CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This section present research background, problem identification, problem limitation, research questions, research objective, and research significance

1.1 Research Background

Women are often faced with injustice in society. In 1792 the thought developed that women were less fortunate than men because they did not have the right to education, politics, property rights and work in their social reality (Retnani, 2017: 95). Furthermore, according to Weitz (2003 in Ilaa, 2021: 212), patriarchal society in the 18th and 19th centuries assumed that women were fragile, irrational, and did not think independently and even considered women like a pet owned by their masters so that women must obey their masters who are none other than their husbands. In society, the implementation of the patriarchal concept gives birth to a gender hierarchy that considers men as the superior sex so that it is superior and demonstrates women are inferior in aspects of life in society and the support of myths created by men adds to the commonplace discriminatory actions and marginalization of women so that they become familiar in society (Azzahra, 2022: 117; Khurosan, 2020:3). With this oppression, a movement to defend women emerged namely feminism.

The feminist movement has been known for a long time. The word *feminist* was put forward by Charles Fourier who was a utopian socialist activist in 1837 (Retnani, 2017: 96). The first wave of feminism started in 1972, then the second

wave began in 1960, then the third wave and postfeminism began in the late 1980s (Suwastini, 2013: 200, 205). The development of feminism is quite rapid and its followers are not monolistic so new ideas emerge that cover various types. In addition to the development of previous waves, Tong & Botts in their book entitled Feminist Thought (2018) has divided feminist types into several parts, namely liberal feminism, radical feminism, Marxist-socialist feminism, feminism psychoanalysts, care-focused feminism, ecofeminism, existentialist feminism, and queer feminism. Despite having a different focus, these movements have the same goal. The feminist movement aims to free women from patriarchal society that harms women in all aspects including work, education, society, and even politics (Retnani, 2017: 96). In everyday life, the feminism movement is often misinterpreted, considered as a demand of women, more than that the feminism movement is a social movement carried out by women and men to equalize the position of both genders and fight for what is owned by both of them fairly (Hidayanti, 2019: 23).
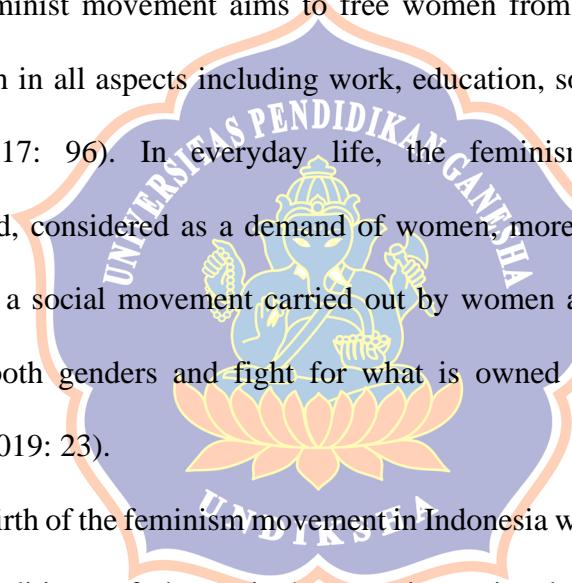
The birth of the feminism movement in Indonesia was influenced by various historical conditions of the nation's struggle, national development programs, globalization and reform as well as the religious life of the community (Djoeffan, 2001: 284). Indonesian women carried out their struggle in several stages, namely before independence which consisted of the period of women's struggle before independence, the period of struggle for women in Japanese occupation, and the period of women's struggle at independence, as well as after independence which consisted of the new order period, reform period and post-reform period. The struggle of Indonesian women was initiated by heroes such as R.A Kartini, Cut

Nyak Dien, Dwi Sartika, and others to defend ancestral lands even though they are different in terms of sex and gender with men, defend women's basic rights in the eyes of the law and to get education (Suhada, 2021: 17).

