

**SLIM'S STRUGGLE AGAINST DOMESTIC  
OPPRESSION IN *ENOUGH* THE MOVIE**

**SCIENTIFIC ARTICLE**

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# **Slim's Struggle Against Domestic Oppression In *Enough* The Movie**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Women subordination phenomenon which puts women in limited roles creates a perspective that they cannot be equal to men. Most married women deal with the domestic sphere that their daily activities are maintaining household and serving the husband. In some cases, they experience domestic violence in the form of physical and psychological abuse. This phenomenon is represented by one of American movies entitled *Enough* which portrays a life of American woman named Slim whose husband is an abusive one. She has to experience several physical abuses and mental torment. The movie becomes the writer's object of the study, focusing on the main character.

This study uses feminism theory in relation to the knowledge about the inequal position between men and women in society. Besides, the information about domestic violence and woman struggle are also included as the supporting data.

This study reveals that woman subordination phenomenon happens in Slim's life after getting married. She has to face her fate as a housewife whose husband cheats and executes domestic violence. She experiences psychological abuse which results in depression and anxiety. Finally she struggles to end the violence and succeeds.

The writer suggests the next researchers to conduct a comparative study on two movies which have the same domestic violence theme but from different cultural backgrounds because the difference of culture may lead into difference result.

**Keywords:** Feminist Literary Theory, Woman subordination, Woman Resistance and Struggle, Domestic Violence, Movie.

Marriage is one of important steps for most people in their lives. It aims to have a harmonious family and continue family generations. The journal of Psychology Today defines marriage as “a process by which two people who love each other make their relationship public, official, and permanent. It is the joining of two people in a bond that putatively lasts until death (2013, p.01)”. The quotation states that marriage should be based on love to create an ideal concept of marriage. The application of ideal concept should reduce arisen conflict due to many possible reasons such as different principles, perspective, and personality changes.

The different principles and perspective may lead to the conflict dealing with the position between man (husband) and women (wife) in marriage. In patriarchal society, men generally assume to have superior position and they must be the leader of family. The idea of superiority of man often triggers conflicts in a marriage because this idea tends to put woman in subordinate position.

Woman subordination, in particular domestic violence, is embodied in some American movies. Movies which belong to one of popular cultures usually deals with contemporary issues, one of them are woman position in developed country. The embodiment can be seen through the theme, it brings domestic violence issue, to show that woman subordination which resulted in domestic violence still exists at present. One of the movies presenting woman’s struggle against domestic abuse is Enough. This movie is interesting to be analyzed because the main character,

Slim, endured violence done by her husband, and she is successful in freeing herself from the oppression. The final decision of Slim is to kill her husband because it is the best solution to protect her daughter and herself from her husband's bad attitude. In this thesis, the writer aims to analyze the movie using feminist approach because *Enough* shows woman struggle toward patriarchal culture. The writer will explain more about feminist approach in chapter two.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

### (1) Deciding the Object of the Study

The writer is using the qualitative research to help the writer to analyze the object material. In conducting this research, the writer uses feminist theory. The writer uses a movie as the data source. The movie that is used is an American movie titled *Enough*. It was played by Jennifer Lopez as the main character of this movie. The main character experience domestic violence in the form of physical and psychological abuse. She struggles to end the domestic violence by finding information about domestic violence, escaping from the perpetrator, and doing a self defense.

The first step analyzing is, choosing a movie. The movie chosen is titled *Enough* as the object of the study. The movie highlights the problem of a housewife who knows fact that her husband is cheating and executing domestic violence. As a woman and a mother, she tries to free herself from difficult situation and to protect her only daughter. This study is focused on

the type of domestic violence experienced by the main character and how she ends it.

(2) Using Feminism Theory

The theoretical framework used in analyzing the texts is derived from feminism theory. Feminism is an approach which can be used to analyze every single thing existing in woman's life regarding to society and surrounding environment. In addition, Najmah and Sa'ida say that "Feminism is a consciousness of oppression and exploitation happening to women in their family, work places, or in society and the existence of conscious action from man or women to change that situation.

(3) Analyzing and interpreting the data

In the step of analyzing, the writer uses an audiovisual as a medium of analysis. The movie entitled *Enough* is watched for several times. The writer chooses to observe the main character, Slim, a housewife and a mother who experience domestic violence. After choosing a character, the writer used feminist theory in this research because that theory is appropriated with the object of the study.

## **FINDINGS**

*Enough* the movie consists of several chapters, each chapter indicates or describes different themes. The movie begins with 'hey' chapter that introduce movie's characters and the story's flows, focusing on Slim as the main character.

Slim, works as a waitress at the Red Car restaurant. She has good attitude, this trait can be seen in some dialogues and scenes. The early scene of the movie also shows Slim's education background and she wish to continue education "You know, I was thinking. I could go back to school full-time" (CD 1, minute: 02). The dialogue shows that Slim hasn't finished her school and she think's to quit the job to pursue her wish to continue her education.

"How they meet" part also shows Slim's process before marriage. It happens when she meets a customer who uses the black t-shirt who flirt her by trying to give her a red rose. Slim feels happy but man who wear the brown jacket sitting behind him tries to protect Slim from black t-shirt man who has a bad plan to Slim. Man with the brown jacket knows that Slim is used as a bet by the black t-shirt man. The man who wears the brown jacket, later on known as Mitch, told Slim that she is played by the man with a rose as a bet, as seen in this pictures and dialogue. Slim appreciates Mitch's help and that event triggers romance between Slim and Mitch which continue to new movie chapter called 'to have and to hold' or marriage procession.

