# REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE NOVEL "PEREMPUAN YANG MEMBELAH DIRI" BY IVA TITIN SHOVIA

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| ARTICLE INFO | ABSTRACT |
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| | The image of women in literary works, including novels, is an interesting study to research. Women are often underestimated for all their shortcomings, but it is not uncommon for women to be able to show their existence in every useful activity. The aim of this research is to describe the representation of women in the novel "Perempuan Yang Berbelah Sediri" by Iva Titin. The method used in this research is a qualitative method, with the aim of describing the role of women in the novel. The results of this research show that the female characters in the novel have a defeatist nature in many ways, apart from that the representation of women in the novel shows vulnerability in the conflicts that befall them, whether conflicts with family, husband or the environment. |

## ABSTRAK

Citra permpuan dalam karya sastra termasuk novel merupakan kajian yang menarik untuk diteliti. Perempuan sering dipandang sebelah mata dengan segala kekurangannya, namun tidak jarang perempuan juga dapat menunjukan eksistensinya dalam setiap aktivitas yang bermanfaat. Tujuan penelitian ini ialah untuk mendeskripsikan representasi perempuan dalam novel "Perempuan yang Membelah Diri" karya Iva Titin. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini ialah metode kualitatif, dengan maksud mendeskripsikan peran perempuan dalam novel. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukan bahwa karakter perempuan dalam novel tersebut memiliki sifat mengalah dalam banyak hal, selain itu representasi perempuan dalam novel tersebut menunjukan adanya kerentanan dalam konflik yang menimpanya, baik konflik bersama keluarga, suami, maupun lingkungan.

**Kata Kunci:** Representasi Perempuan; Karakter Perempuan; Konflik Perempuan.

## Introduction

Literature is a dish that can be enjoyed by all groups. The creative process in a literary work sometimes involves many things, from the author's imagination, to personal experience and the social conditions of society. Literature also reflects the conditions of a certain period so that in literary studies we can see the process of thought patterns and developments that occur from time to time. For example, we can see the portrait of women's social change based on the periodization of the literature, namely the pre-independence and post-independence

periods until now, of course there are differences in women's behavioral patterns in fighting.

In line with social and cultural evolution, literature has become a mirror that reflects and records various aspects of human life. Novels, as a form of literary work, are a strong medium in building narratives and representing various characters. According to women, they are the main stronghold in the family (Zahrok & Suarmini, 2018). This research seeks to explore and analyze the representation of women in novels, exploring how the narrative shapes the image, role and identity of women.

The representation of women in literature has a significant impact on society's understanding of women themselves. Over time, there has been a paradigm shift regarding the role of women in literature, but questions still arise about the extent to which this representation reflects the reality of women's lives in society. The paradigm that emerges is that women are weak, secondary and the source of problems, and women are bad (Sobari & Silviani, 2016). Therefore, this research aims to answer critical questions related to how women are represented in novels and how this representation reflects gender dynamics in literary works..

The representation of women in various contexts often reflects the social, cultural and political dynamics that exist in society. Feminist literary studies that attempt to place women in their proper position within the framework of a patriarchal society through a system of signs and symbols (Isnaini, 2022). In media and entertainment, women are often faced with stereotypes and body idealizations that create beauty standards that are often unrealistic. Feminism is one of the factors that influences the production of literary works (N.W. Suliantini, I.N. Martha, & G. Artawan, 2021). Film and television often cast women in supporting roles or focus on love stories, sometimes ignoring the complexity and diversity of women's experiences. Although there is an increase in the representation of strong and independent female characters, this is sometimes still the exception rather than the rule.

Education and careers also reflect female representation. Despite the increasing participation of women in various fields of study and professions, they are still often faced with challenges in achieving leadership positions or being recognized as experts in their fields. Additionally, in some societies, women still face stereotypes regarding their intellectual abilities. Art, literature, and popular culture often provide spaces to reflect changes in the representation of women. There are efforts to present a more inclusive narrative and involve women in a variety of roles that reflect the complexity of real life. However, challenges in exploring diversity and illuminating women's experiences remain.

Overall, women's representation is a complex and ever-changing issue. Despite these positive developments, much work still needs to be done to create a picture that is more fair, inclusive and values the contributions of women in all aspects of life. The challenge is to continue to question and change social norms that support detrimental representations of women and to support more realistic and balanced depictions.

