

The Movement Of Women In Obtaining Gender Equality In Moxie Movie: A Feminist Approach

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Abstract

This research examines the types of feminism and women's movements in the Moxie (2021) movie that aim to fight the patriarchal system and sexism, and how the main female character and other female characters can deal with it. Moxie (2021) is a coming-of-age genre movie that contains elements of feminism. The data collection used is descriptive qualitative method. The theory of feminism used in this research was the theory of feminism from Tong and Boots (2018). The results of this study show that there were four types of feminism, namely Liberal feminism, Radical feminism, Psychoanalytic and Gender feminism, and Ecofeminist feminism. Then, it was found that there were 4 women's movements that supporting feminism, namely Viviane started zine Moxie as a form of women's resistance, zine Moxie influenced the women's movement in schools, women maintained their self-esteem, and women dared to speak up. Afterwards, some of the moral messages found were the existence of a patriarchal system, discrimination, and sexual harassment until the women dare to fight back and form a feminism club called Moxie. Women deserve to have rights over themselves, such as having equal rights with men, being able to become leaders, and being able to have opinions freely.

Keywords: *Feminism; Gender Equality; Moxie; Women's Movement*

INTRODUCTION

Literature is a form of human expression that is poured into a work of human art in written or oral form. Such as poetry, novels, even movies, and other works. Literature is imaginative, created using beautiful language, based on the thoughts, experiences, and feelings of the author of the work. According to (Rosalinah et al., 2022), "Literature is a human expression in written or spoken form based on thoughts, experiences, opinions, feelings in an imaginative form, reflecting reality or data wrapped in aesthetic content through the medium of language." Based on this statement, literature is a form of communication through written or oral works based on human thoughts, experiences, and feelings wrapped in aesthetics. Literary works can have a strong influence on readers and help shape their thinking about the world around them.

The topic of gender has become something that people often to talk about. Movements related to issues of equality and justice between men and women have been discussed around the world. Gender is a social construction attached to men and women formed from social or cultural roles, behaviors, and identities associated with sex that are considered conventional in society or culture, in contrast to sex, which is the biological division of sex between men and women which is natural and cannot be changed. Because of these gender roles that give rise to the role of men as masculine and more dominant, compared to women being considered feminine because of the dominant structure of society. This shapes the image of men and women in society with their respective ideologies, then causes the emergence of gender inequality (Nurhayati & Prasetyo, 2022). From the book entitled *Kajian Gender dalam Tinjauan Psikologi* by Rilla Sovitriana, P. (2020:14), stated that "Gender is the difference in roles, functions, and responsibilities between men and women which is the result of social construction and can change according to the times." The difference in roles, functions, and responsibilities between men and women is not something that is determined by biological factors alone, but is more influenced by social and cultural factors due to the development of the times, and is influenced by social values in society.

When talking about gender, it will not be separated from the issue of gender equality. Gender equality, also known as gender justice, holds that all people must receive equal treatment and not discriminate against the gender identity of others. Such as in the social and political fields, in democratic activities and getting equal pay rights, with the aim that everyone can get fair treatment in society (Larasati & Ayu, 2020). Browne (2023) state, "Gender equality addresses the tendency to ascribe, in various situations across society, different roles and statuses to individuals on the basis of sex." Gender equality refers to efforts in addressing the different roles and statuses that are often still considered normal for men and women in society. Gender equality is one of our basic human rights. The right to an honorable, fearless and freely designed life is not only reserved for men, women also have the same rights in principle.

Feminism is a form of gender equality. Charles (2013:4) stated, etymologically, feminist is derived from the Latin word, "femina" which means a hooded woman, then added with "ism" which means it becomes the term "feminism" (Siagian et al., 2018). Feminism is a women's movement based on political, social, and ideological aspects to fight for equality rights between women and men. The existence of feminism is due to the patriarchal system and discrimination experienced by women, where men are prioritized in various fields. The purpose of the feminism movement is to break the gender bias system and obtain gender equality between men and women in terms of fulfilling their rights. The first wave of feminism began in the 19th and early 20th centuries demanding political equality. The second wave of feminism emerged in the 1960s and 1970s demanding legal and professional equality. And the third wave occurred in the last few decades which has been fighting for social equality (Dewi & Medina, 2020). According to Didah (2016:26) stated that "Feminism is a women's movement that demands complete equality between women and men, and in literature it relates to feminist literary criticism, a concept of literary studies that focuses analysis on women" (Putri, 2022). Feminism is a movement carried out by women to demand perfect equality between men and women. In addition, in the context of literature, this is a well-known study to be used as a study material for feminist literary analysis, especially on women's experiences and perspectives.

