

Muslim Refugee Girls in Malala Yousafzai's *We Are Displaced*

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Abstract

The research intends to find out the kinds of discrimination faced by the refugee girls and also life experiences of the refugee girls that related to the author's life. Malala as the writer of the memoir *We Are Displaced* describes her experiences as a Muslim woman who is often treated unfairly both in the homeland and in the host land. As Malala had seen many discriminations in many places, she was inspired to write all discrimination as the movement against that discrimination. Therefore, feminism is a study of efforts to change gender roles, sexist practices, and sexual norms that often limit personal development. This research uses content analysis, especially close textual analysis. The results of this research show that there are 3 kinds of discrimination of the refugee girls. They are: 1) Racial Discrimination, 2) Gender Discrimination, and 3) Social Class Discrimination. This research also shows that some of the refugee girls have the same life experience as the author based on educational value, they are: 1) Independence value, 2) Creativity value, 3) Social Concern value.

Keywords: *Discrimination, Malala Yousafzai and Refugee Girls.*

Introduction

Literature has become a part of human experience, both from human being's aspect for his life experience and from the aspect of its creator, expressing his inner experience into literary works. In terms of its creator, literary work is the creator's inner experience about people's life within a certain cultural period and time. Literary work describes the situation and social life of a society, events, ideas and thoughts, as well as the values mandated by the creator through the character in the story (Faiqah and Nasrum 2020; 31).

Some activities and events that occur in society may be expressed and described in literary works. Authors present a work to convey their ideas to reader. Therefore, we can understand that every work has its own characteristic and the purpose of the author. It is clear that the author's idea in work can affect to the mindset of the reader. Human experiences are also expressed in literary works, both from human being's aspect for his life experience and from the aspect of its creator, expressing his inner experience into literary works. In terms of its

creator, literary work is the creator's inner experience about people's live within a certain cultural period and time.

Malala is one of the activists who provided women with an appropriate education, because the Taliban government prohibited women from receiving an education. Malala penned numerous articles about the Taliban when she was unable to alter the situation. Her writing on the BBC blog elicited a great deal of pity, which led to the beginning of her fame. Malala, who was very young at the time, joined politics in order to convey the aspirations of her women, who desired the same rights as all other women. Malala won the Nobel Peace Prize at the age of 17 for her service to the Pakistani people, particularly for women's education (Yousafzai, 2019). Malala is a symbol for many young Pakistani women who are beginning to make a difference.

Since she always struggles for women rights, she becomes popular as the feminist, especially against discrimination toward Moslem women. Discrimination is the action of discriminating against a person or group of people based on race, religion, ethnicity, status class, and status socioeconomic class, gender, body condition, age, sexual orientation, ideological and political views. Forms of discrimination is a common occurrence in society. This is due to the tendency of humans to differentiate between others. In other words, social discrimination is the differentiation of attitudes and treatment of fellow human beings based on their social position (Fulthoni et al 2009:7).

Thus, discrimination begins with prejudice that makes a distinction between us and others. It occurs as people are social creature who naturally want to hang out with other people who has something in common with them. Prejudice is based on ignorance and indifference to some groups. It is also exacerbated by a bad stigma/stereotype. This bad stigma based on various facts that lead to the similarity of the patterns (Fulthoni, 2009:8).

The existing articles related to object have been published by several publications. First, an article written by Adam (2021) implied that Malala meets an inspiring young woman to talk about learning, and life as a displaced person. Another article was written by Megan (2019) that wrote the struggle of Malala as a Muslim refugee to rebuild refugees' lives in foreign places more than once in her lifetime. In addition, Peppin (2020) also discussed the stories of Malala who wants to humanize such individuals by forcing others to consider the challenges that the refugee face but are not overcome.

The current research aims to find out the kinds of discrimination suffered by the refugee girls in Malala's *We Are Displaced* and describe the life experience of the refugee girls related to the author's life based on educational values. Moreover, this study focuses on analyzing the discrimination against women that have been displaced from their country due to war or disaster, so they have to live in the refugee camps before being displaced to another country. Apart from living in insecurity and uncertainty, women are particularly vulnerable in this situation, and apart from living in uncertainty and insecurity, they are also at a disproportionately higher risk of harm, especially in gender-based violence. Refugee camps are the place where harassment, rape, abuse and exploitation are common in the daily lives of the refugees.



