



## Women Image and Gender Bias in Oral Literature of Kekeberen

Selva Mindatika<sup>1</sup>; Mohd. Harun; Ramli<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Master of Indonesian Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> Universitas Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh, Indonesia

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### **Abstract**

The study aims to describe the female image that is found in the oral literature of the kekeberen and describe gender biases that are found in the oral literature of kekeberen. The methods used in this research are descriptive methods with a qualitative approach. Data collection using cutting, recording, and recording techniques. Data are words, phrases, and sentences that describe the image of women and gender bias in oral literature. The research shows an image of a woman that is a psychological aspect, such as sadness, tension, thinking, feelings, anger, and fear. The social image includes the social image of women in the family, namely, the role of children, mothers, wives, devotees, and guardians. Then the social picture of women within the society, that is, caring for one another and being decent in everyday life; the gender bias that consists of subordination, like women placed in low positions, underestimated, or with limited access. Stereotypes, like naming boys and girls. Violence like beating, threats, rough temperaments, egos, and emotions. The burden of work is like women engaged in heavy daily work, including farming and caring for other households.

**Keywords:** *Women Image; Gender Bias; Oral Kekeberen*

### **Introduction**

Literature is one of the cultural elements that reveals the history and culture of a nation. It is seen in the development of literature that shows the various stages of its development. Indonesian literature can generally be divided into two periods, namely the period of old literature and the period of new literature.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Kosasih stated that old literature or classical literature was Indonesian literature before the arrival of Western influence. According to its form, old literatures are divided into two, namely literature in the form of poetry: spells, *pantun*, and poems and prose literature among them fairy tales and folk stories.

The woman is a feminine and weak figure, in the social and cultural context of the household affairs of the family.<sup>2</sup> stated that weakness was the basic reason for men to exploit the existence of

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<sup>1</sup> Kosasih, E., *Apresiasi Sastra Indonesia*. Nobel Edumedia, Jakarta, 2008, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Sugihastuti, M. S., *Perempuan di mata perempuan: perspektif sajak-sajak Toeti Heraty*, Nuansa Cendekia, Bandung, 2000, p. 32.

women. The picture of women's position has been around for a long time. In many fairy tales, women are often used as central figures in the exclusion of women. The stories that appear in folk stories portray women as loving characters who are easily dominated and marginalized. Folklore is a culture that is inherited from time to time and spread in different versions.<sup>3</sup>

The stories of the past that emerged and developed in society as the distinguishing elements of each nation had different cultures, including the cultural wealth and history of each country. It's usually a folk story about an event or creation of a place whereas the characters in the folk story are usually animals, humans, and gods. Besides, some stories highlight female characters. The Gayo community generally has a very complete and orderly tradition, one of which is the tradition of *kekeberen*.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, Asdiana said Kekeberen is one of the forms of oral literature that exists in Gayo Land. The basic word for this kind is '*keber*' which in Indonesian means news, news, or story. Kekeberen is an illustration and an isolation. In short, the *kickeren* tells a previous story, or a series of nowadays stories packed in the form of a story with various shapes, charges, and symbols that he devised.<sup>5</sup>

Kekeberen is one of Gayo's cultural heritage that holds many mysteries and stories behind it, whether it's history, stories, teachings, certain stories, and values of the past that must be dug back and proven its existence. Kekeberen originated and developed in the life of the Gayo people, especially in the districts of Central Aceh, Bener Meriah, and Gayo Lues. One of the most popular and told stories from generation to generation is the story of *Atu Belah*. *Atu Belah* is a folk story in the Central Aceh district that tells about a mother and her hungry daughter. It is said that this legend tells the life of a woman with a daughter and a husband.

The story is a story in which there is an image of a woman and gender bias that is someone who is physically abused, indirectly so that his psychic is affected. Therefore, some cases of violence in this folk story also have a link between psychic and physical violence. This research focuses on and examines in depth the image of women and gender bias that are present in the many stories of Gayo. Some of the stories that are the subject of this study are *Peteri Pukes*, *Peteri Ijo*, *Atu Belah*, and *Peteri Benu*.