Until now, many women in Indonesia have fought for and are aware of the importance of gender equality. Normatively, Indonesia has promoted gender equality through Article 28A of the 1945 Constitution on human rights, which states that every person shall have the right to live and to defend their life and existence. Additionally, the legal basis that upholds justice for women is also found in Law No. 7 of 1984 regarding the ratification of the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. However, despite these legal frameworks, discrimination against women remains a major issue in various aspects of life, including violence, politics, and employment. According to the 2023 Annual Report of KOMNAS Perempuan, in 2022, there were 459,094 cases of reports, with 339,782 of these cases related to gender-based violence, the majority of which were perpetrated by men. In politics, data from the General Elections Commission shows that women's participation in the executive branch remains very low, with only one woman running for Deputy Mayor of Depok between 2005-2020. The main factors contributing to this low political participation are patriarchal culture, gender stereotypes, low political education, double burden, and weak political party support. In employment, the gender wage gap remains significant. In February 2022, the average salary of male employees was Rp 3,329,205, while female employees earned Rp 2,593,709. Additionally, out of 2.82 million people in managerial positions in Indonesia, only 33.08% are women. This disparity reflects the impact of patriarchal culture, which views women primarily as homemakers and

limits their participation in the workforce (KOMNAS Perempuan, 2023; Astuti et al., 2023: 147; Edwar, 2024: 383).

One way to make people aware of the importance of gender equality and feminist values is through early education. Early feminist education can be the first step to overcoming gender inequality because it can form patterns, views on life, and character from the beginning (Arof & Novita, 2024: 22). Knowledge instilled from the start will help children's social awareness of equality. Exposure to gender norms in children's socialization is not only from parents, but also from external factors such as teachers, the environment, and media children use in the learning process such as children's literature (Sari et al., 2023: 2248).

Children's literature is one of the media to teach children. Children's literature usually focuses on children aged 0-11/12 years so that the language used is by the intellectual and emotional development of their age (Soelistyarini, 2013: 184; Umami, 2018: 139). Just as the characteristics of literature proposed by Nodelman (2008: 76-81) include containing a simple language style, containing images or illustrations that aim to shadow the text, and usually children or animals as the protagonists. As a teaching medium, children's stories contain morals, children's personalities, the development of imagination and creativity, and provide knowledge of practical skills, while as entertainment, children's stories have a role to make children feel happy, get satisfaction and inner pleasure so that they can guide their emotions intelligence (Rachmanita, 2016: 112).

Children's stories could become an alternative for introducing gender awareness for advancing feminist ideology among children. Children's books are an easier medium for spreading norms, values, attitudes, and culture to them

through storylines, characterizations, traits, and specific characteristics related to the social learning process and identity development to shape children's understanding of gender (Sari et al., 2023: 2248). The value of feminism in children's literature opens a more ideal and fair view of gender, as a map of knowledge of women and men, and a way to change the way of seeing oneself, others, and the world (Ambarawati 2023: 5). With this, teachers and parents can educate children to understand the values of feminism from an early age to grow into individuals who are fair to gender equality without distinguishing someone based on their gender.
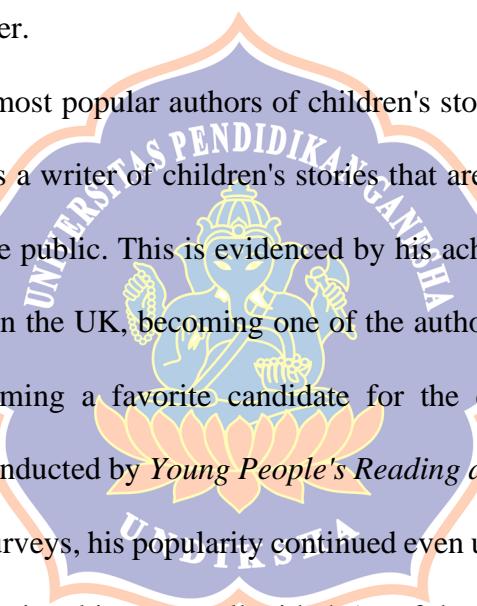
One of the most popular authors of children's stories is Roald Dahl. Roald Dahl. Roald Dahl is a writer of children's stories that are very entertaining and in great demand by the public. This is evidenced by his achievements in the form of book sales figures in the UK, becoming one of the authors with the most loans in UK libraries, becoming a favorite candidate for the children's book category through a survey conducted by *Young People's Reading at the End of The Century*, and various other surveys, his popularity continued even until 10 years of his death, he topped the UK national income poll with 4.5% of the votes from 45,000 people in determining their favorite authors (Maynard & McKnight, 2009: 153-154). Roald Dahl's children's novels are filled with joy and terror, joy and fear that create imagination and immerse children in their imagination (Adhithya &; Latha, 2018: 44).