After married, the wife is expected to always remain home and do all of the household chores. She also has an obligation to obey her husband because husband is the one who has authority over the wife. We can see from Slim family life, after married, Slim is not working because Mitch is a rich man who already have anything what he want like company, house and now he have Slim as a wife. She just do all things at home like maintaining house, as stated by Madsen (2000, p. 2)" women should be confined to the domestic sphere, nurturing children, maintaining

the household and serving the husbands”. Since the beginning of marriage, Slim feels very happy to have Mitch as her husband. It can be seen from Mitch who becomes the conquering hero, they looking for house that will be their house. Slim likes one of the big houses, but the owner of that house does not sell the house, but Mitch tries to talk with the owner and finally he wants to sell the house for them (CD 1, minute: 10-11). Their lives are happier when they have a baby girl named Gracie. But a conflict starts to appear when Slim knows that her husband has an affair with another woman. She knows it when a woman tried to contact her husband. Slim was curious and she tried to call the person who contacts her husband, she was shocked when the voice is a woman and she says darling at the beginning of the conversation.

## **DISCUSSION**

In each domestic problem, many couples problem by doing violence and wife always being the victim by the husband. Violence from the husband is in form physical and psychological abuses. According to Hurley, Sullivan & McCarthy(2007) says that “Women are vulnerable in facing domestic violence because they are less powerful than men; they are unable to hurt men physically and are also dependent to men in term financial. So, when they face oppression from men, sometimes they cannot fight against those oppressions. Many female victims of domestic violence become victims of their own psychological realities”. This condition is also experienced by Slim family, Mitch also takes violent action by slapping Slim when she was trying to explain to Mitch about her loyalty as a

wife to the family. Mitch also shows the authority as the head of the family, and only Mitch that should make the rules for their family.

Many problems about violence and oppression experienced by women can raise women's awareness so that they will be from oppression of women to keep them away from the fear of freedom. It happens because they (women) have been aware of how the reality around of them. As stated by Woman History article says that "Women struggle is the struggle for equality that sought to free women from oppression and male supremacy. The act of women's to protect their self who consisted of advocacy, protest, consciousness-raising, feminist theory and a variety of diverse individual and group actions on behalf of women and freedom (2011, p.01)". This condition is also happens to Slim who try to struggle to keep her daughter and herself from the bad impact by her husband, and as a woman she also wants to find happiness like what she has ever said to Mitch before. To get the happiness like what she wants, she tries to struggle in a various ways such as finding information, escaping, and self-defense.

People who have the experience of being abused and will find the way to defense themselves doesn't. Every victims of violence always does a lot of ways to save lives from violence and the first step they will do is finding the information about how they can get free from domestic violence. Slim's first plan is to join the Krav Maga training for self-defense. KravMaga is the system of self-defense that consists of a combination of various techniques, there are a boxing, Muay Thai, Wing Chun, Judo, JuJitsu, wrestling, and grappling with the coach in order to fight in realistically way. Krav Maga is also known as self-defense in order to keep the

focus on real-world situations, and is very efficient to counterattack against the perpetrators of violence. The final plan, Slim goes to Los Angeles; she wants to meet Mitch to reply the harsh treatment done by Mitch.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

According to the findings and discussion of this study, the writer concludes that the main character in the movie, Slim, does experience domestic violence, both physical and verbal abuse. It influences and changes her life as a wife and mother. We can see how Slim changes from a wife who always obeys her husband into a strong wife who can defense herself, which means stronger than before.

Slim's struggle is based on her long-drawn physical and psychological abuse. Her body has been hurt several times which left scars and the psychological abuse triggers depression and anxiety to lose her only daughter. The struggle is done in three linear steps. The first step is finding information about the domestic violence including sharing her abuse to people around her to release her burden and to decide the next move. She also goes to the police station to find out whether law system can protect the victim of the domestic violence and the procedure to put the perpetrator in jail. Since she doesn't feel enough with the information from the police, she visits lawyer office to get more information. She asks the lawyer what she should do to protect her daughter and to end the domestic violence.

The second step is escaping. Since Slim feels enough with her marriage condition and decides to end the misery, she arranges an escaping idea helped by

her friends. She takes her daughter with her and escapes from the house. The escaping does not work smoothly, the husband catches and threatens them to ruin the escaping but in the end Slim and her friends succeeds to leave the house. Since then, Slim and her daughter live in many different places and change their identity. But that does not stop the husband to abuse them, he blocks Slim's bank account, stalks her, and threatens her.

Realizing that the escaping will not last forever, Slim moves to the third step, the self defense. She arranges a plan to end the abuse forever by learning martial art called Krav Magra. Besides that, during the self defense phase, she protects her daughter by sending to go on vacation with her friend. Then after the time and place have been set, she defenses herself from the husband, which lead to Mitch's death. Those successful struggle's steps help Slim to end her domestic abuse forever. As a woman, she has gained her freedom from male oppression by overcoming her fear and deciding several steps to end the domestic violence.

The writer suggests the next researchers who want to take the same movie to focuses on the other character such as Mitch and apply psychoanalysis theory to explore the psychological condition of the character to conduct a comparative study on two movies which have the same domestic violence theme. It is also recommended that the other researcher may analyze "*Enough*" by using other theories such as psychoanalysis theory in term of anxiety since there are psychological abuses portrayed in the movie. Besides applying feminist theory in movie, next researches can use other literary works such as poem and novel.

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