A woman in a folk story or a *kicker* shows a picture of a woman in the past. Women are regarded as weak and unimportant in decision-making in society. Women's discourse has always been an interesting topic to discuss, women are often objects of beauty and they are also weak, however, women have an existence in society that shapes the image. Images are defined as appearance; images; are images that people have about individuals, companies, organizations, or products.<sup>6</sup>

Women's image is the daily behavior of women in various aspects, both physical and psychological as women's self-image as well as family and society as social image.<sup>7</sup> The patriarchal culture is one of the factors that shape the image of women, thus creating gender inequality. Gender is regarded as a concept used to distinguish roles, behaviors, mentalities, and emotional characteristics between men and women in developing societies. Gender is also a characteristic used as a basis for identifying differences between women and men in socio-cultural conditions, values and behavior, psychological, emotional, and other non-biological factors.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Danandjaja James., *Folklor Indonesia: Ilmu Gosip, Dongeng dan Lain lain*, Pustaka Utama Grafiti, Jakarta, 1997, p.50.

<sup>4</sup> Asdiana, "Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan dalam Tradisi Berkekeberen Pada Masyarakat Gayo", *Journal of Industrial Engineering & Management Research*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 2020, p. 85.

<sup>5</sup> Kadir Ibrahim dan Abd. Rahim Daudy, *Bunga Rampai Cerita Rakyat Gayo*, Department of Education and Culture Indonesian and Regional Literary Book Publishing Project, Jakarta, 1982, p. 56.

<sup>6</sup> Education Department, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, Pusat Bahasa, Jakarta, 2008, p. 2587.

<sup>7</sup> Sugihastuti, *Op. Cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>8</sup> Rokhmansyah Alfian, *Pengantar gender dan feminisme: Pemahaman awal kritik sastra feminisme*. Garudhawaca, Yogyakarta, 2016, p. 1.

The research focuses on the female image and gender bias of characters in oral literature, where once a part of society still argued that a woman's job was enough to cook, decorate herself, and be in the kitchen. Therefore, it would be weird for society if a woman left home to work. Besides, there has been a lack of research into the oral literature of the region. This research is interesting and important to enrich the literary treasures, especially those relating to the image of women and gender bias in oral literature. This, the study of oral literature, puts women and men as researchers or figures studied.<sup>9</sup> The study of women in the context of oral literature is very interesting.

### **Research Method**

This research uses qualitative methods with qualitatively descriptive approaches with a feminist approach. Sayida argues that qualitative research is a type of research that does not use statistical procedures or methods of quantification.<sup>10</sup> A qualitative descriptive approach is a method of processing data by analyzing factors related to the object of research with a more in-depth presentation of the data on the subject of research.<sup>11</sup>

Data sources are everything that is used to obtain data in research.<sup>12</sup> The data used in this research is grouped into two, namely the primary data source and the secondary source.<sup>13</sup> The primary source of the data in this research is the people's narrative of the oral literature of the Central Aceh Gayo community. Data collection was carried out in several villages in the Bebesen district, namely the villages of Kebet, Umang, and Tansaran.

Secondary data sources are data sources obtained indirectly or through intermediaries, but still based on conceptual categories. Secondary sources of data in this study are the study of the library in the Library, documents, archives, and resources available on the Internet, or informants that exist around the mentioned villages.<sup>14</sup>

### **Discussions**

#### **1. Women's Image**

The image of women in the study of feminism is understood as a picture of women as a whole that covers the family sphere and the social sphere.<sup>15</sup> According to Sugihastuti, the image of a woman is a physical and psychological aspect of the woman's self-image as well as of the family and society as a social image.<sup>16</sup>

##### **a. Women Self-Image**

Women's self-image is a typical world with all kinds of behaviors. A woman's self-image is a condition and view of a woman that originates from within herself and covers both physical and

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<sup>9</sup> Locke, L., *Encyclopedia Women's in Folklore and Folklife*, Greenhill, USA, 2009, p. 9.

<sup>10</sup> Sayidah Nur, *Metodologi Penelitian Disertai dengan Contoh Penerapannya dalam Penelitian, Taman Pondok Jati J3*, Zifatama Jawara, Sidoarjo, 2018, p. 14.