One of the children's novels by Roald Dahl that was so popular that it was even made into a movie was a novel called *Matilda*. This novel became one of Roald Dahl's greatest works. The novel was first published in 1988 by Jonathan

Cape and has since been reprinted three times by different publishing companies (Suwastini et al., 2023:3). The novel received the Children's Book Award in 1988, was listed among the 100 best children's books on the BookTrust website in 2015, and ranked among the top 100 children's books in the School Library Journal in 2012. Because of its popularity, the novel was made into a film in 1996 and remade in 2022 under the title Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical, which won BAFTA Awards for Outstanding British Film of The Year and 76th British Academy Film Award nominations for Outstanding British Film and Best Makeup and Hair.
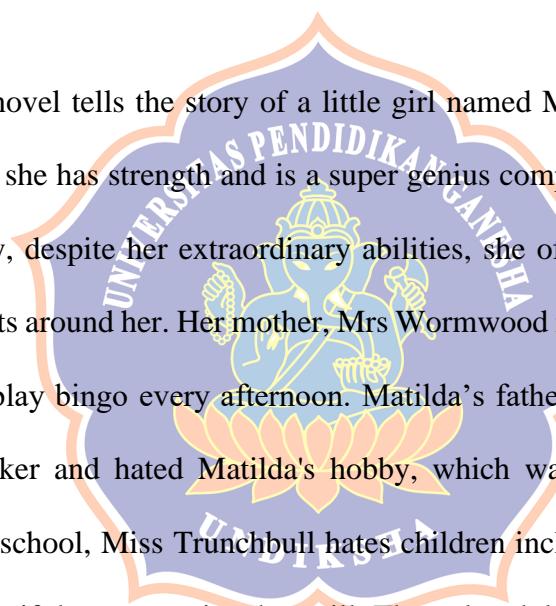
This novel tells the story of a little girl named Matilda. Matilda is not an ordinary girl, she has strength and is a super genius compared to children her age. Unfortunately, despite her extraordinary abilities, she often gets unfair treatment from the adults around her. Her mother, Mrs Wormwood never took care of her and preferred to play bingo every afternoon. Matilda's father, Mr. Wormwood was a cheating worker and hated Matilda's hobby, which was reading books. At her headmaster's school, Miss Trunchbull hates children including Matilda, and often punishes them if they act against her will. The only adult who cares for Matilda is her homeroom teacher, Miss Honey. Miss Honey realizes Matilda's strength and genius, but cannot do anything about it due to lack of support from parents and principals. With her power, Matilda punishes the adults around her to teach them a lesson due to the injustice given. In the end, Matilda lives happily with Miss Honey and successfully fights injustice.

Not only entertaining, *Matilda* has several values in it, namely heroism, literacy practice, gender role, and feminism. The value of heroism was found in

research conducted by Hansson (2012), Beauvais (2015), Yeni & Ariska (2018), and Martens (2015) which found that Matilda was able to be heroic in all situations she faced because she had extraordinary power and the ability to control these powers. Furthermore, research on literacy has been carried out by Wallin (2023) who found that *Matilda* is good for children's literacy because it has an ambiguous ideological arrangement with a mixture of prejudice and humor, criticism, and hope causing children to discuss asking critical pedagogy questions. The same thing was found in research conducted by Putri & Retnaningdyah (2018) that *Matilda* can make people, especially children, like to read and can also be used to increase children's interest in reading. In terms of gender roles, research has been conducted by Quaraishi & Jani (2020), that the role of men, Mr. Wormwood expresses emotions that are stereotypes of society, namely not prioritizing emotions of sympathy, kindness, and love. While the female characters, Matilda and Miss Trunchbull express emotions opposite to their gender stereotype. Lastly in the value of feminism, *Matilda* has been researched by Dickinson (2017), Shaw & Fard (2018), Maynard (2019), Suwastini et al., (2021), and found that the characterization in Matilda's novel reflects feminist values.

Researchers chose *Matilda* because of the many values contained in it, such as heroism, literacy practice, gender roles, and feminism, and even became one of the 100 best novels in the children's story category. This novel is categorized as a children's novel so that it can be a medium to teach children from an early age about feminism to grow into individuals who are aware of the values contained in it. Through this value, children understand gender diversity so that inequality and gender injustice are slowly cut from society. In addition, this novel also contains

interesting stories and illustrations and is suitable to read for children so that their reading skills and literacy increase. The positive values contained in it can be implemented in everyday life. Previous research has analyzed *Matilda* using a liberal feminist lens, focusing primarily on the main character. However, this study seeks to fill a gap by examining the portrayal of radical feminist values through the characterization of Miss Trunchbull in the *Matilda* by Roald Dahl.

