

THE MAIN CHARACTER'S POWER FEMINISM IN THE NOVEL "SELENA" BY TERE LIYE

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Abstract: This study examines the concept of feminism as perceived by Naomi Wolf, focusing on the character Selena and its alignment with the five principles of power feminism. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach and incorporates a review of relevant literature. The primary data source utilized in this study is the literary work titled "Selena" authored by Tere Liye, which was published in the year 2020. The secondary data source incorporates a variety of scholarly publications, including journals, books, and theses that are relevant to the research being conducted. The data collecting process employed the Read and read-and-note technique. The process of data analysis followed the feminist analytical framework proposed by Ruthven, which involved the identification of female characters within literary texts and the examination of their roles within the context of family, society, and their broader social surroundings. This literary work explores the tenacity exhibited by the protagonist, Selena, in her pursuit of personal rights, which can be traced back to her mother's desire to relocate. The findings of the study indicate that Naomi Wolf's five principles of power are evident in Selena's character through five distinct manifestations. Firstly, Selena's resistance to the predetermined course of her life. Secondly, Selena's involvement in public affairs. Thirdly, Selena's expression of her individuality. Fourthly, the development of Selena's character through her life experiences. Lastly, the presence of strength and power within Selena's character.

Keywords: Naomi Wolf, Power Feminism, Selena

INTRODUCTION

Human life has rights inherent in humans throughout their lives; these rights should be shared equally between men and women even though they have different races, skin, colors, languages, and cultures. It is appropriate that every human being has a right to be born, namely equal or the same; every human being must be treated equally "sameness" because "every human being is the same" (Smith et al., 2008).

Different genders do not prevent human beings from getting their rights. If a man has freedom of opinion, then a woman also has the same freedom to fight for her voice; she cannot just stand by and leave her fate to other groups, according to Tuti in her speech (in Wiyatmi, 2012). Women should realize and move to get a decent position and respect.

However, women with the right to freedom do not so easily fight for their position and deserve respect because some individuals do not have the same freedom. Things that also influence it, such as differences in race, language, skin color, and body shape, also play a role. Share in women's freedom. Standardization of beauty is the reason for the restraint of women in his life. Beauty as a currency system is like a gold standard; this system that dominates society makes women compete for their rights (Wolf, 2002).

The view of having a body shape like a Spanish guitar, long straight hair, white skin, and ideal body weight for beauty is a frightening specter for women to leave the house. The meaning of beauty has a relative value, this increasingly sharp discrimination is what ultimately leads to racism against women

because, in essence, what is owned by individuals is natural, it is not fair to look at individuals only from their physical aspects because each individual has different physical features (Syata, 2012).

This beauty standard is a nightmare for other women; women are exposed to physical and psychological attacks due to their desire to meet beauty standards. They are also haunted by feelings of inadequacy and discomfort, making women flock to beauty clinics to achieve these beauty standards. Naomi Wolf as one of the third-wave feminist figures in America (in Karolus, 2016), argues that beauty standards in America at that time made women imprisoned in dissatisfaction with their bodies and a feeling of not being able to satisfy men, even the point of hating their bodies.

The meaning of beauty should no longer be judged physically but in terms of spiritual (inner beauty); no matter how perfect a person's physique is, even if it meets beauty standards, it will be useless if it cannot provide positive energy for the surrounding. Instead of beauty being judged by straight hair, beauty can be judged by the achievements and ethics of the individual; spiritual beauty (inner beauty) will automatically emanate from individuals who, in their daily lives, can positively impact the surrounding environment (Syata, 2012).

Proving the existence of inner beauty is a privilege for Selena, the main character in Selena Tere Liye. Selena was born to an underprivileged family in the Sabit 6 district of the Moon clan; her father died due to illness, and not long after her mother followed her father's departure, 15- 15-year-old Selena began a new life without parents by moving to the city of Tishri. and living with her uncle named Uncle Raf, with her characteristic curly hair, thin body, and poor fighting skills like an elephants fart, so that she was nicknamed the curly one; she was not afraid to fulfill his rights as a young woman who wanted to have an education in ABTT. Moreover, they become a great scout of the Moon clan.