<sup>11</sup> Heriyanto, et.al., "Analisis Pemanfaatan Buku Elektronik (E-BOOK) by Librarian of SMA Negeri 1 Semarang", *Jurnal Ilmu Perpustakaan*. Vol. 2, No. 2, 2013, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Arikunto Suharsim, *Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktik*, PT Rineka Cipta, Jakarta, 2010, p. 172

<sup>13</sup> Siswanto, *Metode Penelitian Sastra, Analisa Psikologis*, Muhammadiyah University Press, Surakarta, 2005, p. 54.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>15</sup> Hellwig, T., *Citra Kaum Perempuan di Hindia Belanda*. Yayasan Obor Indonesia, Jakarta, 2007, p. 20.

<sup>16</sup> Sugihastuti, *Loc. Cit*, p. 7.

psychological aspects. A woman's image of herself is embodied as an individual who has his attitude and choice over various activities based on his personal and social needs.<sup>17</sup>

### 1) Women's Physical Image

According to Sugihastuti what is called physical image is a certain physical trait that only women possess. Physically, the adult woman is an individual resulting from the biological processes of the baby girl, who in the course of her age reaches maturity in this physical aspect, the woman experiences characteristic things, which are not experienced by men, for example, only the woman can conceive, give birth, and breastfeed her children. This physical reality continues to raise, among other things, the myth of women as mother-nature, in this myth women are assumed as the source of life and life as beings who can create new beings in the sense that they can give birth to children.

### 2) Women Psychological-Image

From a psychological point of view, women are also psychological beings, beings who think, feel, and breathe. The female psychic aspect cannot be separated from what is called femininity. This principle of femininity is a tendency that exists within women. These principles include relatedness, receptivity, love, fostering life potential, community orientation, and interpersonal relationships. The psychological aspect is that a woman is born psychologically different from a man, and this affects her development.

### b. Women Social-Image

The social image of women is a woman's image that is closely related to the norms and values that exist in a group of society, where women become members and wish to have interpersonal relationships. A group of people is a group of families and large groups of people in the family, for example, women as wives, mothers, and family members whose respective roles bring about social consequences, that is, one with the other related.

The social image of a woman is also a matter of self-experience, as it is reflected in the image of the woman and her social image, these experiences that determine the social interaction of women in society on the self-experience that a woman behaves, including in her attitude toward men. The important thing that begins the social image of a woman is the image of herself.

### 1) Women's Social Image in Family

As an adult woman, as reflected in her physical and psychological aspects, one of her prominent roles is the role of women in the family. The image of women in the family aspect is depicted as a mature woman, a wife, and a housewife.

### 2) Citra Women's Social Image in Society

In addition to the role in the family, the social image of women also plays a role in society. Human beings as social beings in their lives need other human beings. Likewise, a woman's relationship with another man can be special or general depending on the nature of the relationship. Human relations in society begin with relations between people, including relations between women and men.<sup>18</sup>

## 2. Gender Bias

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p. 83-144.

<sup>18</sup> Sugihastuti & Suharto, *Kritik Sastra Feminis: Teori dan Aplikasinya*, Pustaka Pelajar, Yogyakarta, 2016, p. 132.

Gender bias can also be understood as the formation of the social and cultural character of men and women that favors one gender and is detrimental to the other.<sup>19</sup> Gender bias, there is an unfair distribution of positions and roles between men and women. Women with a feminine character are considered to have a good role in the domestic sector, whereas men with a masculine character should have played a good part in the public sector. That means understanding that interpretation supports this concept of gender bias.<sup>20</sup>

This gender bias occurs in all areas of life, including in the educational environment. Gender-biased behavior arises as a result of gender inequality or Gender Inequality. Moreover, the attachment of character to men and women is socially and culturally constructed as a gender concept.<sup>21</sup> Gender inequalities based on historical developments have led to inequality, oppression, domination, and hegemony.<sup>22</sup> The gender bias that leads to differences and inequalities between women and men should be given special attention, bearing in mind that the role of women is crucial, both structurally and functionally. There is no distinction between a man and a woman.<sup>23</sup> However, gender differences are not a problem as long as they do not give rise to gender inequality. Therefore, gender changes over time, from place to place, and from class to class.

