



# Gender Stereotype Reflected in N.H. Dini

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## ABSTRACT

This article aims to present women who often receive gender Stereotypes in literature. Women are often seen as a minority and only as second-class human beings. It is not surprising that women often receive gender Stereotype that undermines their existence. Through three short stories literary works by N.H. Dini entitled *Pendurhaka*, *Perempuan Warung*, and *Keberuntungan*, the various gender Stereotypes of women are narrated. This research uses content analysis, qualitative and library research as the method. Gender and feminism studies are the analytical tools in this research. As a result, these three short stories critique the existence of women in the Javanese patriarchal culture, which often experiences discrimination. The female characters in the three short stories suffer from the preservation of culture so that they always have to obey, often receive gender Stereotypes, and are considered to be human beings who have deficiencies because they are not married. To sum up, the female characters in the three short stories have tragic fates without being able to fight back.

**Keywords:** Content analysis, gender stereotype, literature, representation, short stories

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Literary works are a reflection of phenomena and events that occur in society. Because of the writer's expertise, various events that depict human life are framed in literary works such as short stories and novels. The stories featured are diverse, from the lives of teenagers written in Teenlit and Chiklit (Agustina, H.N., 2017) to short stories and novels. These works of fiction are often based on true stories experienced by people around the author.

Some female writers raise issues about women concerning the stereotypes experienced by women that deserve appreciation. One of these Indonesian writers is Nurhayati Sri Hardini Siti Nukatin, better known as N.H. Dini. She actively advocates for gender equality. Her works voice much social criticism, including women's resistance to patriarchal traditions in almost all societal aspects. This research examines her short stories: *Pendurhaka*, *Perempuan Warung*, and *Keberuntungan*.

N.H. Dini stated that the short story sources were obtained from observations around her, such as people who lived in her mother's rented house, school children, and employees who lived in her mother's house and the area where she lived. Her mother is a widow without a fixed income. Therefore, her mother used the five rooms in the house as a source of income to support and send

N.H. Dini and her siblings to school (2003: viii). The short story *Keberuntungan*, published in *Femina* magazine, also reveals some events: a successful water spinach merchant. N.H. Dini wrote many short stories. Many events around inspired her. All of these events became a source for Dini in writing her stories. Moreover, it is unsurprising that the theme raised is very close to the problems or conflicts experienced by people in Indonesia.

Apart from the issue of gender stereotypes, other things are said to have the potential to bring significant conflict, namely the issue of class and adherence to Javanese traditions, which N.H. Dini explores on the three short stories she wrote. These two issues often become one of the causes of gender stereotypes among Indonesian women.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The previous research on *Dua Dunia's* short story collection has yet to be carried out much. Ramadhani et al. (2023) discusses the main character's inner conflict in the short story. It shows a gap for researchers to examine the short stories from another perspective, namely the gender stereotypes experienced by the three female characters in the three short stories. The three short stories were chosen because the gender stereotypes experienced by the three main female characters in the

text represent gender stereotypes that often exist in Indonesian society. Women often experience gender stereotypes, which result in injustice, becoming second-class citizens, and not having equal opportunities with men.

The problem of gender stereotypes has been studied by Ahtisyah et al. (2022) in the short story collection *Perempuan Penakluk Ombak* by the Rafflesia Writer Community. The findings of this research are that there are 64 data consisting of 36 forms of feminism as an inspiring side image, 24 forms of stereotypes as a negative side that cannot be used as role models, and 61 data messages contained in the story.

Next, Fardischa (2021) examines four short stories, namely *Perempuan* by Fitri Astuti Lestari, *Logika Falus* by Tommy F. Awuy, *Api Sita* by Oka Rusmini, and *Clara* by Seno Gumira Ajidarma. Each of these short stories reveals gender stereotypes experienced by women. First, limiting women's roles is an issue raised in the short story *Perempuan*. Second, ethnic discrimination against Chinese women during the riots during the 1998 Reformation is an issue raised in Clara's short story. Third, ethnic Balinese women who have a subordinate position, have limited space for movement, and are subject to men and colonialists are issues raised in the short story *Api Sita*. Finally, the short story *Logika Falus* tells the views of two men who do not know each other about women, whose position in many ways is always below men.

