

Conference Paper

Characters in Ma'mun Affany's Novel 29 Juz Harga Wanita

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Abstract

This study is concerned about the analysis of a novel which focuses on the characters of the protagonist named Toni in the novel *29 Juz Harga Wanita* written by Ma'mun Affany in 2010. The novel is about a hard man but yearning for a women's tenderness. The man has been silenced by his father for twenty years. He also loves a graceful girl who is able to change Toni's mindset so that Toni turns into a better man in his life. The objectives of this study are to reveal the protagonist's characters and to analyse how the protagonist's characters reflected in the novel. The theory of characters is adopted from Lickona (2004). The protagonist's characters depicted in the novel cover four aspects: fortitude, self control, and hard work. The study was conducted by using descriptive qualitative method proposed by Moleong (2013). The findings of this study show that the protagonist has presented good characters in the novel which are worth adopting to put into practice in real life. Such good characters as fortitude, self control, and hard work are evidently depicted in the novel. The conclusion shows that the good characters presented by Toni attracts amazement and invites sympathy from the readers.

Keywords: character, fortitude, self control, hard work.

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1. Introduction

Literary works contain various ideas, theories and systems of thought. These aspects come from the author who has an important role in using the creative ideas outlined in his works. Novel is one kind of literary works in which the author uses the genre to share experiences about the description of life. Wellek and Warren (2013: 255) state that the novel is considered as a document of historical case, a story of real events, and the history of a human's life. Novel contains a series of life stories of society. By reading a novel, the readers can increase their knowledge and get useful information. In the story of a novel, there are about challenges of life, the story of struggle in achieving the ideals which can attract the reader's attention to read it.

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Character is an important element in literary works. In the novel, the character is created by the author to convey his ideas and feelings about something that happens in this world. When reading a novel it will show up feelings and see the story about the life of every character in the novel. The author writes a novel not only to induce feelings of pleasure to the readers but also to convey a message about the events and actions of the characters in the novel. The author describes that everyone has differences in character such as patience, loyalty, bad temper, patriotism, heroism, sense of belonging, sense of humour, and the like.

The novel entitled *29 Juz Harga Wanita* by Ma'mun Affany contains the story of a journey of life of a young man in reaching his dreams. He is known as a writer of Islamic nuanced romances with a strong romanticism. Ma'mun Affany was born in Tegal 21st September 1986. This young writer is not much highlighted in print media or mainstream online media but his novel has circulated nearly 40,000 copies in the hands of the readers. This novel is adopted as the main sources of data in this study which focuses the analysis on the protagonist's characters. The protagonist of the novel named Toni is a person who plays in the first part. The protagonist character is considered as a hero in the story. Generally, the protagonist reflects good characters so that many readers take the protagonist as the idol in the story. Because the protagonist reflects good behaviour and presents responsibility, the readers generally considers him as a hero and they even learn and try to imitate the way how the protagonist behaves in life.

Affany's novel *29 Juz Harga Wanita* is selected because it conveys a story which vividly portrays very interesting characters of the protagonist. The protagonist's characters reflected in the novel are fortitude, self control and hard work. This is the reason why this novel is chosen as the main source of data in this study.

2. Literature Review

As the topic of this study is concerned about character, the theory of character is worth describing in this section. Character is one of the most important elements in literature. Character holds the main role in any kind of literature such as novel, drama, tale, and poem. In literature, the characters are not only in the form of human beings, but also in the form of animals. Characters as the person that presented in the literary work, that their appearance is interpreted by the reader as being endowed with desires, motivation, and emotional qualities that are expressed in their appearance is interpreted by the reader as being endowed with desires, motivation and emotional qualities that are expressed in their saying and action in the story. On the other word,

character in the fiction work is the representative and the description of personal qualities in the real life. Therefore, although the character in a literary work is fictitious, it represents the behaviour of a community in real life.

The term character is defined as a reliable inner disposition to respond to situations in a morally good way (Lickona, 1991: 51). He further conceives that character has three interrelated parts: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behaviour. A good character includes knowledge of goodness, and cause commitment (intention) of goodness, and finally actually doing goodness. In other words, character refers to a set of knowledge (cognitive), attitudes, motivations, behaviour, and skills. From the above description it is understood that character is the value of universal human behaviour that covers all human activities, in order to relate with God, with himself, with others, as well as with the environment, which manifests itself in the mind, attitudes, feelings, words, and actions based on religious norms, laws, manners, culture, and customs.

Lickona (2004: 8) states that there are ten essential virtues which are most important for strong character. The ten essential virtues are: wisdom, justice, fortitude, self-control, love, positive attitude, hard work, integrity, gratitude, and humility. Thus, character does not only teach what is right and what is wrong to the person but rather it is the reflection of his personality covering the way he behave, speak, and interact with other people.