According to Fakhri, gender bias can be in the form of subordination, stereotypes, violence against women, and double labor burdens. These forms of gender inequality are interrelated and influence one another, including the following:<sup>24</sup>

#### a. Subordination

Subordination means a judgment or assumption that the role performed by one sex is primary or more important, in other words, a position or role that underestimates the value of another role. One sex is considered more important, primary, and high than the other sex. For example, men as leaders. The idea that women are irrational or emotional so that women cannot lead, resulted in the emergence of attitudes that put women in an unimportant position.

#### b. Stereotype

In general, stereotypes are labeling or marking a particular group. One of those stereotypes comes from a gender perspective. For example, a marking that begins with the assumption that a female prostitute is to attract the attention of the opposite sex, thus suitable to be assigned as a guest receiver.

Women as accompanying husbands do not need to be promoted to the head or head, because they are not considered to be the primary livelihoods that will support the family's economy. Women are considered to be seductive, so they can't be trusted to occupy important/strategic positions. When there's a case of violence or sexual harassment associated with this stereotype. This stereotype is a natural consequence if women's education is undermined. This stereotype of women is everywhere. Many governmental regulations, religious rules, cultures and social customs are developed because of these stereotypes.

#### c. Violence

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<sup>19</sup> Hidayat, R., "Bias Gender dalam Prestasi Akademik Siswa: Studi Tentang Perbandingan Prestasi Akademik Siswa Laki-laki dan Perempuan di SMA 12 Bekasi", *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan*, p. 474.

<sup>20</sup> Rokhmansyah Alfian, *Op. Cit*, p. 11.

<sup>21</sup> Fakhri Mansoer, *Analisis Gender dan Transformasi Sosial*. 15<sup>th</sup> Printing, INSISTPress, Yogyakarta, 2013, p. 71.

<sup>22</sup> Sukeni, N., *Hegemoni Negara dan Resistensi Perempuan*, Udayana, Bali, 2009, p. 7.

<sup>23</sup> Selvira Pebby and Prio Utomo, "Gender Discourses Analysis: Representasi Bias Gender Dan Pengaruhnya Pada Buku Ajar Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam Di Madrasah Ibtidai'yah", *Jurnal Equalita*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 2021, p. 158.

<sup>24</sup> Fakhri Mansoer, *Op. Cit*, p. 13-21.

Violence is an assault against the physical or psychological integrity of a person. Violence against other human beings originates essentially from various sources, but one is violence against a particular gender caused by gender perceptions.

#### d. Responsibility

Women are considered to be caring and diligent, so not fit to be the head of the household. As a result, many women have to work hard and long to keep their homes clean and clean, from cleaning and polishing the floor, cooking, washing, to caring for children. In the environment of poor families, this very heavy burden must be borne by the women themselves. What's more, if the woman has to work, then she'll bear the double burden of work.

### 3. Kekeberen

*Kekeberen* comes from the word 'keber' which in Indonesian means news, news, or story. *Kekeberen* is an illustration and an isolation. In short, a kicker tells a previous story, or a series of nowadays stories packed in the form of a story with various shapes, charges, and symbols that he sketches. The contents can be Islamic stories, such as the history of Islam, the story of the Prophet, Friend, and others. Besides, they describe the local wisdom of this tribe.<sup>25</sup> *Kekeberen* Gayo has developed in the life of the community, especially in the districts of Central Aceh, Bener Meriah, and Gayo Lues.

As a result of the analysis of women's image data in the oral literature, it was found that there are two types of female image: female self-image and female social image. Women's self-image is divided into two types, namely, female images in physical aspects and feminine images in psychic aspects.

#### 1. Image of a Woman

##### a. Physical Aspect

The representation of a woman in the physical aspect includes the shape of the body, the plane, and other things that can be seen clearly by the woman herself. Here's an example of the female self-image of physical aspects in the oral literature of *kekeberen*.

