

**TAKING REVENGE AS A WAY OF STRIVING FOR
SUPERIORITY REFLECTED IN NAWAL EL SAADAWI'S
NOVEL WOMAN AT POINT ZERO**



**Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for Getting Bachelor
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APPROVAL

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NAWAL EL SAADAWT'S NOVEL *WOMAN AT POINT ZERO***

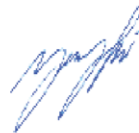
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**TAKING REVENGE AS A WAY OF STRIVING FOR SUPERIORITY
REFLECTED ON NAWAL EL SAADAWI'S NOVEL *WOMAN AT POINT
ZERO*: AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY APPROACH**

RESEARCH PAPER

by

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Accepted and Approved by Board of Examiners

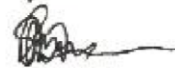
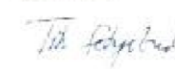
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TAKING REVENGE AS A WAY OF STRIVING FOR SUPERIORITY REFLECTED IN NAWAL EL SAADAWI'S NOVEL WOMAN AT POINT ZERO

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisa indikator dari balas dendam yang dilakukan oleh tokoh utama dalam novel *Woman at Point Zero*. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan psikologi individu dari Alfred Adler untuk menganalisa novel. penelitian ini termasuk ke dalam penelitian kualitative. Data dari penelitian ini terdiri dari data primer dan data sekunder. Data primer yaitu novel *Woman at Point Zero* dari Nawal El Saadawi. Data sekunder yaitu jurnal-jurnal, artikel- artikel, buku- buku, dan sumber dari internet yang berkaitan dengan penelitian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada tiga indikator balas dendam yang dilakukan oleh tokoh utama. Antara lain: 1) inferiority feelings sebagai pendorong tokoh utama melakukan balas dendam, 2) striving for superiority sebagai kompensasi dari perasaan inferior, 3) creative power adalah kemampuan tokoh utama untuk melakukan balas dendam.

Kata Kunci: Balas dendam, berjuang untuk superior, psikologi individu

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the indicators of retaliation that the main character did in *Woman at Point Zero* novel. This study uses individual psychology approach by Alfred Adler to analyze the novel. The study belongs to qualitative research. The data of the study consist of primary data and secondary data. The primary data is *Woman at Point Zero* novel written by Nawal El Saadawi. The secondary data are journals, books, and internet sources related to the study. The researcher uses descriptive analysis to conduct the study. The result of this study shows that there are three indicators of retaliation that the main character did. There are, 1) inferiority feelings as the source of the main character to commit revenge; 2) striving for superiority as the compensation of inferiority feeling; and 3) creative power is the main character's ability to do revenge.

Keywords: Individual psychology, Retaliation, striving for superiority

1. INTRODUCTION

Revenge defines as punishing someone who already commit wrong behavior that causing harm to others. Revenge also consider as a response toward wrong behavior

whereas harm is repaid back with harm (Yoshimura & Boon, 2014). The desire of revenge exist in human mind because people perceived injustice, negative treatment, and betrayal. Revenge helps individuals to balancing suffer between victim and transgressor (Antika, 2019). It helps the doer of revenge to restore power and self- esteem which have been insulted by others. People uses revenge to gain power and superiority, to show that they are not powerless.

Although revenge have bad reputation in society because it is dangerous and moral improper. But in society, revenge still become common issue. Moreover, it is also rises as the theme of literary work such as movie, novel, theater, and etc. One of literary work that contains revenge issue is novel written by Nawal El Saadawi entitle *Woman at Point Zero*. This novel firstly publish in 1975 in Arabic, 1983 in English language. This novel tells about Firdaus who is the main character of the novel. She lived in a patriarchies society where women are not have same opportunity to give contribution toward social interest which means all are dominated by men. This give a stereotype that men are superior than woman that encourage them to act as free as they want. This social culture brings Firdaus in to suffer. She often experiences violence and sexual harassment. It makes her lost trust toward men because most of them often impose their willing toward women. So, Firdaus wants to show that as a women she is capable to be powerful. Through her power she would be able to repaying men's bad behavior toward her. Firdaus becomes a prostitute also as a way to cover up her inferiority feeling.