2.1. Fortitude

Lickona (2004: 8) states that fortitude enables us to do what is right in the face of difficulty. The right decision in life is often the hard one. One high school's motto says: "Do the hard right instead of the easy wrong." A familiar maxim says, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." Fortitude is the inner toughness that enables us to overcome or withstand hardship, defeats, inconvenience, and pain. Courage, resilience, patience, perseverance, endurance, and a healthy self confidence are all aspects of fortitude. Many people are frustrated because they are unprepared to deal with life's inevitable disappointments. We need to teach students to develop their character more through sufferings than through successes, that setbacks can make someone stronger if he does not give up until he reaches the success.

2.2. Self control

Lickona (2004: 9) states that self-control is the ability to govern ourselves. It enables us to control our temper, regulate our sensual appetites and passions, and pursue even

legitimate pleasures in moderation. It is the power to resist temptation, to wait, and to delay gratification in the pursuit of higher and distant goals. An old saying recognizes the importance of self-control in the moral life: "Either we rule our desires, or our desires rule us." Reckless, self-destructive, and criminal behaviours flourish in the absence of self-control.

2.3. Hard work

Lickona (2004: 10) states that there is no substitute in life for hard work. "I challenge you," says the great basketball coach John Wooden, "to show me one single solitary individual who achieved his or her own personal greatness without lots of hard work." Hard work includes the virtues of initiative, diligence, goal-setting, and resourcefulness.

3. Research Method

This study used descriptive qualitative research. Moleong (2013) defines that qualitative research is a research procedure in which the data are in the form of word description, written or oral, from people and their behaviour that are being observed. Qualitative research is used to explain and understand holistically a phenomenon, usually human and their behaviour and describes it in the form of word description. In this study the protagonist's characters depicted in the novel entitled *29 Juz Harga Wanita* are analyzed by using qualitative descriptive research. Thus, the main source of data was derived from the above mentioned novel. There are some steps which were used to collect the data such as reading and understanding the novel, classifying the data into related points including in the research problem of this research, conducting survey towards paragraph and dialogues in the novel, and choosing the data dealing with the problem identification. The procedures taken in the analysis are identifying the data which refers to the protagonist's characters, classifying the obtained data based on the research problem, analyzing the obtained data about the protagonist's characters based on the theory adopted.

4. Discussion

This chapter contains the analysis of the characters in the novel entitled *29 Juz Harga Wanita* written by Ma'mun Affany which tells about the journey of the heart of a simple man named Toni Saputra. He cannot continue his higher education because after he

has completed his high school he works as labourer in a construction company. From his childhood, he lives with his father and he does not know his mother because she passes away at the time of his birth. He only knows his mother's name Halimahtus Sa'diyah. He has never felt the warm embrace of his mother whereas his father does not take much care of him and even he gets rude education from his own father. His fortitude encourages himself to be a patient man in his daily life. He must control his emotions in facing his temperamental father and other problems in his life. As he grows up, he falls in love with a graceful woman in the boarding school where he works. The journey of his love is very sad. There are many obstacles that must be passed and he must control all his anger, emotion, and lust to realize all his goals. His perseverance in fighting for his love is amazing. Ultimately, Toni is successful and the woman whom he loves becomes his wife. Unluckily, Toni's wife gets such a serious accident that she does not remember him anymore. However, because of his fortitude, he can get through all his problems. In the end, all the problems are gone. Finally, Toni leads a happy life with his family.

Toni as the central character in the novel plays very important roles throughout the story from the very beginning up to the end. The protagonist's characters which are analyzed in this study cover three aspects *fortitude*, *self control*, and *hard work*.

4.1. Fortitude

Fortitude is more important than efforts. All people can do their best but they will never reach a success unless they have fortitude. By having fortitude they can pass to face many problems, trials, and challenges in their life and they will struggle to achieve their ideals and will never give up.

The first character of the novel that has fortitude is Toni. He has a stern fortitude to face his own father who is ruthless to him. He is an ordinary child who wants to know stories about his mother but his father never tells him about it. He feels as though he were a child with no direction and affection. He tries to be patient even though he always gets rough treatment from his father in his daily life. He understands the condition of his father who is depressed by deep sadness because the figure of the woman he loves has passed away. Therefore, his father wreaks his depression to Toni.

The protagonist's fortitude is also reflected when his love is rejected by a woman he loves so much. Toni's first love story is so pathetic. It starts when he meets a graceful woman named Naela who is so fascinating with her grace and piety. Then, he struggles to get her heart; but in fact, his love is rejected. Toni's fortitude is implied when his

love for Naela is rejected but he remains steadfast even though he feels a very deep pain.

