

## GENDER INEQUALITY WITHIN A FAMILY: THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN'S NOVEL IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Laily Fitriani<sup>[1]</sup>, Muassomah<sup>[2]</sup>

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<sup>[1]</sup>laily@bsa.uin-malang.ac.id, <sup>[2]</sup>muassomah@bsa.uin-malang.ac.id  
Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim  
Malang, East Java, Indonesia

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**Abstract:** A topic about women is always interesting to discuss, including their works, such as a novel. Her life journey has been portrayed in a novel in detail. This paper aims to describe the representation of a women's novel in social media, the factors leading to it, and the values within. It employed a qualitative descriptive method with a feminist literary approach that examined the text from the women's side as a reader. Data were taken from a novel published online in social media and then printed. It was Elena. This study showed that women's novels in social media tend to experience marginalization/discrimination, stereotype/ negative labeling, subordination, and excessive burden for women. The dominating cultural construction, patriarchy ideology, and familial ideology are the influencing factors. Women's novel also contains messages about religious values, education values, and the values of patience and endurance. It suggested that further research compared it with other novels published in social media or other media to provide a more comprehensive and varied description.

**Keywords:** *representation, women's novel, social media, feminism, gender.*

### INTRODUCTION

A novel, which is a journey of human life, has taught people about the presence of a woman who becomes a central issue in a women's novel. As a publication medium, technology and the internet have become the society need to develop skills (Rismayani et al., 2018), including literacy, such as writing novels, poems, or other literary works (Indriyani et al., 2019). Women have contributed to building literacy awareness in social media either individually or through various online writing media, such as Facebook (Lubis, 2014). The literacy activities in Facebook have been proliferating since 2013 and developed along with community members dominated by married women of 30-50 years old. Many posts popping up within the community are appreciated, motivating them to write literary works (novels), either offline or online. The work (a novel) uploaded in the media is a place for women to voice their issues (Hayati, 2012). The issues cover rights,

reproductive health, dangers of domestic violence, the ups and downs in marriage, the wait for the couple to come, and things that will, is ongoing and had happened in their world (Krisnalita, 2018).

A study related to social media today goes into three trends. *Firstly*, social media as a place or tool for religious contestation (Musthofa, 2016; Ningrum, Suryadi, & Chandra Wardhana, 2019; Saputra, 2016; Sumadi, 2016). Violence, social schisms are often exhibited in various mass media and online news, such as the news of terrorism popping up daily on our mobile screen. It results in anxiety that the *ummah* would fall apart (Yunus, 2017). *Secondly*, social media as a solution to online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic (Anderson & Dron, 2014; Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2012; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2016; Kumar & Nanda, 2018). Social policy and physical distancing have shut down all educational institutions, that the learning process is conducted online by utilizing social media

platform, which is now already familiar within the society, including students (Suni Astini, 2020). *Thirdly*, social media is a medium of politics (Prasatya, 2015; Terchilă, 2014; Piorean & Bra°ov, 2010). According to Ardha, social media plays a vital role in influencing society to campaign for the credibility of a party (Ardha, 2014). Besides, Indonesia ranks eighth globally for most social media users, such as Facebook, Twitter, Blog, and Youtube (Siagian, 2015). The three tendencies of social media associated with women's literary works (novels) have not been commonly studied. It might expose gender relations or man and woman relationships socially constructed, or when women are under the domination of parents and a man within a family.

This paper reviews the depiction of a women's novel published on social media in 2018 and 2019, written both individually or under a community, *Komunitas Bisa Menulis* (KBM) on Facebook. This paper discusses the way women's novel is represented, factors affecting the representation of the women's novel, and the values inside the women's novel in social media.

It hypothesizes that social media functions as a platform for women to express all forms of gender inequality and injustice, which has recently been coming up dynamically, and the development of women's literacy community in social media. The novel is chosen because it provides an accessible and vast space to reveal all of the pressure burdening them (Yulianeta, 2016). In addition, it strongly appeals to readers who describe a man *as* authoritative, so he assumes that a woman is a dream, *the secondary gender*, the second-class citizen, and the subordinate (Setyorini, 2017).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Literacy and Social Media

Literacy is defined as one's ability to process and understand information during reading and writing (Teguh, 2017). This definition is shifting along with the development of science and technology. Literacy is currently used in many variations, such as media literacy, computer literacy, scientific literacy, cultural literacy, and many others (Perpustakaan Universitas Indonesia, 2016). Critically, literacy can be achieved through five activities: understanding,

involving, using, analyzing, and transforming a text. According to Adyawanti, literacy is the ability of individuals to read, write, speak, calculate, solve problems according to the level of expertise required (Adyawanti et al., 2016). Further, literacy is following the particular environmental requirements of an individual Social Media.

