizabeth : I do assure you sir, that I have no pretension whatever to that kind of elegance which consists in tormenting a respectable man. **I would rather be paid the compliment of being believed sincere.** I thank you again and again for the honour you have done me in your proposal, but to accept them is absolutely impossible. **My feelings in every respect forbid it.** Can I speak plainer? **Do not consider me now as an elegant female intending to plague you, but a rational creature speaking the truth from her heart.** (Austen, 1984:148)

Analysis:

According to Langermann and Brantley (in Ritzer and Goodmann, 2004) Liberal Feminism claims gender equality. The appeal of Liberal Feminism is the values of individualism, choice, freedom, and equality of opportunity. In addition, Mill in International Journal titled *John Stuart Mill and Individual Liberty* (2009) stated that an atmosphere of a freedom was necessary to assure all people opportunity to develop their individuality and women have the same right as men to develop their individuality. The main character said **“I would rather be paid the compliment of being believed sincere”** to express her freedom in expressing her individuality as she has spoken honestly about her feelings. By saying **“My**

feelings in every respect forbid it” she strengthens her individualism developed as she bravely shows her refusal to a man she does not love and the statement **“Do not consider me now as an elegant female intending to plague you, but a rational creature speaking the truth from her heart”** definitely expresses her freedom in expressing herself as woman who has moral and right to speak and do what she has to do to develop herself as a human being.

6. Conclusion

The issues of feminism in the novel were because of gender inequality that could be seen in the system of entailment and the lack of opportunity of self-actualization. The system of entailment in *Pride and Prejudice* was the future restriction of ownership of family estate to particular descendants. It was limited to male heirs. As Mr. Bennet does not have a son, his estate was entailed to Mr. Collins. Woman acquires less of opportunity for doing self actualization as a woman faced the issue of matchmaking to secure family’s economy; therefore, woman cannot freely choose her spouse and is always dependent on family choice.

The main character could face the issues of feminism and she experienced the effects of feminism in which she had successfully conveyed liberal feminism which supported the right of women in value of individualism, choice, freedom, and equality in opportunity. The effect of feminism in system of entailment was the claim of individualism in expressing the right to choose and determine her own life though she experienced quarrel with her mother. The effect of feminism in self-actualization was the claim of individualism as she can develop her individuality by speaking frankly about her feelings and she also expresses her freedom in expressing herself as woman who has moral and right to speak and do what she has to do to develop herself as a human being.

7. Bibliography

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