The act of repaying back wrong behavior that Firdaus did become the reason the researcher rises the issue of the study. There are some reason why the researcher interested to analyze this novel. First, because the characterization of the main character can be seen as brave and though reason is about her decision to become a prostitute as her way to gaining superiority. To analyze this novel the researcher uses individual psychology as the approach.

The researcher found several previous studies conducted to *Woman at Point Zero* novel. All of them discussed the different issues but it can be classified into several fields. First, the study that focuses on woman oppression are Fwangyil (2019), Rahayu (2015), Otu (2016), Quyoom (2017), and Hidayati, Darma, &

Mustofa (2017). Second, the study which used feminism approach are Wilany (2017) and Wangmo & Sharam (2018). Last, Millah (2019) studied about the main character psychology using psychological approach by Sigmund Freud. Therefore, the researcher decided to examine the novel by raising the revenge issue of the main character using individual psychology approach by Alfred Adler. Individual psychology approach known as theory that focus on the uniqueness of each individual. Basic concept of individual psychology by Alfred Adler there are: 1) fictional finalism, 2) inferiority feeling, 3) striving for superiority, 4) style of life, 5) social interest, and 6) creative- power.

This study aims to reveal the indicators of retaliation of the main character in the *Woman at Point Zero* novel. The researcher analyzes the main character's personality and behavior using individual psychology by Alfred Adler to find out the indicators of retaliation that the main character did.

2. METHOD

In this study the writer using the library qualitative research. While analyzing the object applying the individual psychology theory by Alfred Adler, the steps to analyze the object are 1) determining the type of research; 2) determining the object of the study; 3) determining data and data source; 4) determining technique of data analysis; 5) determining technique of data analysis. The object this study is "*Women at Point Zero*" novel by Nawal El Saadawi.

This research was done to reveal the individual psychology toward the "*Woman at Point Zero*" Novel by Nawal El Saadawi based on the individual behavior of the main character and the structure of the story. The analysis is done by determining the structural elements and the individual behavior based on individual psychology theory. There are two type of data source. The first is primary data, it is "*Woman at Point Zero* (1963)"novel. The secondary data source are journals, books, and internet source related to the study. Two type of data collected by library research and internet. The writer uses library research as the technique of data collection. The steps conduct to library research are: 1) Reading the novel

repeatedly, 2) note-taking of the important information, 3) classifying and categorizing the data into several parts 4) analyzing the data 5) drawing the conclusion based from displayed data.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In analyzing *Woman at Point Zero* novel by Nawal El Saadawi based on the issue of retaliation and using individual psychology by Alfred Adler. In responding the problem statement related to the indicators of retaliation, the researcher uses six point of basic concept of individual psychology by Alfred Adler which are 1) fictional finalism; 2) inferiority feelings; 3) striving for superiority; 4) style of life; 5) social interest; 6) creative power. From the six point, there are three point that can be conclude as the indicators of revenge which are 1) inferiority feelings, 2) striving for superiority, and 3) creative power.

3.1 Inferiority Feelings

Inferiority feelings is the first indicator of retaliation that the main character did. Inferiority feelings can be defined as feeling of weakness and incomplete such as having low social class or organ defect that began from childhood (Schultz & Schultz, 2013). Inferiority feelings encourage people become unconfident and assume that other people are better than them. Generally, people with inferiority feelings response their inferiority by seeking for compensation. Each person has different way to compensate their inferiority. People with normal feeling of incomplete will compensate their inferiority feeling with social interest to pursue their success. But, people with exaggerated feelings will compensate their inferiority with personal achievement which is personal superiority (Feist & Feist, 2017). So, it can be said that inferiority feelings drive human to growth and achieve their goals. In *Woman at Point Zero* novel, Firdaus as the main character addresses two form of inferiority feelings which are: 1) feels inferior because of her gender, and 2) feels inferior because of her economic conditions.