The rapid development of technology and information leads to the preconditions of social media's presence, followed by a shift in social behavior patterns concerning culture, ethics, and norms (Cahyono, 2016). In addition to spilling negative information, such as hoaxes, pornographies, and porno-actions, and many others (Gumgum et al., 2017), social media also provide convenience and positive things that can be utilized by the users and broader community, such as the more accessible and quicker process of interaction and wider science accessibility (Rahadi, 2007; Sudiby, 2011; Astini, 2020). Therefore, people need technology literacy to acquire its convenience and benefit.

### Gender Inequality

Gender inequality is defined as differences and inequities between men and women in various aspects of life, such as education, employment, health, politics, decision-making, and many others (Chary, 2017; Zilfa, 2017). According to Siregar (2018), it refers to a condition in which an injustice happens between men and women within a family, society, nation, and state. Ponthieux & Meurs (2015) suggest that gender inequality refers to any form of unfair treatment, such as exclusion, restrictions of rights and freedoms in various fields between men and women, either economic, political, or social (Ponthieux & Meurs, 2015). Fitrianti and Habibullah's (2017) research shows the lousy impact of gender inequality in education, where people still think that women should not pursue higher education, resulting in lower employment opportunities than men.

Often, an injustice constantly made becomes a construct of goodness based on religion (Nurhilaliati & Nor, 2015). The position of men, which is superior to that of women in the concept of religion (Islam), affects in woman subordination, especially related to a relationship in a marriage or a husband and wife, constructed in marriage

sermon, a gender-biased religious dogma (Nurhilaliati & Nor, 2015). On one side, society has caused a gap between men and women, for example, in leadership, the right to voice, and many others, yet on the other hand, Article 27 paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution states that every citizen is equal under the law and government, either a woman, man, adult, or child (Abidin et al., 2018; Yatazaka, 2014). Women perceive the role of gender deliberately built by this ideology as something natural or nature, so in many aspects of life, this system perpetuates gender inequality (Rokhimah, 2014).

Sari's (2019) study clarifies that gender inequality in Japan is a form of structural violence influenced by the patriarchal culture, which ultimately forms a social structure dominated by men, as seen in the inequality of women's representation in politics, economy, access to education, and social expectation. Gender inequality in politics, according to Gusmansyah (2019), lies in the marginalization and exclusion of women from the formal political process. The research results show that there is still gender inequality in control over the resources and benefits. Gender equality in a family who runs a livestock business has a significant relationship with their income (Nadhira & Sumarti, 2017). The development of reproductive organs and the inequality of gender roles among society increases the vulnerability of young women to experience sexual coercion (Parmawati et al., 2020).

### Family

Johnson (in PDR, 2012) defines a family as a group of two or more persons as the smallest units of society who have blood relations living together continuously under one roof with an emotional bond and respective obligation. Another concept defines that a family as a group of people with ties of marriage, birth, and adoption aims to create and sustain a culture and enhance every member's physical, mental, and emotional development (Duvall and Logan, 1986). According to Logan (1979), a social system and a group of components interact. As one of the social institutions among society, the family plays a significant role in developing behavior patterns and normative internalization. It is the

first and foremost educational institution in instilling a moral foundation (Syarbini, 2014).

Gender relations in a family can be built equally and justly between husbands and wives, sons and daughters in enforcing their functions through role and work division in diverse aspects of life (Anita, 2015). Along with that, social and cultural construction contributes significantly to determining their respective roles within the family institution (Nuraida & Zaki, 2018). Family is the pivot of changes in society. Once it is built in harmony, equality, openness, and togetherness, it will result in children who hold the same, equal, fair, open, responsible, and responsible attitude. On the contrary, when the family always shows negative behavior, it should also negatively impact them (Nurhilaliati & Nor, 2015). Social and cultural construction significantly affects the husband's and wife's role distribution within the family (Aisyah, 2014).

### METHOD

This study employs descriptive qualitative research, a literature study that examines a novel with a feminist approach. This method is used to understand and describe the representation of a women's novel in social media to gain an overview of women's literacy development and its factors. The approach and criticism of feminism are made by reading the posts, ideology, and culture under the perspective of women. Feminism is used to see how the ideology describes the representation of women's novels presented. Therefore, the study of feminism aims to reveal the possibility of patriarchal power or resistance against the domination reflected in those novels (Hidayati, 2019).

The research data are the literary works, women's novels. They are phrases and sentences containing information related to the research problem retrieved from the novels. The primary data source of the current research is the novel posted in the Facebook group, KBM, titled *Elena* by Ellya Ningsih. This novel is selected due to the high interest of readers. The data of the current research are collected in two stages. The first is reading. This technique begins with reading the novel's contents thoroughly, and then the data are classified based on the objectives of the study. The second is note-taking. In this stage, we take

notes on the narratives and paragraphs describing the aspects studied: the representation, the factors of the representation, and values within the novel.

The data are then analyzed through the descriptive qualitative method. The inference is used to interpret and conclude the results of the research according to the research problems. In this research, the inference is made based on feminist literary criticism, *woman as the reader*. Feminist literary criticism in *the woman as reader* focuses on representing literary works constructed by women during writing.