1.2 Problem Identification

Gender injustice and the patriarchal system in society continue to occur even though the efforts of the feminist movement have been intensified for years because individuals grow up in a patriarchal environment it is difficult to change habits despite the disadvantages of the system. Therefore, this must be trimmed from the beginning or small to growing individuals who understand gender equality. This is the same as feminist values that aim to eradicate female discrimination to achieve gender equality in society. To teach gender equality through feminist values, anal children can be introduced through literary media, such as children's novels because they are interesting to read and have benefits in cultivating positive values that can be implemented in everyday life. The novel used is *Matilda* by Roald Dahl because it has proven to be favored by children and reflects the ideology of feminism through the characterization of the characters. Therefore, this research investigated radical feminism reflected in the characterization of *Matilda* by Roald Dahl, especially the character Miss Trunchbull.

1.3 Scope of The Research

The study was limited to an analysis of the characterization of Miss Trunchbull in the novel *Matilda* by Roald Dahl. Analyze aspects that reflect a radical-libertarian feminist traits that includes elements in the novel including characters and characterizations. As such, the study provides a deeper understanding of the character of Miss Trunchbull and how the character can be interpreted as a representation of radical feminism in a novel entitled *Matilda* by Roald Dahl.

1.4 Statement of the Research Question

Based on the background of the study and the problem identification above, the research questions can be determined as follows:

1. What are the character of Miss Trunchbull's in Roald Dahl's *Matilda*?

2. What radical feminist traits are represented through Miss Trunchbull's character in Roald Dahl's *Matilda*?

1.5 Objective of The Research

Based on the research question above, the objectives of this study are:

1. To describe the characterization of Miss Trunchbull character in Roald Dahl's *Matilda*

2. To elaborate radical feminism traits represented in the characterization of Miss Trunchbull in Roald Dahl's *Matilda*

1.6 Definition of Key Term

This section discussed the key terms used in this study. It explains the definitions of Radical Feminism, Character, and Novel based on relevant literature, as well as how these terms are applied in this research.

1.6.1 Radical Feminism

According to Tong & Botts (2018: 12), feminist radicals have a sharp view of the roots of women's oppression, they see power, domination, hierarchy, and competition as characteristics of the patriarchal system that cannot be reformed so that it must be repealed, this movement focuses on sex, gender, and reproduction. Radical feminists can be divided into two, namely libertarian radicals and cultural radicals. In this research, feminist radicals, especially radical libertarians point to how those things as concerns maintain the character of Miss Trunchbull in Roald Dahl's Matilda.

1.6.2 Character

According to Gill (1995:127) a character is a person who has been specifically created by the author and is not a real person in a literary work and has its characteristics. In narrative works, characters have moral and emotional values that are reflected through their interactions, actions, and appearances. In this research, the character refers to Miss Trunchbull in Roald Dahl's *Matilda*.

1.6.3 Novel

According to Kennedy & Gioia (1995: 264), Novels are a type of fictional prose that is interesting to read so that there are many enthusiasts and can develop very rapidly, it should have at least 50,000 words and aims to make readers feel like they're living real life as they read it. In this research, the novel points to a long story that contains moral values, particularly feminist values.

1.7 Significance of The Research

This research is aims to portray the characterization of Miss Trunchbull in Roald Dahl's *Matilda* from the perspective of radical feminism, particularly radical-libertarian feminism. This study offers both theoretical and practical significance by providing useful information to readers about the content of the novel and its relevance to real life. The significance of this research is divided into two aspects, theoretical significance and practical significance. Both aspects explained separately below.

1.7.1 Theoretical Significance

This study aims to provide important significance for children, especially in the context of studying literature. Especially for those who are interested in reading novels, engaging in in-depth analysis of novels, or conducting textual research using novels as main material. This research not only helps in the understanding of the material of the novel itself but also hones analytical and critical skills towards the literary text. The theoretical significance of this research is divided into two, namely literature learning and language learning.