Based on the description above, the three researchers used Naomi Wolf's feminist perspective, namely power feminism. This theory is by the character Selena, as told in the novel. Naomi Wolf is an initiator of feminism from America. She voices her opinion about women's strength and resistance and provides opportunities for women to get equal opportunities as men in various aspects of life.

Naomi Wolf's Feminism of Power

In liberal feminism, there are two approaches proposed by Naomi Wolf 1997, namely victim feminism and power feminism; victim feminism is described by 18 principles, and 16 principles describe power feminism. Victim feminism is an understanding that implies women seek power in conditions of powerless identity claims; women are considered as "angels" who are confined, fragile, and do things according to conscience, not logic (Wolf, 1999).

Power feminism, according to Wolf, emphasizes that women also have strength and are resilient to the problems they face so that they do not need to depend on men and be bound by patriarchal values (Maghfiroh & -, 2020). Power feminism aims to gain power, health, education, and voting rights with their mindset and will, whatever they do with it all, as long as it is used in the capacity of individual adult women (Wolf, 1999).

Wolf's power feminism is outlined in 16 principles and summarized into five principles. First, women and men have equal significance in human life. At this level, believing "I am a feminist" must mean "I am a human being," so the world must open equal opportunities for all women regardless of race, ethnicity, language, and even their goodness. Having the same opportunity as men to explore and obtain their rights as human beings, women are free to utilize or save, give and take, build, and even destroy (Wolf, 1999).

Secondly, women have the right to determine their path in life. No one can stop women based on their gender or sexual orientation. Women have the right to choose and be confident in their choices, and when they pursue power, they are responsible, both for their interests and for creating a more just world, because their choices can affect their surroundings and change the world. Naomi Wolf (in Wachtell, 2017) revealed that today, women from various backgrounds confidently wear items that show their identity, are fed up with sexual harassment and humiliation, and even bring their children to the field to voice gender equality.

Third, the experiences that women have meaning, not just empty talk. With their experience, women have the right to speak up and have open discussions; in this case, the stereotype of women as weak human beings can prove that stereotypes are wrong by fighting back and voicing their experiences, as long as the values of honesty and justice limit it, the more women reveal, the more

secure their position (Wolf, 1999).

Fourth, women have the right to speak the truth about their experiences. In most cases, when women speak the truth and demand injustice, the response is "whining." Even when women document rape, violence, and discrimination, it is claimed to be a "culture of grievance" If men are involved in demonstrations against paying high taxes, it is called "tax payer rebellion" instead of "complaining" as directed at women, so women who dare to speak the truth feel less valued and choose to remain silent (Wolf, 1999).

Fifth, women deserve more of what they do not have just because they are women: respect from others, self-esteem, education, safety, health, representation, and finances. Using politics and capitalism to empower women in the future is not selfish, but that is what is deserved for the sake of empowerment; even women who have power do not escape the limitations of movement, social and cultural factors, especially patriarchal culture that limits women's movement of their desires (Wolf, 1999).

Several researchers have studied power feminism from Wolf's perspective, one of them in Annatasya & Saksono's research (2021) examining the resistance or resilience of women in the film *Nur Eine Frau* by Sherry Horman; the results of this study are forms of resistance in the main female character in the form of The main character's courage in making her own decisions her way of life; firm in what she chooses; dare to voice her opinion; independence resistance is reflected in her attitude (Annatasya & Saksono, 2021). The study of Naomi Wolf's power feminism is also applied by Melania's research et al. (2022) studying Wolf's perspective on feminism with the novel *Alaska* by Sitti Annisa Fatmasari as the object; the purpose of this study is to describe the results of the analyzing the dialogue of the character Alana in the novel *Alaska* using the five core principles of Naomi Wolf's power feminism (Melania et al., 2022).

Next, the study of power feminism is used by Muslimin (2019); in his research, the object used is the novel *Destroy, She Said* by Marguerite Duras. His research discusses women's efforts to dominate among more dominating men; the study results show that women have power from personal charm, assertiveness, and resilience. Women use this power to dominate men, while the resulting domination does not make women superior but makes them equal to men (Muslimin, 2019).