3.1.1 Inferiority because of her gender

The main character feels inferior is because she is a woman. As a woman who lived in the patriarchies society, she experienced the discrimination as a woman. According to Oxford dictionary (2021) discrimination defines as the act of making unjust treatment between human beings. People usually discriminate in the categories of race, gender, religion, sex- orientation, and other categories. The discrimination that Firdaus experienced can be seen when she got violence from her husband. She went to her uncle house searching for a help but her uncle said that it is common for husbands to beat their wives. She could not do nothing and came back to her husband house. As shown below:

“But my uncle told me that all husbands beat their wives, and my uncle’s wives added that her husband often beat her.” (*Woman at Point Zero* (2007), p.46)

The statement above shows that men are seen as superiors who have dominant role. In contrast, woman seen as inferiors who placed in the second class people. Moreover, her aunt who is a woman also think that men are superior than women. She also added that women should not complaint to her husband. It can be seen on the following statement:

“She replied that it was precisely men well versed in their religion who beat their wives. The precepts of religion permitted such punishment. A virtuous woman was not supposed to complain about her husband. Her duty was perfect obedience.” (*Woman at Point Zero* (2007), p. 46)

The data above shows that becomes a woman makes her being inferior. She did not allow to complain to her husband although she suffered. She has to obey her husband in order to be seen as a good woman. Ryckman (2012) stated that inferiority often synchronizes with feminine behavior like submissiveness, passivity, and dependence. So, the society where Firdaus lived already force her to be inferior.

3.1.2 Inferiority feelings due economic condition

The other inferiority feeling of the main character is because of her economic condition. It can be seen from her background as an orphan who lived with her uncle and her aunt. She always obeyed her aunt request just like when she forced to marry an old man who has gap fifty years old with Firdaus. At first, Firdaus tried to refuse the marriage by leaving her uncle's house. But, she realized that she has no one to rely on except her uncle. So, she came back and accept the marriage. It can be seen below:

“Once back I do not know how I put up with life in my uncle house, nor do I remember how I became Sheikh Mahmoud's wife.”
(*Woman at Point Zero* (2007), p. 44)

The data above shows that economic condition becomes the reason of Firdaus's inferiority. She perforce obeying her aunt's request expecting that she will have financially secure in her life. But, during her marriage Firdaus experiences violence and marital rape. She tried to endure it and she did not dare to oppose her husband because she only has her husband to depend on. But, her husband behavior getting worst from time to time that makes her left him. As shown below:

“One day he hits me with his heavy stick until blood ran from my nose and ears. So I left, but this time I did not go to my uncle's house. I walked through the streets with swollen eyes, and bruised face, but no one paid any attention to me.” (*Woman at Point Zero*, p. 47)

The data above explained that Firdaus left her husband because she could not tolerate her husband anymore. She wants to live freely without any violence and suffered so that she left her husband recklessly. It shows that inferiority feelings encourage people to compensate their inferiority. Adler believes that inferiority feelings force human behavior. Inferiority feelings drive human to overcome their

weakness such as low self-esteem, feeling of neglect, or has low economic status, etc (Malik, 2019). Although inferiority feelings make people become unconfident and unworthy but it provides human to overcome their inferiority. Firdaus act of leaving her husband can be seen as her effort to overcome her inferiority. Hirao (2014) people response their inferiority by seeking compensation. It can be striving for success or personal superiority. Through inferiority feelings an individual struggle to strive their compensation. It can be linked with the motives of the main character in committing retaliation. Because Edward (cited in Pandia, 2019) stated that revenge arise from miserable experience with the intention to enhance self-worth that has been humiliate.

3.2 Striving for Superiority

Striving for Superiority as the second indicator of retaliation defines as compensation of inferiority feelings. People striving for superiority as a way to cover up their inferiority feelings. Chaplain (as cited in Sylvyana, 2018) states that striving for superiority helps people to overcome inferiority to bring comfort and security in the future. In this study, striving for superiority of the main character divided into two: 1) to fulfill personal satisfaction, and 2) to pursue the social status.

3.2.1 Striving for personal satisfaction

Striving for superiority in the content to fulfill personal satisfaction as form of compensation. People who striving for superiority concern with personal achievement which motivated by exaggerated feeling of personal inferiority. People with exaggerated feeling usually compensate their inferiority by seeking personal superiority not for social interest (Feist & Feist, 2017). Every person has their own way to compensate their inferiority. Based on the novel, the main character decided to do retaliation as form of her compensation to fulfill her personal satisfaction. As her way to compensate her inferiority, she decided to become a prostitute. Being

prostitute helps her getting close to men. It will makes it easier for her to repaying back her disappointment toward men. As seen below:

“As a result my price kept going up. A man cannot stand being rejected by a woman, because deep down inside he feels a rejection of himself. No one can stand this double rejection. And so every time I said no, the man would insist.” (*Woman at Point Zero*, p. 97)

The statement above shows that the way Firdaus repaying back her disappointment is by doing rejection toward men. Doing rejection will encourage men to feel humiliate and insult their egoism because of their request is not fulfilled. Seeing men being humiliate makes Firdaus satisfied. This will helps her more confident and covering up her inferiority. Firdaus acted as a though woman to overcome her inferiority. Adler used the concept of masculine protest to overcome feelings of inferiority by acting masculine behavior such as swaggered, acted tough, or it can be women who spouted obscenities (Ryckman, 2012).