*“pitu peteri mehne cantik tapen si pedehne gegeerel peteri bensu renyel we le si paling terkenal I daerah e so”*

“The seven daughters were all very beautiful, but the most beautiful of them was Peteri Bensu, and she became a very famous girl in her countryside” (*Informant Bujangga*)

The data describes the beauty of Peteri Bensu known as the most beautiful of the seven daughters, and she has physical characteristics that are considered attractive to her community. Peteri Bensu has clean and healthy skin, and her hair is neat, shiny, and well-maintained, her length and hairstyle have a role in her appealing physical image. Then, Peteri Bensu had a good posture, as well as giving an impression of self-confidence and elegance. Therefore, this data is included in the physical image because it depicts the beauty of Peteri Bensu.

##### b. Psycial Aspect

The psychological picture of women encompasses the feelings that originate in women, such as feelings of happiness, sadness, tension, anger, or fear. Here is a description of the psychic image of women in the oral literature of *kekeberen*.

<sup>25</sup> Kadir Ibrahim dan Abd. Rahim Daudy, *Op. Cit.*, p. 59.

*“tibe-tibe ine si penyeber oya muninget i kuren kudu ara beberapa ekor lompong si ben i tengkam ne orom Ipak io ne”*

“Suddenly the patient's mother remembers on the back roof there are some frogs she just caught with Ipak last afternoon” (*Source Kobat*)

## 2. Women's Social Image

The picture of women in the social aspect covers the social roles that women play in the family and society, these roles will change depending on their circumstances and where they are. Here are some data on the social image of women in the family and society.

### a. Women's Social Image in Family

Here is a description of the social image data of women in families that can be on oral literature of *kekeberen*.

*“wan jelen sesire nemen adek e urum upuh panyang si nge tue , pungu kuwene mu nehen kidding ni adek wan jelen, sesiren berjangin berpepongoten munalu ine e “*

“He was on the way, clothed with a long cloth, and his right hand was with him, and he went on his way, and sang a song of loving kindness”(Source Kobat)

The data describes a social image or a picture of a young woman traveling with her sister. The act of carrying his sister with a long cloth and leading his brother reflects the family responsibility carried on by the boy. It shows the character of the boy who is responsible for caring for and protecting her brother. This journey creates the image of the self-reliance of that boy, not only caring about his sisters but leading their journey, depicting the independence of the young woman who has been acting like an adult woman.

### b. Women's Social Image in Family of Society

Here is a description of the social image of women in society that can be seen in the oral literature of *kekeberen*.

*“inen keben bercerak orom putri bensu ike malim dewa nge demue tudung mu si kenali putri bensu”*

“Inen Keben told Peteri Bensu that Malim God had found his flying sword, and showed him the flying sword he'd been looking for all this time of *Peteri Bensu*”

(Source Karimisah)

The data describes the social image or picture of the interaction between Inen Keben and Peteri Bensu in the context of the story. Inen Keben's action to tell Peteri Bensu that Malim God has found his flying scarf reflects both news communications between these two characters, a crucial moment in the story, between Inen and Peteri Keben have a close relationship or have a relationship that allows them to share the news.

The research also found forms of gender bias consisting of subordination, stereotypes, violence, and workload. Gender bias is defined as the formation of the social and cultural character of men and women that favors one gender and adversely affects the other. (Hidayat, 2011). This gender bias occurs in all areas of life, including in the educational environment. Gender-biased behavior arises as a result of gender injustice or *Gender inequality* (Afandi, 2019).

## 1. Subordinate

The picture of subordination in gender bias includes one gender considered more important, primary, and higher than the other gender. Here is a description of subordination data in oral literature *kekeberen*.

*“Perangun banan remalan i arap, Mude i apit kuen kiri orom roa jema sudere e, ton pake ni i perjelenen i tengah perangun rawan mubeda barisan i kuduk”*

“The women went in front of him, and Mude was held on his right hand by two of his relatives. They were in the middle of the way, and the men in the rear” (*Source Karimisah*)

The data describes subordination which is a gender-based treatment, in this situation, women (female groups) are placed in the front and men (men) in the back. This data contains an arrangement that places women in a front position and men in a back position, reflecting social behavior or differences in treatment based on gender, this is subordinations in a particular context.

## 2. Stereotype

Stereotypes in gender bias include labeling and marking. Labeling or marking is usually given to someone who relates to a position in society. Here is a description of stereotypical data in the oral literature of *kekeberen*.