Literary criticism needs interpretation stages to understand literary work by providing interpretation based on the character of the works. Interpretation is an attempt to clarify the meaning of the language through analysis, paraphrase, and comment by interpreting the meaning of the work based on

the other elements and aspects, such as the type, the genre, the effect, and the socio-historical background.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Social media is an effective medium to voice an opinion for anyone, including women, through literary works, such as a novel. People who join the KBM Facebook group can express their ideas and thoughts in literary works publicly. The written stories are mostly the authors' personal experiences, especially the female authors subjected to injustice within their relationship with their partners.

### Women's Representation in *Elena* Novel

Marginalization and discrimination occur due to personal interests, rights, needs, and aspirations in Elena's social life. It is described in the passage excerpts of the novel, as presented in table 1 below:

Table 1. Marginalization and Discrimination of Women

NOVEL EXCERPTS	CODE
Akhirnya Elena mengiyakan lamaran itu setelah ibunya menjadi sakit karena terlalu memikirkan nasib putri semata wayangnya. Tanggal dan tempat pernikahan sudah ditetapkan sementara dia sendiri belum menemukan cara bagaimana harus menyampaikan berita itu kepada Eugene.	Compulsion
<i>Finally, Elena assented to the proposal after his mother became sick for overthinking her only daughter's destiny. The marriage date and place had been set, while she did not find a way to deliver the news to Eugene.</i>	
Ia seperti berhadapan dengan buah simalakama. Memilih Eugene berarti bersiap kehilangan keluarganya, bahkan mungkin juga agamanya. Meninggalkan Eugene berarti ia harus menikahi orang yang baru dikenal dan sama sekali tidak dicintainya. (Elena, 2018, p. 85).	Forced choice
<i>As if she were dealing with a dilemma. Choosing Eugene means getting ready to lose her family, even possibly her religion. Leaving Eugene means she would have to marry somebody who she just knew and did not love. (Elena, 2018, p. 85).</i>	
"Ini adalah salah satu admin toko kita yang baru di Bandung. Namanya Adinda. Kami akan melakukan ta'aruf pekan depan, jika kau berkenan. Ia bersedia menjadi adik madumu, orang tuanya pun tidak keberatan," jelas Ibnu. Elena bergeming antara sadar dan tidak. Apakah ada artinya pendapatnya saat ini? Percuma. (Elena, 2018, p. 85).	Negative Stereotypes
<i>"She is one of the new administrators at our shop in Bandung. Her name is Adinda. We will do ta'aruf (an Islamic tradition of a spouse to know each other before getting married) next week, if you allow me to. She is willing to be your co-wife. Her parents also do not mind," said Ibnu.</i> <i>Elena flinched between being conscious and not. Did her opinion count at that time? Useless. (Elena, 2018, p. 85).</i>	
Selama proses taaruf Elena lebih banyak diam, ia hanya mengajukan permintaan sederhana, yaitu tinggal di rumah terpisah. Pada saat bukan gilirannya, ia diperkenankan tinggal di rumah Abah dan Ummi Izza. Ibnu menyetujuinya.	Helpless

Semua berlangsung cepat, tiga kali pertemuan, lalu tanggal pernikahan ditentukan. Luka Elena, luka yang bisu. Tak ada air mata mengalir, hanya ia menjadi lebih pendiam dan lebih senang dalam kesendiriannya. (Elena, 2018, p. 170).

*During the process of ta'aruf, Elena was in much silence. She was asking a simple request, which was living in a separate house. When it was not her turn, she was allowed to stay in Abah and Ummy Izza's house. Ibnu approved it.*

*All went on very quickly. Three-time meeting, then the wedding date was set. Elena endures the pain, the silent hurt. No tears fell, only she became more silent and more convenient in his solitude. (Elena, 2018, p. 170).*

Kehadiran Adinda di rumah Elena ibarat duri dalam daging. Elena risih melihat perempuan itu hampir selalu menempel lekat kepada Ibnu. Memborong semua tugasnya sebagai istri di depan matanya, mulai menyendokkan nasi sampai menyiapkan air mandi. Elena menahan diri meski dalam hati ingin sekali memaki. Naum Ibnu sedikit mengobati kekesalannya. Pada saat Adinda memaksa agar ia saja yang membuatkan teh manis untuk suami mereka, Ibnu malah melayani Elena dengan menyeduhkan kopi dan mengoleskan selai stroberi di atas rotinya. Adinda tampak cemburu berat. (Elena, 2018, p. 195)

Subordination

*The presence of Adinda in Elena's house was like a thorn in the flesh. Elena was disgusted seeing the girl nearby Ibnu, Replacing all of her roles as a wife right in front of her eyes, from scooping out the rice to preparing the bathwater. Elena restrained her temper even though, deep in the heart, she wanted to curse. However, Ibnu treated her with annoyance. When Adinda insisted that she would have made sweet tea herself, Ibnu served Elena by brewing a cup of coffee and spreading strawberry jam on the top of her bread. Adinda looked jealous. (Elena, 2018, p. 195)*