The background to this research is based on awareness of the importance of literature in shaping perceptions and social norms. An in-depth understanding of the representation of women in novels is the key to detailing the influence of literature on the construction of gender identity and the concept of justice in society. Through this research, it is hoped that complex dynamics involving narrative selection, character creation, and the role of women in the novel plot can be revealed.

In general, this research contributes to contemporary dialogue about gender equality and raises awareness of the importance of more inclusive and accurate representation in literary works. By detailing the representation of women in novels, it is hoped that this research will provide deeper insight into how literary narratives continue to shape and reconstruct our understanding of women and their role in society.

Novel "Perempuan Membelah Diri" karya Iva Titin  is a story that really inspires women in their nature as social creatures and having responsibility in every matter. Even though women are seen as weak creatures, in reality the role of women has a big impact in all

aspects, especially in household matters.

## Method

This research selects novels as the focus of the study, taking into account the diversity of genres and periods of writing. The social and cultural context behind the writing of the novel is an important consideration, along with the choice of feminist psychoanalytic theory which requires a deep understanding of psychological aspects and character development.

The data sources in this research are primary and secondary data. Primary data sources are the main sources obtained directly, namely in this case the primary data sources in this research are novels "Perempuan yang Membelah Diri" karya Iva Titin Shovia. Meanwhile, secondary data is the second source of data, namely in the form of data obtained from various literature and documents. Secondary data sources in this research are supporting books and journals related to the problems in the research.
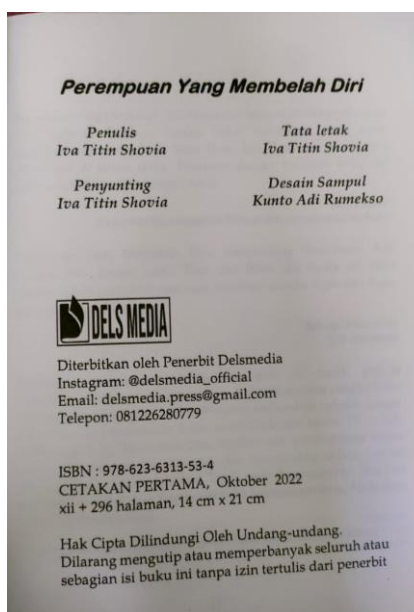


The data resulting from the analysis are grouped based on the findings that emerge from the text analysis. These findings were then coded and given categories that reflect the aspects. The findings resulting from the data analysis are detailed in the research report. The report involves a discussion of the findings, connections to feminist psychoanalytic theory, and implications for understanding gender and the representation of women in literary works.

## Results and Discussion

### *Female Characters in Novels "Perempuan yang Membelah Diri"*

Character in literary creation refers to the characters presented by the author in a work. Characters are an important element in building a narrative, moving the plot, and conveying the message the author wants to convey to the reader. The definition of character itself is a reflection of a person's complete personality which includes mentality, attitudes and behavior (Febriyanto, Patimah, Rahayu, & Masitoh, 2020). In this context, female characters play a special role as representations of women who are brought to life in the imagination of writers. The character of "giving in" as a woman in matters of love is shown in the novel, as in the following quote:

> *"Aku terbenam dalam nian tergila-gila, sayangnya aku dicipta sebagai pecinta, namun yang akan dicinta, nomor tiga." (data 1, hal. 1)*

This quote shows that a woman's destiny is to be loved by a man. From this perspective, women actually give in more when it comes to life partners. Women are more willing to give in when their family has arranged an marriage, and it is not uncommon for women to become the number one wife of a man of a higher rank. The character/nature of "giving in" is very visible in this case. In the context of marriage, the meaning of giving in for women can be related to a woman's attitude or action to give priority to the desires, needs or happiness of her husband or family, even if that means putting her personal interests or rights behind. According to (Euis Nurul Bahriyah, Maulana Irfan, Yasundari Yasundari, Olih Solihin, & Stella Sabrina, 2022) The period of giving in is a condition where humans realize their helplessness due to the problems that arise. Women's yielding behavior in conditions of helplessness is listed in the following data:

> *"Oh ya, Hen masih menunggumu lho."*
> *Thor melihat mata Boni menyala, a menggeram. Hen, ia pacar Boni sebelum Thor. Mereka putus karena ayah Boni tak mengizinkan anaknya menikah dengan sesama anggota orkes. Masuklah Thor, sarjana pendidikan, guru sukarelawan dengan gaji pas-pasan.* (data 2, hal. 11)

Data 2 shows the character of the female character, who is called Hen, who has to give in to her father's decision to forbid her from marrying a male member of the orchestra, and in the end she marries a graduate who works as a teacher with a mediocre salary. In this context, Han's father does not look at men in terms of income, but rather looks at the social status of the man who will become his son's husband. The "defeat" attitude is also shown by the character Han who is willing to be separated because of his father's advice. According to (Nugroho & Fikri, 2020) him, giving in is a way to let go of something.

> *Ia tidak lagi bekerja sejak menikah, full menjadi ibu rumah tangga, mengurus tiga anak, masak, melakukan semua pekerjaan rumah tangga sendirian. (*data 3, hal 66)

Data 3 also shows the relenting attitude of women who are willing to stop their careers in the world of work in order to become housewives and care for their children and family. The concept of the "giving in" personality shown in data 3 shows a serious expression and commitment carried out by a woman. Giving in does not mean being someone who always loses, but giving in is more of an action full of awareness and a sense of responsibility. Women are also often identified with weakness and submission, as in the following quote:

> *"Biarlah. Bagiku tidak diusir dari rumah ini saja sudah anugrerah. Aku tak mau menjada, apalaagi anakku sampai tak punya ayah. Biar, biar saja aku dipukul, ditampar dan diinjak seperti sampah."* (Data 4, hal 206)

In data 4, as in the quote above, it shows that a female character named Bonita was physically abused by being whipped by her husband because of a small mistake she made. She received punishment in the form of bullying and violence as a wife who had devoted herself to her husband. Even though she was subjected to violence, the female character persisted and preferred a "surrender" attitude in order to maintain the closeness of her family relationships.

Characters in literature have complex dimensions, including aspects such as psychology, motivation, internal conflict, and changes experienced throughout the story. Female characters, as part of the narrative, are often faced with challenges that allow them to evolve

as strong, multidimensional individuals. Creating female characters is not only limited to physical descriptions, but also includes emotional and intellectual journeys. Depictions of revolutions of female characters who leave their world are often seen as a form of commitment to change for the better for the sake of their family.

### *Women's Conflict in Novels "Perempuan yang Membelah Diri"*

Conflict refers to a situation where there is disagreement, differing interests, or clashes between two or more parties. Conflict can arise at various levels, from interpersonal conflict to inter-state conflict. Conflict is not always negative, because it can lead to change, innovation, or problem solving if handled in a constructive way. According to (Indrawan & Putri, 2022) Conflict is a social process between individuals and groups.

Even though they are women who "give in", women are also not free from disputes/conflicts, whether between friends, family, husbands, or society. Some of the conflicts that arise in the novel are as follows:

> *Lalu lecutan demi lecutan dihadiahkan lelaki itu kepadanya. Hanya karena kesalahan sepele seperti telat menyapu atau daster yang dipakainya lusuh, ia akan mendapatkan hadiah itu, bilur-bilur di punggung, kaki, bahkan dadanya. Bekas dilecut cambuk sapi.* (data 5, hal 205)

Data 5 shows the conflict that befell a woman in the household to the point that she received physical violence in the form of a whip from a cow whip by her husband just because of a small mistake. This violence shows oppression from men who consider women weak, so that in family conflicts, physical punishment becomes the choice or outlet for men..

> *"Maaf Bon, aku tak bisa membantumu. Makanya jadi istri yang nurut agar suami tidak mengamuk."* (data 6, hal 207)

Data 6 shows other disputes experienced by female characters apart from experiencing violence from their husbands. This quote shows that the female character who has experienced physical violence, received intimidation from neighbors who actually mistook the female character as a wife even though she had received violence from her husband. The violence experienced by women will certainly have an impact on the victim's mentality, even deep trauma (Hidayat, 2021). Good communication within a family is an important key in maintaining household harmony. The representation made by the author in depicting the figure of a wife who is willing to be intimidated by Sumai because she is afraid of becoming a widow could happen in real life and happen to many people. Therefore, through this article, researchers advise women and men to maintain relationships by improving communication, solving every problem well and having a clear mind. So it is hoped that it can improve the image of men towards women.

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