This study uses the novel *Selena* by Tere Liye as the object of study and focuses on the existence of power feminism in the main character, *Selena*; what distinguishes this research from the previous ones is the focus taken in the research of Muslimin (2019) and Ni Putu Melania et al. (2022) oriented to the efforts of woman figures to dominate and the value of freedom in *Alana's* character, in Berliana and Lutfi's research (2021) there are differences in the object of study used, namely the film object as the chosen object, while the similarities in this study are using Naomi Wolf's feminist theory of power and object novel study used by two previous studies.

Researchers used the Novel *Selena* as an object because this novel has an appeal to its genre, namely *sci-fi* with forward and backward storylines that can make the readers dissolve in the emotions of the main character, *Selena*, the character *Selena* who was born in a family unable to fight alone in achieving her rights and proving that gender differences are not an excuse in achieving power, she is not afraid of the environment that underestimates her. Instead, she makes her shortcomings a motivation for a decent life as a young woman. Based on this background, the problem formulation in this study is "what *Selena* does to achieve power in the midst of her shortcomings." This study aims to describe the existence of Naomi Wolf's power feminism in the character *Selena* in the novel *Selena* by Tere Liye.

METHOD

This type of research is qualitative descriptive with a feminist approach (Sidiq & Mujahidin, 2019; Sugiyono, 2013). Qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects in terms of descriptive behavior.

This study uses a feminist approach, with Naomi Wolf's Power Feminism theory. Feminism studies are seen from a woman's point of view but also their relationship with men, their families, and

their environment (Sofia, 2009; Kholil, 2022). The material object of this research is *Selena*, a Novel by Tere Liye in 2020, published by Gramedia Pustaka Utama, Jakarta.

In analyzing feminism, Ruthven (1990) provides the following steps: first, to identify female characters in literary works; second, to find the position of women in their family, society, and social environment. So, from the steps given by Ruthven above, the identification of this study focuses on the female character (Selena) in the novel *Selena* by utilizing Naomi Wolf's feminist theory of power to see the existence of female characters.

ANALYSIS

Naomi Wolf, one of the figures of liberal feminism, argues that women's choices can affect the lives of those around them and change the world (Wolf, 1999); this is by Naomi Wolf's five principles that discuss women's power and strength. This section describes the existence of power feminism in *Selena* in a context divided into five sub-chapters according to the approach used.

In achieving power, the tools a woman uses must be indirect. Fighting, shouting, or other masculine things are not by a woman's psychological and physical strength, so it needs to be understood and realized by women. The power that women can use can be in the form of attractiveness and women's attitudes in facing life (Yangsen, 2021). Women's resistance in the novel *Selena* describes Selena's self-defense in fighting for her rights as a young woman. Intervention in the public sphere is needed to prove that women have the right to determine their way of life. At the stage where women have the right to determine their way of life, women need to manifest their identity to convince themselves that what they do is right and firm in something they choose; justification or self-actualization of their life experience also becomes an essential process in realizing the existence of strength and power in women.

Selena's Resistance to Life's Destiny

Women's resistance is a response against social stigma and stereotypes aimed at women and evidence of defense by utilizing the power and strength of the self (Maghfiroh & -, 2020). The narrative in *Selena's* novel describes the evidence of Selena's changing destiny by moving to the Tishri capital city and starting a new life as a strong young woman.

"Alright, enough of these passing thoughts. I need to focus. I have to start packing. I'll be leaving for the city of Tishri early tomorrow morning. I turned right, quickly entered the room, grabbed the travel bag." (Liye, 2020)

Before her mother died, she gave Selena a will to move to Tishri, the capital city, and meet her uncle, Raf; Selena will start her new life as a fifteen-year-old girl and be raised by her uncle's family. So she convinced herself and immediately packed up because the next day, Selena had to leave for the capital alone; she was given a modest allowance by the head of the Sickle 6 districts.

The quote above shows a woman's resistance to the fate that befell her; with her resilience, Selena decided to move to the capital and start a new chapter of life as a fifteen-year-old female teenager. The resistance of Selena's character relates to the first principle of power feminism by Naomi Wolf, which is that women and men have equal significance in human life. The higher the demand for self-development, a woman needs the same opportunity to improve her quality (Djoeffan, 2001).