The definition of feminism and the women's movement almost have the same meaning. According to (Daskalova, 2020), the women's movement can be defined as a subset of socio-political movements with a focus on women's gender experiences. The women's movement refers to specific movements that focus on women's rights and position in society. The conflation of women's activism, movements and feminism confuses women's ability to effect change. It means, the women's movement is a subset of socio-political movements with a focus on women's gender, referring to the rights and position of women in society to effect change. According to (Stewart et al., 2015), "Women's movements are movements carried out by women or men (as activists, participatory or non-participatory (also known as observers) to fight for things that they think are unfair, contrary to human rights, related to children's rights, environmental concerns and so on." (Krisnalita, 2018). Based on the statement above, women's movements that can also be carried out by men in a participatory or non-participatory manner to fight for matters related to human rights. (Patimah & Sugandi, 2019) stated, "The women's movement or better known as the gender movement as a political movement is actually rooted in a movement that in the late 19th century in various Western countries was known as the "suffrage" movement, namely a movement to advance women both in terms of their living conditions and regarding their status and role." In other words, the women's movement is known as a political movement to advance women's rights in terms of living conditions, as well as regarding status and role.

Film is one of the media that can distribute or represent feminism today. According to (Ramrao, 2016), "Films also capture the same like literature but due to its visual and sound effect, it got wide popularity. Then he added that there is a link between literature and film. So that film (movie) is considered as a branch of literature" (Wijaya et al., 2021). Film or movie have a relationship with literature, because there are visual and audio effects that make films or movies popular, and it also a representation of life events. In films, there are characters who play a role in expressing the feminism movement through conversation and behavior and following with plot and settings.

Character is an important element in film. Without character, there is no story or plot. Due to the presence of the characters, the plot of the film has a special characteristic or effect on the audience. Character also causes a person to have something that does not belong to others and has its own uniqueness. In literature, character is a representation of a person's speech in a broad sense, specifically defined by that person's thoughts, speech, and behavior (Fauzi & Yuwita, 2022). Character is one of the most important elements in storytelling. Characters are created to distinguish one entity from another (humans, animals, spirits, robots, furniture, and other objects) based on mental, emotional, and social characteristics. Based on the statement above, a character in a movie or film is an important element that is created to distinguish one entity from another in the story and is based on characteristics. (Rondonuwu, 2020)

In this article, the writer discusses about the Moxie movie. Directed by Amy Pohler, Moxie is an American movie with a coming-of-age genre and about some issues that most people know about or may have experienced. The story is about Viviane, an ordinary teenager who sees her friend being bullied by man, Mitchell the football captain, The Pirates. In the school, there are patriarchal system, discrimination, and sexism at school, but the principal ignores it. With the emergence of these things, Viviane made a zine anonymously about feminism to fight the patriarchal system and sexism. She was inspired by her mother when she was a teenager who was a rebel against the patriarchal system during her school days. After the first zine appeared, it turned out that some of Viviane's friends supported the action. In addition, Viviane also faced some bad things with her best friend Claudia, and also with her boyfriend Seth.

METHOD

This research is uses a qualitative descriptive method. According to (Bhandari, 2020), "Qualitative research involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (for example, text, video, or audio) to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. This research can be used to gather deep insights into a problem or generate new ideas for research." It means that the qualitative method is research whose material is expressed in verbal form, which in its analysis does not use numbers and does not use statistical techniques. To analyze the types of feminism and the factors that cause feminism in the film, the researcher uses the theory of feminism by Rosemarie Putnam Tong and Tina Fernandes Boots, *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction (2018)*, there are 8 (eight) different types of feminism embraced by feminists.

The writer uses several procedures in finding information that can support the preparation of this research. The following are the steps used by the writer to analyze this research. First, the writer chooses an outline according to the topic discussed. Second, before collecting the necessary data, the writer watches the movie repeatedly, then records the data information according to the topic sought in the movie under study. Third, collect the recorded information data and sort the data again. Finally, the writer analyzes it by identifying how many types of feminism appear in the movie under study.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the writer found four types of feminism that has been found in the *Moxie* movie based on Tong and Boots (2018) theory.

a. Types of Feminism

1. Liberal Feminism

According to Tong and Boots (2018) stated:

The first wave of liberal feminism believed that women should have the right to equal education with men so that women can blend into society, because women are also social beings. Women should be given opportunities in rights; organization, personal affairs, and freedom of speech. The second wave, gender equality and equal opportunities for women. And the third wave, focus on the problem of discrimination. (Sundari et al., 2020)

Data 1



Scene 1 (09:02 – 09:10)

Figure III. 1 Conversation between Lucy and Mr. Davies got interrupt by Mitchell

Lucy : **Why aren't we reading Sandra Cisneros...**
 Mitchell : **I thought it was great.**
 Lucy : **Hey. I was talking.**
 Mitchell : Yeah, I know, but *The Great Gatsby* is a classic.