Namun, hari ternyata cepat berlalu. Hitungan tahun berlalu begitu berat dan menyiksa dengan ketidakberpikahakan takdir baik pada Elena. Adinda kerap menggajal usaha Ibnu memperbaiki hubungannya dengan Elena, Ibnu kerap membatalkan jadwal konseling karena terkadang Adinda merasa tidak sehat dan alasan-alasan lainnya. Tak ada kemajuan, semua terasa percuma. (Elena, 2018, p. 197)

Living life under pressure

*However, the day passed by so quickly. Years went by so heavy and torturing with the impartiality of good faith to Elena. Adinda often blocked the effort of Ibnu to fix his relationship with Elena. Ibn often canceled the schedule of counseling because sometimes Adinda felt unwell and for other reasons. No progress, all was useless. (Elena, 2018, p. 197)*

Elena baru saja menidurkan Al di boks bayi ketika Ibnu masuk ke kamar, lalu duduk di tepi tempat tidur. Laki-laki itu memperhatikan Elena dengan seksama, terlihat jauh lebih kurus dari terakhir ia melihatnya di masjid. Pastilah dua minggu pertama yang luar biasa berat bagi perempuan itu, bahkan Ibnu nyaris tak mempunyai kesempatan untuk menghubunginya. Adinda menguasainya. (Elena, 2018, p. 170).

More burden

*Elena just put Al to sleep in the baby's crib when Ibnu went into the room and sat on the edge of the bed. The man looked at Elena closely and found that she was much thinner than when he saw her at the mosque. It must have been the heaviest two weeks for the woman; even Ibnu barely had a chance to phone her. Adinda mastered him. (Elena, 2018, p. 170).*

Table 1 shows that the women's novel represents their condition in social life, as either a child or a wife and mother in a family. From the excerpts in the paragraph, women possess four perceptions in choosing a man as their companion and going through life with families. First, from childhood to adolescence and adulthood, women have been marginalized and discriminated against. Women are not given the right to determine an essential decision for themselves, such as choosing a man for their life companion. She (Elena) had

to accept the choice of her parents. Within the weighty decision, she was willing to accept a man of her parents' choice reluctantly. Elena was forced to accept the arranged marriage with Ibnu, a widower with one child, although she did not want the arrangement. Elena just wanted to see her two parents happy and did not want to be a rebellious daughter. A girl is willing to sell her happiness for the happiness of others.

*Second*, women are subjected to negative stereotyping or labeling, which tends to

degrade them. Women are second-class beings, through which the husband ignores the wife's wishes, as experienced by Elena in her husband's case, and then chooses to do polygamy. Her husband intended to get married to another girl named Adinda, as written in table 1. Ibn decided to do ta'aruf and made Adinda the co-wife of Elena. Elena was never asked for an opinion about polygamy because, for Ibnu, his decision was final, neglecting his wife's voice, who did not want it to happen. He neglects Elena's feelings. She was too broken hurt, so being silent and soluble in the loneliness is the only way for her to keep sane and happy.

*Third*, women experience subordination, in which the women are deemed weaker and more vulnerable than men. The story ended up with a dispute. She also did not have the opportunity to decide her way of life. The coming of Adinda in the house of Elena presents a different situation and condition. Whereas it was the day where Ibnu, her husband, visited her, but Adinda as the second wife, decided to come along and dominated Elena's turns in the form of small cares. However, Elena could still hold her back. All of the plans of Ibnu to fix his relationship with Elena failed due to the coming of Adinda. All of the schedules prepared by Ibnu for their relationship were missed.

*Fourth*, women bear more burden after getting married. Being excessively burdened happened to Elena, who should have cared for Maryam while her husband seemed indifferent. Elena looked bearing much burden because she had to take care of her baby Al and her

stepdaughter, Maryam. Ibnu realized that his attention to Elena and her children was divided after Adinda, his second wife.

*Fifth*, the exposure to the representation of women's novels in social media demonstrates discrimination and injustice against women. A woman in a family (as a child or a wife) does not have the right over herself, did not have a chance to defend, and can not make her own decision. The study results are confirmed by Abdullah & Abdullah (2012) that the relationship pattern of men and women in the family is more likely to marginalize women due to patriarchal culture. However, they also added that the family of the same village in the same village shows different relationships because they have different economic backgrounds. More specifically, the elements can be broken down into, for example, education, work, party membership, and environment (Abdullah & Abdullah, 2012).