Intan (2020) examines the novel *Malik & Elsa* by Boy Candra. The research results explain that there are several stereotypes about good men and good women in the novel. All gender stereotypes conveyed through the perspectives of male and female characters reveal that the only thing agreed upon is the idea that men have to fight to get women.

Natha (2017) studied the stereotypical representation of women and patriarchal culture in Megan Trainor's video clip All About That Bass using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis method. The study results concluded that the video clip further confirmed the stereotype of women wearing skirts and the pink color, which is identified with women, and the patriarchal culture, which assumes that women are men's sex objects and must serve men.

Agustina (2020) examines female characters in the film *Imperfect: Karier, Cinta & Timbangan* by Ernest Prakarsa. This research uses discourse analysis to reveal how women fight various kinds of stigma and stereotypes through language and dialogue in films. The position of women in this film is always the victim of the stigma and stereotypes of ideal women in society. Ismiati (2018) stated that a stereotype has shackled women's feelings, thoughts, and perspectives towards themselves, which affects low self-esteem.

### 3. METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach. Denzin and Lincoln state that qualitative research is research that uses natural settings to interpret phenomena that occur and is carried out by involving various existing methods (Moeleong, 2017: 5). Qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects holistically through descriptions in the form of words and language in a particular, natural context and utilizing various existing methods.

The method used is the content analysis method. Content analysis is a scientific method for studying and drawing conclusions about a phenomenon using documents (text) (Bungin, 2007, p. 163). The data sources in this research are three short stories in the short story collection *Dua Dunia* written by N.H. Dini was published by PT Gramedia Widiasarana Indonesia in 2002. The object studied in this research is the study of gender and stereotypes contained in three texts. The data collected is in the form of quotations from three texts.

According to Baron, Branscombe, and Byrne (2008: 188), stereotypes are beliefs about the nature or characteristics of a trusted social group. In other words, a stereotype is a way of looking at a social group where this point of view is used to influence someone in presenting something. The Council of Europe wrote in an article entitled Combating Gender Stereotypes and Sexism that gender stereotyping presents a severe obstacle to achieving absolute gender equality and feeds into gender discrimination. Gender stereotypes are preconceived ideas where males and females are arbitrarily assigned characteristics and roles determined and limited by their sex (2014). Mahendra (2017:107) explains gender stereotypes as society's beliefs about the conception of men and women. It shows that the ideal man is masculine, and the ideal woman is feminine. Connell (2002: 54) states that masculinity cannot be formed without femininity. According to Hall (1997), Representation connects meaning and language to culture. Representation is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of culture. Through representation, meaning is produced and exchanged between members of society. Therefore, brief representation is one way to produce meaning.

Representation works through a representation system that consists of important components, namely concepts in thought and language. These two components are interconnected. The concept of something that we have in our mind makes us know the meaning of that thing. However, meaning can only be communicated with language.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Framing women as victims

Framing women as victims is N.H. Dini's way of showing the traditions of Javanese society, which often treat girls as objects that can be controlled and ruled. Negating feelings, desires, and dreams of becoming an independent woman and being able to choose are some things that often happen. As a result of these prohibitions, threats, and coercion, harmful excesses arise.

Stereotypes are negative labels towards certain genders in women. In society, women are labeled weak, emotional, and fractious, so access to self-actualization in the domestic and public spheres is limited. Negative labeling also attaches women as the source of sexual violence, for example, being blamed for being beautiful, sexy, and doing activities outside the house or because of how they dress. The stereotypes experienced by women in the short stories *Pendurhaka*, *Perempuan Warung*, and *Keberuntungan* have raised the phenomenon of women in social relations in society.