The next resistance that was proven by Selena's character when facing seniors who bully her during student orientation at ABTT is that Selena feels that she should not be bullied just because she is fighting for her desire to become a student at the academy. At first, Selena refused firmly, but her seniors insisted by pushing Selena's shoulder, and then she showed her strength by issuing a thumping punch. Selena's friend Tazk helped fight because he saw that the number of opponents needed to be balanced.

"You push up a hundred times, kinky! That's your punishment," snapped a senior. "No way". I shook my head. "What did you say?" one of the seniors holding my collar. "No way." I answered more firmly. The seniors were about to push me. I clenched my jaw. BOOM! I let go of the punch with a

thud first. Forget the rule of who strikes first; my patience had run out. The seniors were knocked down. Tazk, who was usually restrained, decided to help me. (Liye, 2020).

The quote above shows Selena's resistance when she was ridiculed and bullied by her seniors, then Tazk helped Selena and took part in attacking her seniors, who acted arbitrarily. It relates to the first principle of power feminism, namely that men and women have equal significance in human life. Tazk proves that men and women have the same rights in life. In line with previous research using the film object "Nur Eine Frau," a woman's resistance can be in the form of defense and resistance to the treatment they receive. The biggest motivation for carrying out resistance is a strong desire to improve justice; the perpetrators of resistance have extraordinary courage and courage to continue to fight (Annatasya & Saksono, 2021).

Selena's role in the public sphere

Women have an essential role in society, giving women their rights. Women and men each have their place without reducing their rights because intellectual mindsets determine equal values between men and women (Wahyudi, 2018). This is in line with the second principle of power feminism, which is that women have the right to determine their path in life.

I took a quick peek at the map that Aq was holding, turning my head to the wall of the pit. Hey, I forgot that I have that unique ability. I can accurately record whatever I see for the first time. I seemed to understand something. "How do you know about that? I mean, it requires incredible foresight, complicated calculations, and you just have to look at the wall." (Liye, 2020).

It was Selena's second day at work. She saw Aq discussing with two Tishri City train company engineers. The discussion had yet to find a bright spot because one wrong step would potentially collapse and endanger construction workers. Seeing this, Selena decided to help solve the problem by using the power of her eyes, which can analyze in detail the objects she sees.

Selena took it upon herself to help the construction workers solve the problems; she used her strength to analyze in detail the objects she saw and decided to help solve the problem. Women have strength from intelligence, resilience, charm, and courage (Panambunan et al., 2022). relates to the second principle of power feminism, which is that women Have the right to determine their path in life. In line with the research using the object of the novel "Destroy, She Said," the data from this study show evidence of Selena's character's toughness in facing her destiny. Women have power obtained from self-charm, assertiveness, and obstinacy (Muslimin, 2019).

Selena's Manifestation of Her Identity

In addition to freedom in making decisions, women have the right to have confidence in themselves, women have the right to voice their opinions whether it is good or not, and rights must be prioritized over goodness (Tong, 2009). Having strong beliefs and sticking to them is a manifestation that individuals can do; it means having their views in making decisions and having the courage to do and be responsible for them. This relates to the third principle of power feminism, namely that women's experience has meaning, not just sheer nonsense.

"I can conquer the academic exam, I'm sure I can. My stature is also more than enough to pass the physical exam." (Liye, 2020).

"I am willing to do anything to be accepted there" (Liye, 2020).

"I am willing to do anything to be accepted into the ABTT" (Liye, 2020).

"I am willing to do anything to be accepted into the Shadow Academy. Really" (Liye, 2020).

When she heard the news of the opening of new student registration, Selena rushed to register herself. She started to study the material that would be tested during the entrance test. During her study process, Selena continued to manifest in the form of saying the same thing over and over again that she was ready and willing to do anything to be accepted into the Shadow Academy. As a woman, Selena has power over her choices because women have the right to determine the actions they want to take (Khairun Nisya & Dwi Komalasari, 2020).

Selena has such a strong determination that she believes in herself by manifesting in her mind;

she proves that manifesting through the mind supported by a strong desire will produce the desired results. Selena manifests herself based on her experience working in underground construction so that he can prove that her experience is not nonsense. It relates to the third principle of power feminism, which is that women's experiences have a meaning, not just nonsense. In line with previous research using the novel object "Destroy, She Said," the data results show that women have strong beliefs based on their experiences. Women's experiences are used as a reflection in viewing the strength that comes from within themselves (Muslimin, 2019).