### The Factors Affecting Women's Novel Representation

The representation is reflected in the narrative presented in the *Elena Novel* under the readers' perspective. Marriage culture with a western (foreigner) rarely occurs among religious communities, mainly Muslim. It happens due to the profound differences between eastern and western cultures. This culture can be reflected in behavior, language, and customs. The difference makes parents reluctant to agree with the marriage of their daughters to someone with different religion and culture. In addition, several other factors might also be the reasons, as shown in table 2:

Table 2. Factors that affect the representation of women

NOVEL EXCERPTS	CODE
Dari kunjungan pertama, orang tua Elena seketika jatuh hati melihat penampilan saleh lelaki itu, terlebih wajahnya yang tampan. Pada pertemuan ketiga, mereka langsung menerima lamaran laki-laki itu. Sejujurnya mereka berharap dengan menikahkan Elena dengan Ibnu bisa menjauhkan anak gadis mereka dari Eugene. Mereka juga berharap Ibnu mampu membimbing Elena menjadi perempuan yang shalihah. Mereka berkeyakinan Eugene sudah membawa pengaruh yang buruk bagi anak gadis mereka itu. (Elena, 2018, p. 84). <i>From the first visit, Elena's parents immediately fell in love with the pious look of the man, moreover his handsome face. At the third meeting, they received the man's proposal. Honestly, they hoped that they could keep Elena away from Eugene by marrying off their daughter with Ibnu. They also hoped that Ibnu could guide Elena to be shalihah. They believed Eugene had brought bad influence to their daughter. (Elena, 2018, p. 84).</i>	The Dominating Construction of Culture
"Ini adalah salah satu admin toko kita yang baru di Bandung. Namanya Adinda. Kami akan melakukan ta'aruf pekan depan, jika kau berkenan. Ia bersedia menjadi adik madumu, orang tuanya pun tidak keberatan," jelas Ibnu.	Patriarchal Ideology

Elena bergeming antara sadar dan tidak. Apakah ada artinya pendapatnya saat ini? Percuma. (Elena, 2018, p. 85).

*"She is one of the new administrators at our shop in Bandung. Her name is Adinda. We will do ta'aruf (an Islamic tradition of a spouse to know each other before getting married) next week, if you allow me to. She is willing to be your co-wife. Her parents also do not mind," said Ibnu.*

*Elena flinched between being conscious and not. Did her opinion count at the time? Useless. (Elena, 2018, p. 85).*

Akhirnya Elena mengiyakan lamaran itu setelah ibunya menjadi sakit karena terlalu memikirkan nasib putri semata wayangnya. Tanggal dan tempat pernikahan sudah ditetapkan sementara dia sendiri belum menemukan cara bagaimana harus menyampaikan berita itu kepada Eugene.

Ia seperti berhadapan dengan buah simalakama. Memilih Eugene berarti bersiap kehilangan keluarganya, bahkan mungkin juga agamanya. Meninggalkan Eugene berarti ia harus menikahi orang yang baru dikenal dan sama sekali tidak dicintainya. (Elena, 2018, p. 85).

*Finally, Elena assented to the proposal after her mother became sick for overthinking the destiny of her only daughter. The date and place of the marriage had been set, while she cannot deliver the news to Eugene.*

*As if she were dealing with a dilemma. Choosing Eugene means getting ready to lose her family, even possibly her religion. Leaving Eugene means she would have to marry somebody who she just knew and not love. (Elena, 2018, p. 85).*

Feminism  
Ideology

Table 2 above shows that woman representation is influenced by three main factors: cultural construction, patriarchal ideology, and feminism ideology. *First*, cultural construction has a substantial stake in influencing a woman's image, such as culture, tradition, and values/norms of Javanese. Javanese women are perceived as submissive, motherly, controllable, and graceful. From an early age, Javanese women have to follow the rules to be obedient, well-behaved, and graceful. In addition, they must also be good at doing domestic chores (washing, cooking, sweeping the floor, and many others) and not allowed to go outside at night. The culture and tradition attached to Javanese have built an image that women should be loving, graceful, and submissive to be controlled by the rules inherently instilled within society. It is reflected in the Novel Elena, which shows that the main character, Elena, should follow the arranged marriage with a widower who has one child. As a daughter, her voice and opinion are ignored and unheard. Elena is positioned as a submissive daughter to her parents' choice even though she already has her prospective husband.

*The second*, patriarchal ideology also marginalizes and subordinates women. It

builds a perception that men should be masculine, mighty, and rational, while women should be feminine, passive, graceful, and sensitive. Patriarchal ideology also creates a portrait that women should be naturally at home, serving their husband, submissive, obedient to the husband, and raising the children. The novel shows that Elena's husband (Ibnu) has made all the decisions on any household issues without his wife's consent, including his desire to get married again or to do polygamy. Ibnu freely delivers the information and explains the girl who will marry him without asking the consent of Elena as a wife.

*Third*, the familial ideology believes that marriage to a stranger will bring about suffering. Obedience to parents is one of the ways to perpetuate arranged marriage. Elena underwent Simalakama in her life, so she chose to accept the arranged marriage for fear that she was considered ungrateful to her parents and her mother was sick for thinking about her. The matchmaking was successfully brought to the aisle even though the bride was forced. The one-sided matchmaking led to discomfort at home. The inherently attached patriarchal ideology has ratified the perception that women are weak and should not be given a

space to argue. The unhealthy relationship pattern and the husband who has a child are automatically burdensome for her. It results in her physical and psychological exhaustion.