1.7.1.1 Literature Learning

Literature offers many benefits that can enrich the lives of its readers. Some of the benefits of literature include moral values that can serve as life examples, the availability of authentic materials, the expansion of cultural understanding, vocabulary enrichment, and personal involvement in the stories and characters in literature, which can enhance the emotional and intellectual experiences of readers (Hişmanoğlu, 2005: 65). In the context of literature learning, these benefits help students understand positive values, issues, and alternatives that are useful for

everyday life, while also enriching their understanding of social and cultural contexts (Riecken & Miller, 1990: 59). Literature, as an authentic material, facilitates and motivates children in learning, improving their ability to read and comprehend more complex texts (Nanda & Susanto, 2020: 1062). In terms of cultural introduction, literature contains background on the history, conflicts, and societies of countries, providing students with the opportunity to understand and appreciate ideologies and traditions in cultural heritage (Irene, 2015: 75). Personal involvement in literature allows students to understand characters through their actions, interactions, or conversations, which can enhance their emotional and critical understanding of the texts they study (Pickering & Hoeper, 1981: 28).

1.7.1.2 Language Learning
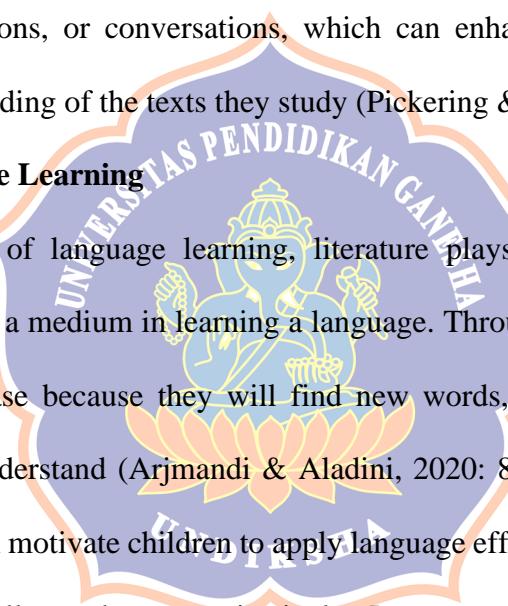
In terms of language learning, literature plays a very important role. Literature can be a medium in learning a language. Through literature, vocabulary skills will increase because they will find new words, from those who do not understand to understand (Arjmandi & Aladini, 2020: 839). Elliot (1990) argues that literature can motivate children to apply language effectively and use language wisely, emotionally, and communicatively. Language in literature tends to be dynamic and flexible because it is faced with various forms of language regulations used, it is more pleasant to achieve the development of language skills (Nanda & Santoso, 2020: 1060). Another development related to applying literature to basic skills is found in terms of grammar. Grammar exercises and skills will increase through literature media (Senturk &; Kahraman, 2020: 546).

1.7.2 Practical Significance

The practical significance of this research lies in its contribution to the application of values in real life, particularly in the fields of education, the family environment, and society. This research provides practical insights into how feminist values, especially gender equality and empowerment, can be introduced and applied through literary works. By analyzing the novel Matilda from a feminist perspective, this research is expected to be a reference for teachers, students, parents, the community, and future researchers in utilizing literary works as a medium to instill moral values, critical awareness, and perspectives that are sensitive to gender issues in daily life.

1.7.2.1 For Teachers
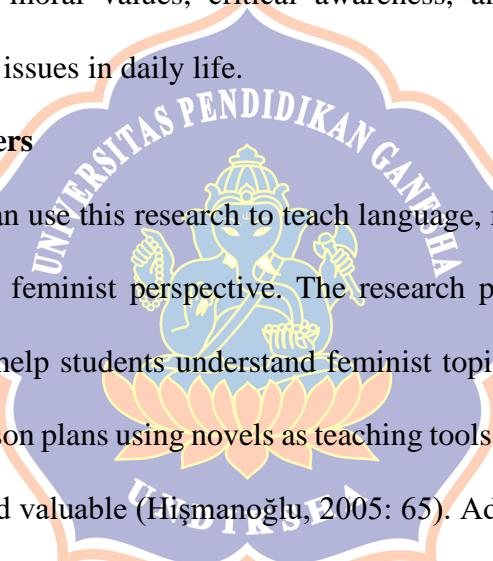
Teachers can use this research to teach language, moral values, and gender equality through a feminist perspective. The research provides literature that is engaging and can help students understand feminist topics more easily. Teachers can also design lesson plans using novels as teaching tools, as novels are considered both interesting and valuable (Hişmanoğlu, 2005: 65). Additionally, novels can be used to teach moral values, which can serve as examples for students in their daily lives (Andriani & Nuraini, 2019: 54). Through this research, teachers can gain a better understanding of gender equality and pass this knowledge on to students, both in the classroom and through gender-sensitive educational materials. This can help raise students' awareness of gender differences and prevent discriminatory treatment based on gender at an earlier stage (Roziqin et al., 2019: 205-206; Sari et al., 2023: 2248).