Selena's Actualization of Her Life Experience

The feminist movement wants women to have strong, independent, authoritarian principles without forgetting their nature as women (Mulyadi, 2018). Women have the same rights as men in various fields in a complete and individualist manner (Melania et al., 2022). It aligns with the nature of self-actualization or the desire to achieve something found in Selena when she took the Shadow Academy entrance test.

I can pass the test. Fifty kilometers long run or fifteen kilometers non-stop swim, I am ready. Passing through simulated physical toughness obstacles is also acceptable. I am used to doing it (Liye, 2020).

In addition to the written test of subject matter, the Shadow Academy also applies a physical toughness test as a second-stage test for its applicants. This second-stage test makes Selena confident because before taking the Shadow Academy entrance test, Selena was used to doing things related to physical strength, such as running dozens of kilometers and swimming for hours; she was so confident to pass the Shadow Academy entrance test.

Selena is confident about taking the Shadow Academy entrance test because she has much experience, especially experience about the skills that she has been trained in since she worked at the underground construction center. This experience is evidence of Selena's self-actualization of her life experiences; this is related to the fourth principle of power feminism, which is that women have the right to tell the truth about their experiences. In previous research that used the novel object "Alaska," the data results showed similarities in a woman's self-actualization regarding her life, whereas, in previous research, it was explained that a woman has life experience and has the right to prove her experience. Because with experience, women will better understand how to act and make decisions (Melania et al., 2022).

The Existence of Selena's Strength and Power

Naomi Wolf's fifth principle of power feminism is that women deserve more than they do not have because they are female: respect from others, self-esteem, education, safety, health, representation, and finance (Wolf, 1999). It is what Selena gets from the people around her.

I was stunned to see my "attic." It was the same shape as before, but the size was now three times larger.

This loft became very friendly. A large mirror was placed near the study table. "I hope you like your new loft, Selena." (Liye, 2020).

Uncle Raf and Aunt Leh picked up Selena during the semester break at Shadow Academy, they prepared a surprise for Selena by redecorating the attic that made Selena's room into a more beautiful setting. The layout of the items was still the same, but Uncle Raf and Aunt Leh moved them into the attic to make it more spacious; they also bought a big mirror and put it next to the study table. Selena was so happy because, in addition to her room becoming more beautiful, she felt loved and appreciated as a woman.

The data above is by the fifth principle of power feminism: women deserve to receive more of something they do not have just because they are female, one of which is by getting respect from others. Aunt Leh shows her affection by redecorating Selena's attic room; this is evidence of the existence of power feminism in Selena, namely, getting respect from her aunt, so the data above shows that Selena gets respect and her rights as a woman. In contrast to previous research that used the

object of the novel "Alaska," in the novel Alaska, the female character gets recognition and respect from herself. In addition to respect from others, of course, as a woman, she must respect herself first (Melania et al., 2022). Meanwhile, the data results in this research show that Selena receives respect for her existence from the person closest to her, namely Aunt Leh.

CONCLUSION

Selena's character in the novel Selena by Tere Liye shows the existence of power feminism in her; since her mother gave her the will to move to the capital city of Tishri, the values of power feminism appear in Selena. The limited facilities and necessities make Selena realize that women must fight to fulfill their rights, not depend on others in choosing a way of life, and stick to their convictions. The form of power feminism in Selena's character is in the form of Selena's resistance to life's destiny, Selena's role in the public sphere, Selena's manifestation of her identity, Selena's actualization of her life experience, and the existence of Selena's strength and power.

In this study, the researcher has conducted an in-depth search of the topic under study so that this research can produce findings that can complement previous research through data analysis and careful and precise research methods. However, this research also has limitations that need to be acknowledged; awareness of these limitations is essential to realize that the researcher's interpretation may have specific limitations. Researchers hope that this research will provide a positive contribution. It is hoped that the shortcomings of this research will be of concern to future researchers so that they can complete and add to the findings of this research.

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