Patience, confidence, and courage are three aspects of fortitude. It happens when Toni is so patient to wait for a good chance in future although his love for Naela has been rejected. He is confident that one day he can win her heart if he has a spirit or courage to keep on struggling. He tries to meet Naela to apologize because he realizes that he has forced Naela to love him but she refuses and gets away from him. Then, Toni tries another strategy by asking Naela's close friend named Iza to arrange a meeting with him but she does not tell her about his request. Toni is so patient to spare his time to meet Iza and asks about Naela but Iza always says that Naela is just fine. Day after day Toni always meets Iza until she feels pitiful to him and finally she tells him that Naela is at the house of her *Kiyai* 'leader of a boarding school'. Then Toni rushes to come to the *Kiyai*'s house. The leader of the school just gives a chance to Toni that he can only see Naela but he cannot talk with her and he orders him to improve his religious knowledge. Toni's bravery to come to the *Kiyai*'s house indicates his courage which constitutes one of the aspects of fortitude according to Lickona.

Toni's fortitude is again implied when he forces Naela to accept his love. He realizes that he is not suitable for her because she is a pious woman who is diligent to do prayers whereas he rarely does it. She is fluent in reciting the Holy Qur'an, whereas he cannot do it. But, Toni with his fortitude struggles to improve his religious knowledge to get her love. He learns to be a pious man and diligent to observe prayers and he studies to recite the Holy Quran. After he has wondered in Jakarta for two years, he returns home to his hometown to meet his father and relatives. He also wants to see Naela who has been his passion in her life. Although his previous love has been rejected Toni encounters Iza to ask about Naela's condition. But Iza still does not tell him about Naela. His patience is again tested as he cannot see her directly. Iza just asks him to write a letter to her but Eko, her friend prevents him to meet her.

Toni is now different; after he has studied religion for two years in Jakarta he can read Qur'an. He also works hard though as a personal driver. Finally, Toni can meet Naela and he conveys all his feelings to her. Naela is amazed when she finds Toni now can read Quran and she feels amazed by his extraordinary struggle. Then, Toni has higher self confidence to propose her to her parents after catching a signal that now Naela can accept his love for her.

Toni's fortitude is also depicted in the novel when he is so patient to face the behaviour of his own father who has made him feel sad and bear shame at the time of his wedding party. His fortitude is tested because his father is not present at the

time of his wedding party. He feels sad and ashamed but he remains steadfast with his father's behaviour.

Toni's fortitude is again tested by an ordeal which comes to his household. His wife suddenly disappears and he has been looking for her everywhere but he does not find her. After some time she comes again but not as it used to be. Naela thinks of Toni as another man not as her husband. He has to face such a heavy ordeal in his life that a wife whom he has chased for a long time finally forgets him because of some disease. He hopes that after some time Naela can get recovered from her illness and can restore her memory that she has a husband named Toni. He remains patient to face all the trials and his self confidence also indicates his fortitude.

4.2. Self control

Self control is necessary in all aspects of life. Someone is able to assess and make estimate of the behaviour to be done so that he can prevent an unpleasant thing that will happen later. Toni is a great man who can manage his self control. It is implied when he shows his maturity to restrain the emotions when he gets ill treatment from his father; he never opposes him. If only, Toni were not restrained against his father's conduct to him, they would hit each other. On the other side, Toni's father is a lucky man because he has a great boy like Toni who can manage his self control. When he cannot bear holding his emotion, he avoids the quarrel by trying to leave him because he is so cruel to him. But he does not have the heart to do it; he remains staying with him as he understands his father's condition.

Toni's self control is indicated in the novel when he has to face his father who is selfish and never shares stories with him. When he asks his father why he is always pensive he even gets a slap on his face from him. Toni never challenges his father even though his cheeks are bleeding because of his father's hit. He can manage his emotions and control himself.

Toni's self control is also reflected when he is watered by his father almost every morning to wake him up. Sometimes when Toni is still sleeping soundly, his father pours water over his body. He gets up late because he feels very tired after he works as construction labourers. Despite rude treatment he undergoes from his father, Toni never at all challenges him as he can control himself wisely. He also can control himself when his friends mock him because he cannot even memorize the expressions in the *azan* 'prayer call'. Toni can restrain his emotions when his friends insult him. He does not get angry but he considers the insult as a whip to make him better. Then, he decides to improve himself by learning what he is supposed to know as a Muslim. Further it

happens when he is in the mosque an old man removes him from being in the first row during prayer time. Toni restrains his emotions because he does not want to quarrel with an old man in the mosque. Although he knows that the old man's conduct is wrong, he keeps his disappointment in his heart.