In this conversation, Mr. Davies asks Lucy about "how women are portrayed" from the novel *The Great Gatsby*. Lucy states that she feels sorry for the main character of the novel because according to her, the main character is obsessed with the woman he cannot have. Lucy states that if people want to learn about the American dream, they should read about immigrants, the working class, or Black mothers. In the middle of Lucy's conversation with Mr. Davies, Mitchell interrupts. From the way Mitchell restricts Lucy who is giving her opinion to Mr. Davies, it shows that there is no right to freedom of speech as mentioned in the theory of liberal feminism according to Tong and Boots (2018).

2. Radical Feminism

According to Tong and Boots (2018) stated:

Radical feminists believe that true gender equality is not possible within a patriarchal system. The sex or gender system is the fundamental cause of the oppression of women. Radical feminists introduce women to consciousness-raising practices. Women gathered in small groups and shared their personal experiences as women. (Sundari et al., 2020).

Data 2



Scene 2 (14:03 – 14:35)

Figure III. 2 Mitchell spit on the Lucy's canned drink

Mitchell : Why do you always have to be so difficult?
 Lucy : **I'm literally just trying to buy a soda. You're the one having this melting down. (Mitchell hit the beverage vending machine.)**
 Lucy : That's mine.
 Michelle: Oh, is it?
(He took Lucy's canned soda and spit on it.)

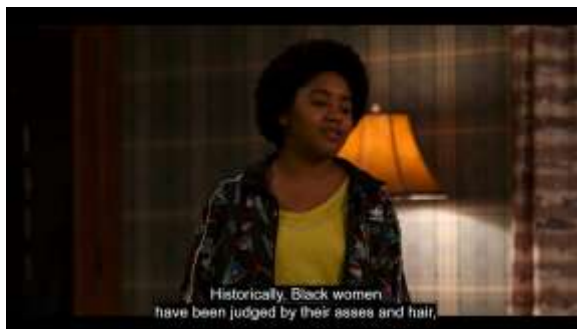
In this scene, Mitchell approaches Lucy in the canteen while she is buying a drink. Mitchell engages Lucy in conversation and asks her about the debate they had earlier in English class. Mitchell touches Lucy's shoulder, which makes Lucy feel uncomfortable. Because of Lucy's action, Mitchell felt offended by it, so he took Lucy's drink and spits on it. The action shows that Mitchell is bullying Lucy because of Lucy's gender and the patriarchal system, as the theory mentioned by Tong and Boots (2018).

3. Psychoanalysis and Gender Feminism

According to Tong and Boots (2018) stated:

Psychoanalytic feminists argue that the basic explanation for women's behavior lies in their psyches, particularly how they see themselves as women. Psychoanalytic feminists say that gender identity, and therefore gender inequality is based on a series of childhood and early childhood experiences, using Freud's constructs such as the pre-oedipal and oedipal stages. (Sundari et al., 2020)

Data 3



Scene 3 (42:56 – 43:08)

Figure III. 3 Amaya chatting at Bradley's party with her friends

Kiera : You know what's also messed up? I don't like being voted "Best Ass".
 Claudia : You don't like it? Why?
 Amaya : **Historically, Black women have been judged by their asses and hair, and we are done with that.**
 Lucy : Period.

In this scene, Viviane and her friends are talking about the unpleasant experiences their friends have had. They talk about who made the Moxie *zine*, until Kiera confesses that she doesn't like being called "Best Ass". Claudia asks why, and Amaya replies that black women are already judged by their physical form. From Amaya's conversation about

her identity with her friends Lucy and Kiera, it proves that gender inequality stems from gender identity and childhood experiences, as the theory mentioned by Tong and Boots (2018).

4. Ecofeminist Feminism

According to Tong and Boots (2018) stated:

Ecofeminists, who include many global, postcolonial, and transnational feminists as well as mainstream, generally privileged, white feminists, focus on human beings’ domination of the nonhuman world, or nature. Because women are culturally tied to nature, ecofeminists argue that there are conceptual, symbolic, and linguistic connections between feminist and ecological issues. (Sundari et al., 2020)

Data 4



Scene 4 (47:03 – 47:12)

Figure III. 4 Seth recalls his childhood with Viviane at school

Seth : Hey, Viviane. Is it weird that I’m not surprised? **Back in kindergarten, you always wanted to take the spiders outside while everyone else wanted to smash them.** You remember that?
 Viviane : No.