*“aku pe segan muganggu mu Pukes sebab ko tengah asyik berdenang, leng mu ne pe merdu pede, kune aku gere sesana leng mu pe nguk jema tertawan ike lagu ini aku nguk ngerin tereh ko i mai jema”*

“I can't bother you because Pukes's been pulling his voice so gently how yes it's okay your voice is so gentle that you can easily get caught in this way for a long time” (*Source Karimisah*)

The data describes women as often seen as objects that have a certain beauty or charm, including soft voices. Mude (a man) stated that Peteri Pukes' gentle voice was very enticing and easy to capture. It reflects the view that women are often associated with their physical or vocal attractiveness. The statement also reflects the stereotype of jealousy in the relationship, in which Mude stated that she could feel jealous if others were also attracted to Peteri Pukes because of her soft voice. This stereotype of jealousy is a view that is generally associated with a possessive feeling or anxiety about losing a partner or an object considered valuable. It is important to remember that stereotypes are a general picture that does not always reflect the reality or wishes of the individual. Every person is unique, and should not be judged based on certain stereotypes. An effort to understand the individual as an individual is essential in respecting and understanding human diversity.

## 3. Violence

The description of gender bias violence includes attacks on a person's physical as well as psychological and mental integrity. Here is a list of data that includes violence in the oral literature of *kekeberen*.

*“jema si ara i istana si mulei berbahagie kini meh lening relem wan tereh”*

“Those who were in the palace, who were once happy, are now drowned in fear” (*Source Bujangga*)

The data suggests that situations, where violence is driven by gender bias, make people in the palace feel insecure and afraid. Gender-based violence is a serious problem that occurs when a person



becomes the victim of violence, threats, or cruel treatment based on their gender or gender roles. Gender bias can lead to destructive behavior aimed at or enforcing gender inequality.

#### 4. Work Responsibility

The description of gender bias involves the assumption that women are caring, diligent, and unfit to be heads of households, resulting in all domestic household tasks being women's responsibility. Here is a list of data that workloads in the oral literature of *kekeberen*.

*“keluarga miskin ini usehe e we berempus orom berume wan ton si gere lues tu”*

“This poor family's only business is gardening and living in a small area” (*Source Kobat*)

The data describes the workload in a gender bias referring to the gender-based distribution of roles that affects the way work and responsibilities in the family. The poor families experience a gender division in which male and female family members have different responsibilities. Usually, in most societies, women and men have separate roles in domestic and agricultural work. Women are often responsible for domestic work, such as cooking, cleaning, and caring for children, while men are usually engaged in agricultural and gardening work.

The role of this poor family is implemented consistently, for example, women in the family are responsible for working at home, while men have to work in gardens and meadows to make a living. Gender bias like this can create inequalities in work and family responsibilities, often women have to face more household duties than men. Gender biased workloads are a social issue that leads to inequalities in the division of work and responsibilities among family members according to gender.

#### **Conclusion**

The research shows that the explanation described earlier is as follows. The image of a woman in the oral literature is a woman's image in the physical aspect, like a beautiful woman. A woman in a psychic aspect, such as a difficult and painful emotional state, desperate, caring, anxious, and guilty. Then the social image of women in the family, such as the sense of dependence or limitation perceived by women in making decisions or taking action, the social picture of the structure and interaction of husband-wife relationships, values, affection, appreciation, and relationships within the family.

There are four forms of gender bias found in oral literature, namely subordination, such as inequality or social hierarchy that arises from gender or gender differences. Stereotypes, such as gender, can influence individual thinking and behavior. Violence, such as acts of violence driven by emotions, egos, or feelings of dissatisfaction, then domestic, psychological, or sexual violence. The burden of work, such as women who are given greater workloads in terms of carrying out homework and responsibilities, includes caring for children, helping the poor, and fulfilling social obligations.

#### **Suggestion**

It is suggested that, firstly, other researchers are expected to investigate other aspects of the different theories that exist in the oral literature, because the research is still limited. Secondly, for readers to grow awareness, that there are positive and negative female images and gender bias in oral literature.

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