4.3. Hard work

Hard work is another character of the protagonist of the novel under study. Hard work is a keyword to achieve a success. Toni is a hard working man to survive as he is born in a family which is poor financially as well as affectionately as his mother passes away when she gives birth to him. Toni is a hard working man. His burly body indicates that he is a hard working man to continue his survival. He is aware of his father's condition as the son of a poor father who has to work hard to meet his needs. He also studies hard when he wants to be a pious man. He never feels tired to study until late at night. His ambition to be a pious man makes his passion to change himself. His perseverance as one of the aspects of hard work is portrayed when he does not feel ashamed to learn how to pray at his adult age. For him it is never too late to learn. Actually he regrets that he did not learn the religious knowledge when he was a child. Now he realizes that even if it is difficult for him to study he will be able to fulfil his obligation as a Muslim to worship Allah the Almighty then his heart will feel peaceful.

His hard work is also indicated when Toni leaves his hometown to wander to Jakarta to change his destiny. His perseverance to find a job in Jakarta indicates his character as a hard worker because he does not care about the type of job he can get. The most important thing for him is that he can work and it means he can survive. Even once he works as a dish washer in a food stall. He often gets insults in his work as a dish washer but he responds the insult as a motivation in his life. He will collect all his insults because he knows later that all his experiences will become sweet memories when he becomes a successful man.

When he suffers from a serious financial problem and he has no place to live in Jakarta, he has to live in a mosque which does not require any rent. Then, he meets a grandmother in the mosque who feels very pitiful to Toni and she offers him a job as a gardener in her home. Then he cleans her garden seriously and he is always ready when she needs him to do anything. His hard work and his sincerity in working make her feel satisfied with the outcome so that she offers him a job as a worker in her printing press. Toni's status gets better because Allah blesses his sincere efforts. His perseverance to work and to study religion makes the grandma give attention to help

teach him every day. Gradually, her family has regarded Toni as a member of their family.

As the days go by, Toni no longer works in printing company with a dull bag. He becomes a personal driver of Mr. Hamid, the son of the grandma. Mr. Hamid asks him to be neat in his dressing because he will accompany him wherever he goes out of town for his business affairs. Actually Toni wants to tell his father about his present job but he is worried that he is not happy with his hard work. He never appreciates Toni's hard work. Toni's hard work is not in vain. He is successful to achieve his ambitions. His perseverance in working hard provides great opportunities in his life. At first he was just a construction coolie in the village and he can work as a dish washer in Jakarta and he also works in printing company and a gardener until finally he becomes a personal driver with neat dressing. He believes that the Almighty will change his destiny if he makes an attempt to change it by working hard.

5. Findings

Based on analysis of the protagonist characters in the novel entitled *29 Juz Harga Wanita*, there are three aspects of those characters *fortitude, self control, and hard work*. Fortitude is reflected in the protagonist named Toni who is patient to face every obstacles and ordeals in his life. He also can control his emotions against any challenges and assaults to avoid the condition getting worse. Toni is also a hard worker. When he realizes his weaknesses in his knowledge about religion, he works hard to study religion until he is able not only to recite the Holy Quran but also to become a preacher in the Friday's prayer.

6. Conclusion

As the topic of this study suggests, the conclusion is focused on the analysis of the protagonist's characters covering fortitude, self control and hard work. It happens that Toni has great characters which lead him to be a successful man. It is proved by Toni who always struggles and prays to the Almighty to achieve his ideals. Toni has great fortitude to face challenges in his life. He never gives up although he is in a critical condition. His fortitude can be adopted as a good lesson that it is a wise character to be strong to face the worst possible condition in life.

Self control is also another asset of Toni's character to resist his temper despite various ordeals, be it in the form of mockery or humiliation and other annoying conditions. He never opposes his father in spite of his bad treatment and rude education to him.

When Toni is humiliated by his friend, he can stifle his emotions. It is wise to take a good lesson from Toni's strength to restrain self control in resisting emotions. Many problems that often arise in this life are caused by one's inability to control his temper. Therefore, self control becomes an important aspect in the actualization of mindset, feeling, and behaviour in facing every situation. A person who can control the self from negative things will certainly get a positive assessment. Self control can help someone to achieve goals because a person who can refrain from deeds that can harm himself and able to choose actions that provide benefits, indicates his emotional maturity and he will not easily be affected by needs that cause momentary pleasure.

Hard work is also reflected in Toni's character which invites the readers to be passionate to achieve goals in life. Hard work is necessary in order to attain success in all aspects of life. Nothing comes to someone without hard work. Dreams will not come true without an attempt which is accompanied by hard work. At first he is just only labourer in his village when there is somebody who builds a house. In Jakarta he works as a dish washer and then he works in printing company and a gardener until finally he becomes a personal driver with neat dressing. He believes that the Almighty will change his destiny if he makes an attempt to change it by working hard.

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