Discrimination

Discrimination is an unfair or a different treatment by a group of people which is done to distinguish between persons or groups based on their race, ethnicity, religion, or membership of social classes. This term is usually used to explain the action of the majorities that have a dominant relation than the minorities; therefore, it can be said that their behavior are immoral and undemocratic. Liliweri (2005: 218) state that discrimination is the behavior that aimed to preventing one group, or limiting another group that is seeking to own the resource. Theoretically, the discrimination can be done through policies to reduce and create the cultural pluralism then assimilate another group (Fulthoni, 2009:8).

One of the causes of discrimination is the existence of the social class. The social class is the division of classes in society based on certain criteria like religion, education, economic status, descent and others. Someone is treated differently because he/she is different in social class. Social class is the differentiation of the population or society into hierarchical classes, and the manifestation is the higher classes and the lower classes. The basic and core layers of society are not balanced in the distribution of rights and obligations, responsibilities and social values and their influence among community members. Social class is the classification of people who belong to a certain social system into hierarchical layers based on the dimensions of power. Every person always has a certain respect in the society concerned and every person must have something that can be appreciated.

Feminism

Feminism is the study of efforts to change gender roles, sexist practices, and sexual norms that often limit personal development. Feminism is entirely focused on solving the social problems that women face in their daily life, such as cases of rape, sexual violence, domestic violence, incoming inequality in the world of work and others.

Feminist theory states that the subordination of women originated in primitive societies in which women served as objects of exchange between father dominated families that formed alliances through marriage. Men hold almost all positions of political and economic power, and economies work in such a way that women are more likely to be poor and more likely to be rich. According to some feminists, such continued male domination is a consequence of male violence against women. Social structure translates a historically continuous threat of physical force. Rape and other forms of violence such as battery are not marginal departures from a norm of consensual gender relations that just happen to be unequally tilted in favor of men (Michael Ryan, 1999: 101).

Dynamic Structuralism

Dynamic structuralism is a branch of the theory of structuralism. Since it has a weakness, Vodicka and Mukarovsky develop Dynamic structuralism as a branch of the structuralism. It shows that literary works not only have intrinsic elements but also a historical background of the author that becomes an important aspect.

Dynamic structuralism places literary works as objects of knowledge sui generis, which has a special ontology status. Literary works are not objects like a statue, or something mental



like pain. Literary works are the norm system of inter-subjective ideal concepts. The concepts are in the collective ideology and change with the ideology (Wellek and Warren, in Faruk, 2012). Dynamic structuralism analyzes the structure of literature by considering the dynamics of literary development as a whole, the continuous shift in literary norms, and the dynamics of their interactions with social life (Teeuw, 1983: 62).

Revealing the contents of *We Are Displaced* by Malala Yousafzai, the study uses dynamic structuralism approach. The theory used is a combination of a theory with one another. Dynamic structuralism research includes two things: 1) dissect literary works which are display of thoughts views, and concepts the world of the author herself by using language as a sign of various meanings, 2) analysis of literary text that related to the author with reality environment

Educational Values

Educational value is something that is believed to be true and encourages people to do positive things in their own lives or in society (Naim, 2012: 162). Therefore, what is meant by educational values in literary works here are values that aim to educate someone to become a good human being in the sense of being educated. The value of education in literary works is very important, for it gives the psychological impression to the reader. If it contains educational value or positive value, it can be imitated by the reader as done by the characters in the book.

The first educational value is the independence value, which is a strength that exists within a person which is obtained through the process of self-reliance and individuation, which is responsible for all the action they choose. Independence is an attitude and behavior that is not easy to depend on others in completing tasks. Independence does not automatically grow in a person. Independent is basically the result of a long learning process (Naim, 2012: 162). Independence is not always related to age; thus, a child already has an independent nature because of the training process or because of life's factors that force them to be independent.

The second value is creativity which is an ability that reflects fluency, flexibility and originality in thinking and the ability to elaborate an idea. creativity is the ability to create a new combination based on existing data, information, or element (Naim, 2012: 162). Creativity is also defined as an individual's ability to generate new or original ideas, new understandings, new inventions, and new art objects (Shiller and Tamera, 2003: 131).

The third value is a friendship value which is a mutual understanding between individuals, understand about what our friends liked, hated, needed, because those elements that form a sense of friendship that requires each individual to trust each other and entrust anything between friends. Each other taste individuals are willing to help each other in doing something to achieve the same cooperation (Shiller and Tamera, 2003: 131). The true value of friendship is seen from sincerity and willingness to sacrifice for someone else's sake. Friendship is a term that describes the behavior of cooperation and mutual support between two or more social entities

Furthermore, the fourth value is a social concern value. Caring is treating others politely, acting politely, tolerant of differences, not liking to hurt others, willing to listen to others, willing to share, note taking advantages of others, being able to work together in community activities, loving people and other creatures, loyal, and peace loving in dealing with problems.