From the three ideologies, a woman has positioned lower than that of a man. The absence of gender equality and justice within the family is regarded as natural. The inequality and discrimination are reinforced by

an ideology inherently attached to the cultural life of the community.

### The Values within the Women's Novel

A novel is a work with values transferred to every reader, and so is a women's novel. Many messages are taught in the Novel Elena, as reflected presented in table 3 below.

NOVEL EXCERPTS	CODE
<p>"Elena mengambil Al-Qur'an, diciumnya beberapa kali sebelum membukanya untuk melanjutkan tilawah. Ia ingat benar seseorang dalam hidupnya pernah berkata padanya, Al-Qur'an itu obat segala penyakit, pelipur lara, pelembut hati yang keras dan penyembuh hati yang luka". (Elena, 2018, p. 71).</p> <p><i>"Elena took the Qur'an, kissing it a few times before opening it to recite. She deeply remembered someone in her life who once said to her, "the Qur'an is a medicine of all diseases, solace, softener of the hard heart, and healer of the wounded heart." (Elena, 2018, p. 71).</i></p>	Religious
<p>"Kata Ummi, perempuan itu cuma punya dua pilihan. Menjadi sebaik-baik perhiasan atau seburuk-buruk fitnah," ujar Maryam sambil memainkan ujung kerudung Elena.</p> <p>"Memangnya, kau mengerti maksud nasihat Ummi tadi?" Tanya Elena penasara.</p> <p>"Awalnya, tidak, tetapi kemudian, Ummi menjelaskan bahwa Islam sudah mengangkat kemuliaan perempuan, jadi kita tidak boleh malah merusaknya sendiri. Ummi bilang, perempuan itu istimewa dan cantik karenanya Islam mewajibkan untuk menutup aurat supaya terjaga, sama seperti merusak dirinya sendiri dan menjadi ujian buat orang lain," tutur Maryam panjang lebar. (Elena, 2018, p. 115).</p> <p><i>"Ummi said, women only have two options, being the best jewelry or the worst slander," said Maryam while playing the tip of Elena's veil.</i></p> <p><i>"So, you understand the advice of Ummi just now?" Asked Elena, wondering.</i></p> <p><i>"Initially, not, but then, Ummi explained that Islam raised the glory of women, so we should not destroy it ourselves. Ummi said, a woman is special and beautiful that Islam requires to cover the aurat (parts of body which should be covered according to Islam) for safety, like breaking one's self and becoming a temptation for others," said Maryam thoroughly. (Elena, 2018, p. 115).</i></p>	Education value
<p>"Nak, cerai itu memang diperbolehkan, tetapi juga dibenci Allah. Apakah kau sungguh-sungguh akan melakukan hal yang Allah benci?"</p> <p>Ketahuilah, misi terbesar iblis adalah memisahkan suami dan istri. Apakah kau bersungguh-sungguh akan membiarkan iblis menang?" (Elena, 2018, p. 142).</p> <p><i>"Sweetheart, divorce is indeed allowed, yet God hates it. Are you really going to do the things that God hates?"</i></p> <p><i>You must know that the greatest mission of the devil is to separate the husband and wife. Are you seriously going to let the devil win?" (Elena, 2018, p. 142).</i></p>	Education value
<p>Pernikahan itu menjadi suatu ikatan yang sangat agung karena dibangun atas nama Allah, maka sejatinya Allah-lah yang menjadi nomor satu, bukan hawa nafsu, bukan rasa cinta dan bukan kecenderungan duniawi," kata Abah di sebagian ceramahnya. (Elena, 2018, p. 146)</p> <p><i>Wedding is a very great bond because it is arranged in the name of Allah. Thus, God is the number one, not lust, love, and nor worldly tendency," said Abah in some of his words. (Elena, 2018, p. 146).</i></p>	Education value
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<p>Bukan aku tidak merestuimu, Nak. Sekali lagi pilihannya ada padamu. Kami hanya bisa mendoakan yang terbaik. Pahami lagi hak-hak istri sehingga kelak kau bisa bersikap adil atas keduanya dan tidak berlaku zalim pada salah satunya. (Elena, 2018, p. 173).</p>	<p>Education value</p>
<p><i>It does not mean I do not bless you, sweetie. Once again, the choice is yours. We can only pray for your best. Learn the wife's rights again so that you can be fair to both and vicious to one of them. (Elena, 2018, p. 173).</i></p>	
<p>Banyak-banyaklah meminta petunjuk Allah, Nak. Istri itu amanah yang berat. Tahukah kau siapa yang paling mudah menyeret suami ke neraka di akhirat nanti? Tidak lain dan tidak bukan adalah istri-istri dan anak-anaknya sendiri. Apa saja hak-hak istri dan anak yang tidak ditunaikan, itulah yang paling cepat menyeretnya. Jikalau seorang suami berlaku zalim kepada istrinya di dunia, sama seperti ia telah berlaku zalim kepada dirinya sendiri di akhirat yang akan datang.” (Elena, 2018, p. 174)</p>	<p>Education value</p>
<p><i>Always ask for the guidance of God, Sweetheart. A wife is a heavy mandate. Do you know who can easily drag a husband to hell in the hereafter? Nobody but wives and children. The unfulfilled wife's and child's right is the quickest thing that drags him away. If a husband is vicious to his wife in the world, it means that he has been vicious to himself in the afterlife.” (Elena, 2018, p. 174)</i></p>	
<p>Berlaku baik kepada orang-orang yang menyukai kita itu sudah seharusnya. Namun, tetap berlaku baik kepada orang yang tidak menyukai kita itulah akhlak baik yang dicontohkan nabi kita, Muhammad shallallahu alaihi wasallam.” (Elena, 2018, p. 180).</p>	<p>Education</p>
<p><i>It is common and obligatory to be good to the people like us. However, doing good to the people who do not like us is a good moral that exemplified by our Prophet, Muhammad sallallahu alaihi wasallam.” (Elena, 2018, p. 180).</i></p>	
<p>Tidak ada jalan hijrah yang mudah, harga surga tidaklah murah. Allah sedang menguji kejujuran tobatmu, maka bersabarlah. Allah yang memberi ujian, Allah yang memegang kunci jawaban. Ujiannya berbeda-beda sesuai tingkatan. Tapi percayalah Allah tidak memiliki sifat dzalim, Allah tahu kadar kekuatan kita dan tidak akan menguji di luar batas kemampuan hamba-Nya. (Elena, 2018, p. 138)</p>	<p>Patience</p>
<p><i>Hijrah is never easy. The price of paradise is not cheap. God was testing the honesty of your repentance, then be patient. God gave the exam, and He holds the key to the answer. The temptation is varied according to the faith levels. Allah knows our levels of strength and will not be tested beyond the limits of His servant. (Elena, 2018, p. 138)</i></p>	
<p>“Satu hari tak cukup waktu untuk berpikir masak-masak. Jangan biarkan hawa nafsumu yang bicara Elena. Aku mencintaimu karena Allah, Aku ingin sehidup sesurga denganmu. Aku memaafkanmu... Maukah kau bersabar memberikan aku lebih banyak waktu untuk berdamai dengan masa lalumu? Kita coba lagi pelan-pelan mulai dari awal,” tuturnya lembut. (Elena, 2018, p. 151)</p>	<p>Patience</p>
<p><i>“One day is not enough to think carefully. Don't let your desire talks, Elena. I love you because of Allah, I want to live with you in the world and hereafter. I forgive you... Will you patiently give me more time to adjust with your past? We try it again slowly from the beginning,” he said softly. (Elena, 2018, p. 151)</i></p>	
<p>Allah itu Maha Pencemburu, Nak. Dia tak ingin hamba-Nya mencintai sesuatu atau seseorang lebih daripada mencintai Allah dan Rasul-Nya. Dia menimpakan kepedihan agar kita tidak berharap kepada manusia dan berpaling kempali kepada-Nya. Teruslah meminta pertolongan Allah dengan shalat dan sabar. Barangkali, Dia akan memberikan jawaban tidak seperti pilihanmu, tapi yakinlah pilihan-Nya selalu benar.” (Elena, 2018, p. 169)</p>	<p>Patience</p>