The results of research on women conducted by researchers found several forms of stereotypes that framed female characters as victims. In the short story *Pendurhaka*, the female character Yati experiences intimidation from her older brother, namely that as a daughter, she must obey all the rules in the family. Women also do not deserve to live alone. The difference in treatment from the mother who prioritizes sons also further shows the stereotypes that apply in the family. The worst is that Yati's three older sisters, Yu Asih, Yu Sri, and Sul, experienced their mother's pressure to marry men they did not love at a young age. The second older sister, Yu Sri, was instead married to a Haji and became the third wife. The following quote shows the stereotype that girls are always second to boys, which has been passed down from generation to generation. A culture called patriarchy is very influential in ignoring gender stereotypes that are detrimental to women.

*Aku ingat, Bunda selalu mendahulukan anaknya laki-laki dalam hal yang enak. Bunda perbuat apa yang Nenek perbuat terhadapnya dulu. Ah! Bunda sangat tidak tahu cara hidup dan bergaul orang-orang zaman kini (Dini, 2002: 41).*

I remember mother always putting her son first in good things. Mother did what grandmother did to her before. Ah! Mother does not know how to live and socialize with people nowadays (Dini, 2002: 41).

In the second short story, *Perempuan Warung*, the female character Kinah works as a shopkeeper owned by her brother in law. She became a victim of the false promise of a man named Marjo so that she would give up her virginity. There is a stereotype in villages that too many women trigger fear if they cannot get a husband,

cannot be a wife, and do not have children. Another stereotype in this short story is the opinion that stall women peddle honor for money. This stereotype is then negated by the sentence spoken by Kinah to Marjo in the following quote.

*"Kenapa kau dijadikan perempuan warung?"*

*Tertegak kepala Kinah mendengar ini. Dan sekali itu dia menentang mata Marjo dengan pandangan tajam.*

*"Untuk sekedar cari makan banyak jalannya. Kau jangan mengira semua perempuan di warung itu jalang," kata-katanya dia tekan (Dini, 2002:59).*

"Why are you being made into a shop-girl?"

Kinah's head straightened when she heard this. Moreover, that once she met Marjo's eyes with a sharp look.

"There are many ways just to find food. "Do not think that all the women in the shop are bitches," she suppressed her words (Dini, 2002, p. 59).

The last short story, *Keberuntungan*, shows a female character named Kasnah, who becomes a successful entrepreneur in the village after continuing her father's business. Kasnah's success was always considered lacking because of her single status and being quite old for a village person. It is a form of gender stereotype that prevails in the village. Of course, this stereotype triggers rumors that discredit women, as in the following quote.

*Tahun-tahun terus bertambah. Ini tiba-tiba berubah menjadi cela atau kekurangan. Bagi wanita di desa, bagaimanapun tinggi sanjungan kepadanya, kehidupan normal di lingkungannya: kawin dan beranak (Dini, 2002: 103).*

The years keep adding up. It suddenly turns into a flaw or deficiency. For women in the village, no matter how highly praised they are, life is expected in their environment: marrying and giving birth (Dini, 2002: 103).

The results of the research on women conducted by the researcher found several forms of stereotypes experienced by the three female characters in the three short stories, including the following: First, women are in the second place after men; second, women must obey their parents; third, women are afraid of being seen as unmarketable if they are not married; fourth, women are the objects of harassment and violence; fifth, women are always considered less if they are not married and do not have children. These stereotypes position women as helpless victims and powerless to fight against patriarchal culture.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The gender stereotypes attached to female characters in the three short stories become a black spot regarding gender inequality, which makes women powerless to fight patriarchal culture. These three stories depict women's struggle to equalize their rights with men. The variety of stereotypes of gender is a negative side that cannot be used as role models for the people in society.

Gender stereotypes that tend to harm and limit women's movement should no longer be carried out. Short story readers are expected to be aware to no longer perpetuate gender stereotypes but to try to eliminate them so that there is equal space for women and men to play equal roles in society and the state. Feminism is an awareness of gender injustice that befalls women in the family and society. Feminism is a bridge to demand equal rights between women and men.

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