Social care is a matter of interest in helping others, the value of social care is very important to have such as the value of honesty, low profile hospitality in social interaction (Naim, 2012: 162).

Finally, responsibility value is an attitude and behavior of a person to carry out a task and obligations that should be done toward self, society, environment (nature, social, and culture), country and God. Responsibility are behavior that determines a person's reaction to everyday situations that require some decisions (Shiller and Tamera, 2003: 131).

Method

This research uses descriptive qualitative method. The study has two data sources, such as; primary data of this research are taken from the memoir *We Are Displaced* by Malala Youzafzai which was published in 2019 whose length of pages consists of 224 pages. The study uses note taking as the instrument. Note taking is a method of assembling required data by using note cards to write down the data findings from the sources of data. To find out the data, the study gives some notes such as marking a sentence related to the topic of the research. After collecting the data, the study focuses on analyzing the kinds of discrimination against the refugee girls by using feminism theory by Mary Wollstonecraft. The study also focuses on analyzing the life experience based on educational value by using Dynamic Structuralism.

Results and Discussion

Based on the data, the study finds out the kinds of discrimination and the life experiences of the refugee girls that are related to the author in *We Are Displaced* by Malala Yousafzai.

The Kinds of Discrimination Suffered by the Refugee Girls in *We Are Displaced*

Racial Discrimination

Racial discrimination in the biography *We Are Displaced* by Malala Yousafzai was described by one of the refugee girls named Zaynab. Zaynab has experienced racial discrimination by an American man. This happened when she was shopping alone at an American mall. Here's the quote:

I was riding the escalator up when I saw a white man approach the top of the escalator. I was wearing my hijab as I do everywhere, **and this man stared at me and started shouting, Jihad! Jihad!** I panicked, thinking maybe he had a bomb, and turned and ran backward down the escalator. **He wanted people to think that just because I am muslim I was dangerous.** Meanwhile, I was terrified of what he might do to me. (Yousafzai, 2019: 39)

The quote above is also classified into racial discrimination because it can be seen when Zaynab was shopping alone in the Mall of America and suddenly a man stared at her and shouted jihad! Jihad! It happened because she was a minority Muslim who was wearing hijab, and this man wanted people assumed that Zaynab was dangerous. It showed that the white people do not like the presence of the black people as the minority in their country because according to them black people are a symbol of shame to their country. As Ulwiyah said that racial discrimination is social rejection where someone is excluded from social interaction just because they are different from other people.



I wanted to have a better life with all our family in Yemen. I wanted my grandmother back. I know that dreams are impossible, but I can make others come true by believing in myself and in my goals. I want to finish my schooling so I can go back to that beautiful home and bring justice with me. I want to rebuilt it. (40)

Black people are often discriminated just because their skin color is different. Even though every person in this world has the same opportunity whether they have black or white skin, sometimes people who have a black skin or have a different skin color will be treated badly.

Gender Discrimination

Gender inequality assumes that men and women are not equal and that gender has an impact on a person's life experience. The differences arise from gaps in biology, psychology and cultural norms. Gender discrimination was manifested in various forms of injustice, especially in women. Manifestations of gender discrimination cannot be separated of each other, mutually related, and influential (Muchdi, 2001: 33). Discrimination against women means any distinction, exclusion or restriction that made based of sex, which has the effect or purpose of reducing or eliminating the recognition, enjoyment or reduction of human rights.

Gender discrimination in Malala Yousafzai's *We Are Displaced* was described when the Taliban have taken control of Pakistan, where the Taliban banned women from going to school and also closed all schools. Here's the quote:

Near the end of 2008, the Taliban made a new decree: **all-girls school would be closed January 15, 2009, or they would risk being attacked.** This was an order even my father would follow, because he could not put his students or his daughter at risk. (13)

The quote above is classified into gender discrimination. It can be seen when the Taliban made the rules to closed all the girl's schools and forbade them attend the class to carry out teaching and learning activities. If the girls disobeyed the rules, they would be being attacked by the Taliban. Gender discrimination is also seen when Malala joined her cousin's class. Where in teaching and learning, the boys were more dominant and the girls had to cover their faces and should speak quietly. Even the women were not allowed to raise their hands and asked questions as if they had lost the right to speak and act as they wanted. Here's the quote:

I joined sumbul's class, even though it was a grade above mine, and was amazed to see that there were only two other girls in the room of more a dozen boys. I was also shocked to see my cousin and the other girls cover their faces when the male teacher entered. I did not copy her. neither she nor the other girls spoke throughout the lesson. **They never raised their hands or asked questions.** When we were excused for the first break, all the boys dashed out of the room in search of snack or the bathroom. But the girls stayed put, **talking quietly with one another.** (16)

This is the reason why Malala dares to speak about the cruelty of the Taliban who have taken away women's right in education through her writings in BBC Urdu. Here's the quote: "By



then, I have begun to write a blog for BBC Urdu that later helped the world beyond our country learn our story and the truth of the attack on girls' education in Pakistan" (13)

The action taken by Malala is to fight for the rights of women in Pakistan so that they can go to school in peace without interference and prohibitions from the Taliban. Therefore, the data found in this study are included into liberal feminism.

Social Class Discrimination

This kind of discrimination occurs because humans are social creatures who naturally want to hang out with people who have the same resemblance. Social discrimination is a different treatment towards fellow human beings based on their social position. Social Class Discrimination is grouping someone or individuals based on their wealth, income, education, occupation, and social networks. The lowest class will get discrimination from the higher class, and people who have a high social stratum or position certainly get respect and dignity from other communities as well as vice versa for those who have low status.

Social class discrimination in *We Are Displaced* was described by the figure Sabreen. It happened when the refugee girls were treated badly by a bus driver just because they were refugees. They were treated very badly, even the refugee girls in the bus did not dare to speak because they would be scolded and even beaten by the driver. Here is the quote:

That scared me so much that I forgot I had to pee. As he clomped back to his seat, he yelled- **this is not fancy travel! You are refugees. Shut up and stay silent!**

I close my eyes to try to contain the tears leaking down my face. All my dreams of what this trip could be were crashing around me. **We may be refugees, I thought, but he's treating us like wild animals.** (34)

Social discrimination in the biography *We Are Displaced* by Malala Yousafzai was described by one of the refugee girls named Zaynab. Zaynab lived with her sister, aunt, and uncle, but she was expelled by her uncle just because of a contagious disease she was suffering from. Here's the quote:

I thought he would give me advice. Instead, he shouted, Get out!! why? I said, stunned. What have I done?

You are going to make us all sick! He was screaming now.

he stormed around the house, gathering my things and throwing them at me. Pack your things and get out! He yelled. (30)

This data showed that there is an action of isolation, and rejection of people who have tuberculosis or has an infectious disease. it was proven when Zaynab's uncle rejected her and refused to live with her when he knew that Zaynab has Tuberculosis.

The Life Experience of the Refugee Girls that Related to the Author

Refugees are people who are forced to leave and to cut off ties with their own country because of fear and experience persecution. In general, they are carried out because of the suppression



of human rights of the refugees in their country. In general, they are also looking for land and new country that certainly free from the suppression of human rights.

They have experienced many stress events due to political or religious oppression, war, migration and resettlement. It is very difficult to define all the kinds of events they suffered, because the war in their country cause a traumatic to the refugees and cause them to flee. Before being forced to flee, refugees may experience imprisonment, torture, loss of property, malnutrition, physical assault, extreme fear, rape and loss of livelihood. During the escape, refugees are often separated from their family, mugged, forced to kill and lose their close family or friends. Moreover, when the refugees resettle in host countries, most of them are placed where they are not preferred, so they must adapt with the new place and with new language. Rebuilding house and identities while trying to juggle the task of their daily life is another challenge for them to undertake (Hollifield, 2005;46)

This is related to Malala. She wrote all of her aspirations in a biographical book entitled *Malala's Magic Pencil*. This book is one of the most successful and bestselling books of Malala thought in the market. This book is written from Malala's point of view which is a first-person perspective. In this book, Malala describes herself as a child who wished to have a magic pencil to solve problems in her life, and also to help others (Gurney, 2017:5). In this book, Malala tells a story about a television program in which there is a boy with his magic pencil. Malala said that if she has a magic pencil then she would use it to stop the time, so she could sleep longer or make a soccer field for her brothers and her friends and create the life which is far from fear and the loss of livelihood.

This study shows that some of the refugee girls have the same life experience as the author based on educational value, they are: 1) Independence value, 2) Creativity value, 3) Social Concern value.