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<p><i>God is the Greatest Jealous, Sweetheart. He does not want His servant to love something or someone more than he/she loves God and His Messenger. He gave us a pain so that we do not wish to humans and turned back to Him. Keep asking for God's help with prayer and patience. Perhaps, He will give you a negative answer just like your choice, yet believe me that His choice is always right." (Elena, 2018, p. 169)</i></p>	
<p>"Sejak kau mengeluarkan aku dari rumahmu kemarin...Tak ingatkah dulu waktu Abah memberikan nasihat pada saat akad nikah kita? "Jangan keluarkan istrimu dari rumah meski saat bersitegang, mata melotot, rambut di ubun-ubun serasa berdiri bahkan jikalau sampai jatuh talak raj'i!" Kau sudah tak menginginkan aku." Elena menunduk dalam-dalam. (Elena, 2018, p. 149)</p> <p><i>"Since you drove me out of your house yesterday...don't you remember the first time Abah advised us once we got married? "Do not drive your wife from home even when you are arguing, bulging eyes, feeling as if the hair on the crown stand right, even when divorce raj'i should be the decision!" You don't love me already." Elena looked down slowly. (Elena, 2018, p. 149)</i></p>	<p>Fortitude</p>
<p>Ketika seseorang ridha kepada Allah, pertanda semakin kuat keyakinannya. Bahkan, bila seseorang telah memiliki keridhaan terhadap situasi yang tidak diinginkan, maka ia bisa melewati situasi sepahit apa pun dengan tenang terlepas dari rasa khawatir berlebihan. (Elena, 2018, p. 169)</p> <p><i>When someone is grateful to Allah, his/her belief must be stronger. Even if he/she is grateful for an unwanted situation, he can pass through any hard situation calmly, without excessive anxiety. (Elena, 2018, p. 169)</i></p>	<p>Patience</p>
<p>"Insya Allah aku akan bertahan, Ummi. Kecuali... Mas Ibnu yang menceraikanku dahulu. Dosa-dosaku ini tak terhitung banyaknya. Amalku pun cacat tak sempurna. Ibadahku juga tak seberapa. Dari pernikahanku ini, aku berharap bisa menjadikannya tabungan pahala. Bukankah setiap usaha bahkan yang terkecil sekalipun seperti mengambilkan gelas untuk suami terhitung ibadah? Aku sungguh berharap sengan semua ujian ini Allah ridha dan berkenan menarikku ke dalam surga-Nya. Lagipula, bukankah Ummi yang bilang, selalu ada kebaikan di setiap ujian, bahkan pada saat terzalimi sekalipun? Bukankan doa orang yang terzalimi itu diijabah? Jadi aku punya banyak kesempatan untuk berdoa, tetap meminta yang baik-baik saja. Karena doa itu ibarat bola yang akan memantul kembali kepada pemiliknya." (Elena, 2018, pp. 201-202)</p> <p><i>"Insyallah, I will stay, Ummi. Except... Mas Ibnu divorces me first. My sin is uncountable. My deed is flawed, imperfect. My worship is also insufficient. From this wedding, I wish I could save rewards. Isn't any attempt, even the smallest part like serving a glass for my husband, a worship? I really hope that through all of the tests, God is pleased and willing to place me into heaven. After all, Ummi always said that there is always goodness in every test, even at the time of being oppressed. Isn't the prayer of somebody who is being oppressed is answered? So, I have a lot of opportunities to pray, to keep asking the goodness because prayer is like a bouncing ball back to its owner." (Elena, 2018, pp. 201-202)</i></p>	<p>Patience</p>