3.2.2. Striving for social status

The next, striving for superiority in order to gain social status. People usually compensate their inferiority by covering up their inferiority. In this novel, Firdaus compensate her inferiority by gaining social status. She pursue to become respectable woman. This will helps her in hiding the inferiority.

“One day, when I donated some money to a charitable association, the newspapers published pictures of me and sang my praises as the model of a citizen with sense of civic responsibility. And so from then on, whenever I needed a dose of honor or fame. I had only to draw some money from the bank.” (*Woman at Point Zero*, 2007, p. 99)

The statement above explains that as an effort to cover up her inferiority she becomes a donor. It will create her image as generous woman. People will see her as a charitable woman not as poor woman. Watts (2015) states that striving for

superiority is desire to move from below to above, minus to plus, and inferior to superior. So, since become a prostitute Firdaus already move from inferior to superior. She is be able to live comfortably. Related with revenge Antika (2019) stated revenge aims to restore power and self- esteem. So revenge helps people to be more confident and powerful in society. So, the act of striving for superiority of Firdaus reflect the goal of revenge which is showing that she is not powerless.

3.3 Creative Power

Creative power controls human behavior to be responsible for their final goal by determining method of striving for superiority (Feist & Feist, 2017). Each person has a freedom to shape their behavior in society. In this study there are two from of creative power shown by the main character which are: 1) creative power to survive, and 2) creative power for the main character existence.

3.3.1 Creative power to survive

Creative power to survive her life. Firdaus being a prostitute as a way to survive her life. Through her profession Firdaus be able to earn a lot of money that makes her live comfortably. As shown below:

“And so every time I said no, the man would insist. No matter how high I raised the price he could not stand being refused by woman.”(*Woman at Point Zero*, p. 97)

The data above shows that Firdaus have characteristic of creative power self. She realized that since become a prostitute her life gets better. She was not seen as poor woman or inferior. Moreover, men are approaching her to fulfill their desire. So, Firdaus took advantages of the situation to avenge her disappointment toward men. As Baron, Byrne, and Branscombe (cited in Pandia, 2019) stated that revenge is an act of repaying the actions of others in hopes of getting a better feeling, more valuable and returning a sense of justice in person.

3.3.2. Creative Power for her existence

Creative power for showing her existence in the society. Firdaus as a woman who lived in suffered feels that her existence often not considered. So, she wants the society to realize her existence. One of her effort to show her existence is by spreading information. It shown on the following statement:

“Buy a journalist to publish my picture and write something about me in the newspapers. Everybody has a price, and every profession is paid a salary, and a person’s price goes up as he climbs the social ladder.” (*Woman at Point Zero*, 2007, p. 99)

The statement above shows that in order to get social existence as her compensation Firdaus spreading information through media. This will make her known as famous and honor woman. People will also perceived her as generous woman because the media often publish her news when she donate her money to social association. Feist and Feist (2017) state that compensation is not necessarily a mirror image of deficiency, each person have the different creation to compensate their inferiority. Firdaus realizes that she cannot avenges with physical strength. So, she retailed by leveling up her existence in the society.

4. CLOSING

In this part the researcher conclude that there are three indicators of revenge that the main character did which are inferiority feelings, striving for superiority, and creative power. Inferiority feelings shows when she offended by people who are superior to her. This action make her feel angry and suffered. So, inferiority feelings is the main character’s source to commit retaliation. Second indicator is striving for superiority. It is her way to overcome or compensate her inferiority feelings. Being superior will helps her to be more powerful that secure her from people who usually insult her. Last indicator is creative power. It is the main character capability to

strive the superiority. The main character decide to become prostitute as a way to commit her retaliation toward men.

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