Independence Value

There are four components to independence: 1) free, progressive, and tenacious, 2) take initiative, 3) have self-control, 4) have self-steadiness (steadfast and optimistic). There are also the factors that influence independence. First, intrinsic factors, including heredity and body condition since birth. External factors, namely all circumstances that influence from outside (Naim, 2012: 162).

Independence value is not depending on others, believing in our own abilities, not bothering and harming others, trying to fulfill our own needs with a passion for self-development. Parker in (Naim, 2012: 162) also suggests that independence also means a belief in our own ideas, independence is related to the ability to get things done. Independence is related to having a certain level of physical competence so that loss of strength or coordination will never occur in the midst of someone's efforts to achieve goals. Independence means the absence of hesitation in setting goals and not being limited by the power of failure.

In *We Are Displaced*, the independence value was described by one of the refugee girls named Najla. She was a brave girl and had a confidence in her abilities. She dared to take action to run away from her home so that she could get her right back to school. Here's the quote:



I was fourteen and I knew I was smart. I wanted to be in school, so I ran away. It was all I could think to do. I stayed at a monastery for five days in the Sinjar mountains. I knew I could not stay there forever. Though, when I returned home my father was furious and my mother frowned, but I know she was secretly proud of me. So wew my sisters. They were so pleased because I was fighting for something I desperately wanted. (30)

Creativity Value

The first value of creative thinking is constructive (building) not destructive (destroying). Many people have creative ideas, but no one dares to put them into action. They are creative but constructive. Creativity is someone who has the ability to be constructive in attitude and thinking.

The creativity value was depicted in the character of a refugee girl named Ajida. She is a Rohingya or Muslim minority who was trapped in Bangladesh refugee camp and has to think hard in order to survive. Here's the quote:

we are doing the best we can. The Bangladesh government gives us rice and lentils, so I made my own stove out of clay. I could at least cook for my family. While the conditions here are difficult, at least my husband and I have jobs. When the love army learned that I was making stoves, they hired me to build them to give to others refugee as a gift. I have since made more than two thousand stoves (30)

Every human being needs creativity in their efforts to solve every problem that exists in their life. Creativity is thinking and doing something to produce a new way or result from something that is already owned. For example, Ajida was trapped with her family in the refugee camp of Bangladesh, and because of it she always tried to create something so that they could survive in the refugee camp. In the refugee camp, Ajida had an idea to make her own stove made of clay so that she could cooks for her family.

Social Concern Value

There are several indicators for someone who has caring character as follows: 1) sensitive to the difficulties of others, 2) sensitive to damage of physical environment, 3) sensitive to various deviant behaviors, 4) sensitive to the needs and demands of a dynamic society, 5) sensitive to changes in patterns of social life.

Social concern value is responsive and sensitive to the conditions around us. Sensitivity is shown not only by feelings of love and affection but also by positive actions such as helping with light hands when people around us need help.

Social concern value in *We Are Displaced* was described by the girl named Muzoon who tried to advise and encourage one of the girl in the camp who did not go to school because she would get married by her father in her seventeen years old. Muzoon said that early marriage is not good for a young girl. Here's the quote:

Why are none of you in school?

The girls laughed! One said, "why bother?" they started talking about how their parents believed the best chance a young girl had was to marry. They said their parents believed that marriage was the best future for their daughters.



I knew this wasn't right. I knew that early marriage would trap girls in a cycle of poverty and deprivation. (44)

Social concern can be seen in the character of Muzoon who began to worry about the future of the girls in the refugee camp. The women were not educated by their parents and would only end up in early marriage. With a high social spirit and eager to help the women, Muzoon came to them and gave them advice to fight for their own rights.

Conclusion

This study found out that there were some discrimination experienced by the refugee girls in Malala's *We Are Displaced* when they were living their hometown and move to America, such as: (1) racial discrimination, (2) gender discrimination and (3) social class discrimination. In fact, the discrimination against the women that have been displaced from their country happened due to a war or disaster, so they have to live in the refugee camps before being displaced to other country. Since they have experienced some bad situation due to political and religion oppression, war, migration and resettlement, consequently all conditions affect their life to be more suffered. They were often separated, killed and lose their family when escaping from the old place to find the new places and new language. Thus, based on the result, it was also revealed the life experiences related to the author's life are based on educational value, namely: (1) Independence value related to having a certain level of physical competence so that loss of strength or coordination will never occur in the midst of someone's efforts to achieve goals, (2) Creativity value is when someone who has the ability to be constructive in attitude and thinking, and (3) Social concern value is responsive and sensitive to the conditions around us.

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