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The *Elena* Novel contains emulatable moral values to the readers and describes the representation of women in a family. Four values can be learned from the Novel *Elena*. *The first*, the religious value of the figure in the text, is a human relationship to God. Elena convinces herself that she must go through her days by reading the holy Quran as a process of getting closer to God for repentance to Him.

*Second*, the novel's educational value is driven through wise teachings given by some figures; for example, Maryam, the

stepdaughter of Elena, tells about her mother's advice that a woman could be good jewelry or an evil tempter. She is advised to close the aurat to become good jewelry. The advice could also be found in Abah's words to Ibnu when he did not speak to Elena, his wife, after her baby's birth. Abah reminds him to reconsider his attitude carefully toward his wife. As the head of the family, being responsible is required, such as maintaining and fulfilling her rights. The novel also teaches us to always do good to

those who have hurt us because it is an excellent moral, as the Prophet showed us.

*The third* is patience. The novel illustrates patience with many problems undergone by Elena, which are all the hurdles given by God. We need to be patient as God would not give us a test beyond human ability.

In addition, patience can also be found in Ibnu, who asks that Elena gives him the time and opportunity to think carefully and try to forgive his wife. Ibnu asks to try living with the family slowly from the beginning after seeing his wife's patience in dealing with the life hurdles. Ummi Izza also advised Elena to be patient and always hope in God, ask God's help through prayer and patience because He will answer the prayer. She also insisted on noting that God's choice is always right.

*The fourth* is fortitude, which was found in Elena when asking the family's status to Ibnu, her husband, and the time she was driven out towards the house of her Abah and Ummi for divorce. Besides, fortitude is found in the advice of Ummi to Elena that a grateful human to God's provision in any situation can pass through it calmly without any anxiety. The attitude of being grateful embedded in Elena let her strive to do more good with her devotion to her husband. As somebody who is oppressed, Elena kept praying for the goodness and happiness of herself and her family.

## CONCLUSION

The representation of women's novel (*Elena*) denotes that: *firstly*, woman objectification, in which women are

marginalized and discriminated happens due to particular interests, rights, needs, and aspirations in social life. *Secondly*, negative stereotyping or labeling due to the low perception of women as second-class beings is made in the form of ignorance to the wishes of wife, as experienced by Elena. Her husband does not love her again and chooses to do polygamy. *Thirdly*, subordination, depicted in the family discomfort, unhealthy communication, and the absence of the opportunity to decide and determine her life path. *Fourthly*, excessive burden, where the female character is burdensome as a cheated wife who should take care of two children until she does not have the time to think about herself.

This representation is influenced by four factors: the dominating cultural construction, patriarchal ideology, and familial ideology. This novel is also full of values and messages worth internalizing to any readers, such as religious values, educational values, patience, and fortitude. Therefore, the results of this study recommend the related parties, such as governments or other institutions, promote gender equality and gender-friendly education to society through the literacy movement. This paper examines only a single novel published initially in social media and written by a female writer, so the data related to gender inequality inside the novel is still limited. It suggests the need to study other women's novels under gender perspective as either a reader or a writer.

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