1.7.2.2 For Students

Students can gain knowledge about gender equality through feminist values from an early age by engaging with literature, supported by teachers' facilitation to ensure effective understanding. This research also provides valuable insights into the novel Matilda, which contains moral, character, and social values that are relevant for application in daily life. Additionally, by reading novels, students have the opportunity to develop their language skills while enriching their vocabulary (Arjmandi & Aladini, 2020: 839). The literacy habits demonstrated by Matilda in the novel can also be adopted by students in their everyday lives. Matilda's habit of reading is something children can emulate. Furthermore, the novel Matilda teaches that not all adults are always good role models, highlighting the importance of children being vigilant and capable of protecting themselves from negative influences (Yeni & Ariska, 2019: 22).

1.7.2.3 For Parents

This research aims to demonstrate that reading novels is not only entertaining but also educational. By highlighting the moral, character, and social values present in novels, particularly in *Matilda*, parents are encouraged to suggest this book to their children for home reading. Parents as facilitators provide reading books that are useful to improve children's literacy and get valuable lessons from the books read (Fikriyah et al., 2020: 99). Furthermore, the novel encourages parents to reduce television dependency and inspire their children to read more children's literature that is appropriate for their age. Additionally, the novel provides insights into effective parenting styles, which can be beneficial in nurturing their children. From *Matilda*, parents can learn the importance of treating their children

equally, regardless of gender, and allowing them the freedom to pursue their interests without intimidation (Beauvais, 2015:14).

1.7.2.4 For Society

This research aims to encourage society to adopt a more open and inclusive attitude and to avoid discrimination based on gender. By utilizing feminist perspectives, this study seeks to inform society about various relevant social issues and promote the creation of a harmonious life through principles of mutual respect and appreciation. Through this approach, it is hoped that society will learn to better respect, appreciate, and support women who are striving to develop themselves. The study also emphasizes the importance of rejecting all forms of female subordination and ending the violence that they often experience. By focusing on the empowerment of women, it is expected that they will feel empowered to pursue their dreams and desires freely, without pressure or limitations from their surroundings. Furthermore, according to Dickinson (2017), through the novel *Matilda* the author aims to inspire readers to seek self-empowerment through books. The author wants to demonstrate that self-empowerment is not dependent on gender, body size, or personal circumstances.
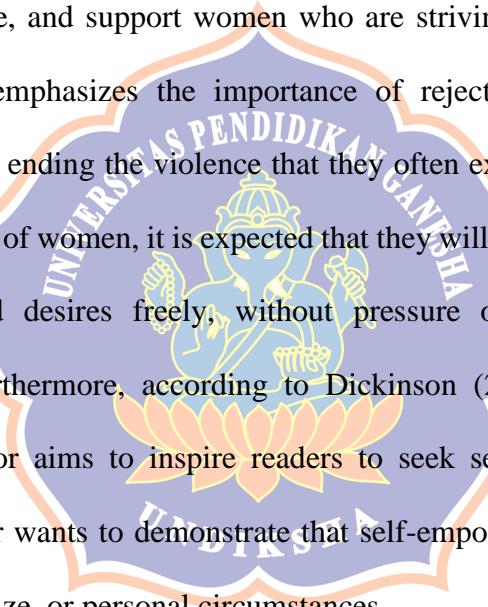
1.7.2.5 For Other Researcher

This study to provide useful insights for similar research in the future. The results of this study can also be used as a reference to support and strengthen future research. In addition, this study can serve as a helpful resource for other researchers who want to analyze novels, especially from a feminist viewpoint. In this context, they can access relevant sources such as the works of Sarah Gamble and Rosemarie Tong, which offer a deep and critical understanding of feminist theory.

Additionally, this research can serve as a valuable example for researchers who wish to conduct qualitative research, particularly in literary text analysis. Through this study, researchers can understand various methods and approaches that can be applied in novel analysis, including ways to explore themes such as gender. Thus, this study is expected to enrich the academic literature in the fields of literary studies and feminist studies, as well as assist other researchers in developing appropriate methodologies and theoretical frameworks for their research. This study is also expected to spark broader and deeper discussions on gender and equality issues in literature, as well as provide new insights into how novels can be used as tools to understand feminist values.