In this scene, when Viviane is about to put the Moxie *zine* in the women's bathroom, she accidentally meets and collides with Seth. At that moment, Seth learned that Viviane was the mastermind behind the Moxie movement. However, Seth was not surprised because when they were kids, Seth remembered that Viviane once saved a spider when someone else wanted to exterminate it. This scene shows that what Viviane has done is indicative of the ecofeminism feminism movement, where there is a strong cultural connection between women and nature, which opposes forms of oppression, as well as conceptual, symbolic, and linguistic relationships, as mentioned by Tong and Boots (2018).

a. Women’s Movement

The women's movement can be defined as a subset of socio-political movements with a focus on women's gender experiences. The women's movement refers to specific movements that focus on women's rights and position in society. The conflation of women's activism, movements and feminism confuses women's ability to effect change. (Daskalova, 2020).

1. Viviane Started the Moxie Zine as a Form of Women's Resistance

Data 5



Scene 5 (25:50 – 27:04)

Figure III. 5 Viviane makes her first Moxie *zine*

After “The List” incident at her school, Viviane rushed home because she was very upset about it.

Viviane : Stupid.

Suddenly, Viviane got the idea to create the Moxie *zine* as a form of resistance to the previous system of patriarchy and sexism. She immediately made 50 copies and put them in the women's room.

2. Moxie Zine Affects to the Women's Movement in School

Data 6



Scene 6 (51:26 – 51:50)

Figure III. 6 All women at school wear tank top on Thursday as dress code to fight sexism

After what happened with Kaitlynn, Viviane made the next women's movement, which is that on Thursdays all girls at school wear a tank top dress code as a resistance to sexism.

3. Women Maintained Their Self-Esteem

After Lucy was bullied by Mitchell, she reported it to the school principal, Mrs. Shelly. She complained to Mrs. Shelly about what happened to her, but Mrs. Shelly ignored the incident because Lucy was still a new student, and told Lucy to attend extracurricular activities. After that, Viviane met Lucy at the stairs, she talked to Lucy to ignore Mitchell's behavior. Lucy said, why should she ignore him, because for Lucy, Mitchell was dangerous. Viviane replied, Mitchell is not dangerous, he just annoying.

Data 7



Scene 7 (16:48 – 17:24)

Figure III. 7 Lucy and Viviane talking in the staircase

Lucy : You know that annoying can be more than just annoying, right? Like, it can be code for worst stuff.

Viviane : **If you keep your head down, he'll move on and bother somebody else.**

Lucy : **Thanks for the advice, but I'm gonna keep my head up, high.**

4. Women Dared to Speak Up

Data 8



Scene 8 (1:37:30 – 1:38:41)

Figure III. 8 Viviane confessed that she started the Moxie movement

Viviane : Speaking in front of people is my worst nightmare. I'm not brave. Uh, I'm not fierce like some of my friends. And I do not fit the prototype of a leader in any way, but here I am anyways. I hate that we are a shoved aside. That we are dismissed, ranked, assaulted. And I mean, nobody does anything about it. Nobody listens to us. And that is why I walk out today. That's why I'm standing up here yelling at all of you. It's why I started Moxie. You know what? If you're going to expel somebody, expel me. Okay? It's me. I started Moxie. I am Moxie.

After the incident where Viviane painted the school porch, Ms. Shelly saw it the next day. At the same time, Mr. Davies announces the school policy to the class that anyone who goes out is considered a Moxie supporter and violators will be punished by being expelled from school. But who would have expected, Mr. Davies supports the Moxie movement, as a result Viviane, her friends, and other students move out to gather.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the writer discuss about the conclusions. The first discussion is a conclusion about the types of feminism found by researchers, women's movements that support feminism, and the message from the Moxie movie. Second, it contains suggestions aimed at future researchers who will examine similar research as the writer.

From all the results above research that used the theory of Tong and Boots (2018), there are several types of feminism that appear in the film. First, liberal feminism which is focuses on freedom of speech, gender discrimination, and equal education. Second, radical feminism which is focuses on acts of discrimination due to the patriarchal system. Thirdly, psychoanalytic and gender feminism which is an unwelcome race-based experience. Fourth, ecofeminist feminism which is women are culturally bound with nature. Then, women's movements in obtaining gender equality were found. These data include; Vivian made the Moxie zine as a form of women's resistance, Moxie zine affects to the women's movement in school, women maintained their self-esteem, and women dared to speak up.

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