

Reflection of Moral Integrity in the Novel *Al-Hubb Fii Zaman An-Nafth* by Nawal El-Saadawi (A Sociological Literature Study)

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ABSTRACT

*Discrimination against women in the workplace is still a complex social problem, including in the field of archaeology. Novel *Al-Hubb Fii Zaman An-Nafth* depicts the story of a female archaeologist who experiences gender discrimination in her work. The main character is prohibited from going looking for statues without permission, while her male colleagues do not face similar restrictions. This study aims to describe the sociological review of literature on moral integrity in the novel. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method by analyzing the patriarchal and moral areas presented in the novel. The results show that the female character in these novel fights discrimination due to the patriarchal culture inherent in society through self-motivation and internal drive. She shows courage and moral firmness in facing the injustice she experiences. In addition, the moral integrity of the main character is reflected in honesty, consistency, commitment, perseverance, and self-discipline. Values such as responsibility, trust, and justice are also principles that are firmly held in her struggle. This study reveals that moral integrity plays an important role in dealing with gender discrimination. The female character in this novel represents an empowered woman, who not only opposes injustice but also proves that morality, perseverance, and courage can be the main weapons in fighting discrimination. These findings provide new perspectives on how literature can reflect social realities and promote gender equality in society.*

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KEYWORDS

Moral Integrity; *Al-Hubb Fii Zaman An-Nafth*; Novel; Sociological Literature.

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1. Introduction

Women often face discrimination in various aspects of life, including in the world of work. One form of discrimination that still occurs is against women who choose professions that are dominated by men, such as archaeology. In this context, women who work as archaeologists often receive criticism from various parties, both men and women (Jariah et al., 2022; Junaid et al., 2025; Rahman, 2024). This is due to the patriarchal view that considers archaeology as a job that is only suitable for men, while women are more appropriate to work in fields that are considered more in accordance with their nature, such as oil carriers. This kind of view reflects gender inequality that is still inherent in society (Siddiqi, 2021; Juanid et al. 2024; Sugiyartati et al., 2020; Suma et al., 2023).

Reflection on this condition is important to understand how beliefs and knowledge that develop in society can affect women's opportunities in the world of work. According to Mann et al., (2009) reflection is an active, continuous, and careful consideration of a belief or knowledge that is the foundation for supporting it in the future. In other words, reflection allows individuals to re-evaluate prevailing social norms and seek fairer solutions for all parties.

In facing discrimination due to the inherent patriarchal culture, moral integrity becomes a very important aspect. Barnard et al., (2008) identified several aspects of moral integrity that are relevant in this context, such as self-motivation and drive, moral courage and assertiveness, honesty, consistency, commitment, perseverance, self-discipline, responsibility, trust, and justice. The main female characters in the novels studied in this study adhere to the moral integrity that is believed and held firmly.

Several previous studies have discussed the theme of gender injustice from various perspectives. Latifah (2024) in her thesis entitled *Interpretation of Humanist Values in the Novel *Al-Hubb Fii Zaman An-Nafth* by Nawal El-Saadawi: Charles Pierce's Semiotics* highlights the humanitarian values contained in the novel, including issues of injustice towards women. Azizah (2016) in her research entitled *Sejarah *Al-Hubb Fii Zaman An-Nafth* Li Nawal Al-Saadawi* (Dirasat

Adabiyah) reveals how the novel reflects Egyptian society. Meanwhile, Salbiah (2022) in her study entitled *The Self-Existence of the Main Female Character in the Novel Al-Hubb Fii Zaman An-Nafth* by Nawal El-Saadawi (Study of Simone De Beauvoir's Existential Feminism) criticizes the self-existence of the main female character in the novel from the perspective of existentialist feminism. Haeriyah et al., (2024) in his journal *Social Criticism in the Novel Al-Hubb Fii Zaman An-Nafth* by Nawal El-Saadawi (Review of Sociology of Literature) discusses the social conditions of Egyptian society, what types of criticism and forms of conveying social criticism.

Although previous studies have examined various aspects of injustice against women, forms of criticism and criticized the existence of the main female character in the novel *Al-Hubb Fii Zaman An-Nafth*, this study still has limitations in terms of analyzing moral integrity as an important element in dealing with discrimination. In addition, previous studies have focused more on structural analysis and feminism without exploring how women's reflections and survival strategies face patriarchal culture.

This study aims to fill this gap by examining the role of reflection and moral integrity in maintaining the principles and existence of women in a world full of discrimination. It is hoped that this study can provide a new perspective on how women can survive and fight injustice through reflection and moral integrity. Thus, the scientific contribution of this study is to offer a more holistic approach in understanding the struggles of women archaeologists, not only from a feminist perspective, but also from a deeper aspect of reflection and morality.

2. Methodology

Qualitative descriptive in novel research is a method used to describe and analyze phenomena that occur in literary works, such as moral values and themes. According to Siswanto (2010, p. 55), this type of research is qualitative descriptive research. The basic approach used by researchers is qualitative with descriptive methods. So related to this, Siswanto (2010, p. 55) stated that the type of research describes how a researcher uses methods in solving a thorough problem (Siswanto, 2010, p. 55).

The types of data used in this study consist of two, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data is the main data, namely data that is selected or obtained directly from the source without intermediaries (Siswanto, 2010, p. 70). Primary data in this study are in the form of sentences or quotes that contain moral integrity, namely: self-motivation and encouragement, moral courage and assertiveness, honesty, consistency, and commitment that are held firmly by female figures and patriarchal form from several parties namely: 1.) public area 2.) private area. Secondary data is data obtained indirectly or through intermediaries but still relies on categories or parameters that are used as references (Siswanto, 2010, p. 71). Secondary data in this study are in the form of reference books or scientific works related to this study.

Data sources are data obtained from sources to be studied. Data sources are related to the research subjects from which the data are obtained (Siswanto, 2010, p. 71). The data source comes from the novel *Al-hubb fii Zaman an-Nafth* by Nawal El-Saadawi.

The reading and note-taking technique are a method of collecting data in novel research that combines reading and recording important information from the text. In this study, to collect data the researcher will use the reading and note-taking technique. The technique used to collect data in this study is the reading and note-taking technique. The reading and note-taking technique are data obtained from the results of reading the novel text and recording information that is in accordance with the problems in this study, Adam (2015, p. 8-9). This technique involves re-reading the novel to capture the content and determine data that is relevant to the formulation of the research problem. The steps for data collection in this study are as follows: 1.) The researcher first carefully reads the novel "*Al-hubb fii Zaman an-Nafth*" by Nawal El-Saadawi. 2.) The researcher marks the paragraphs that contain patriarchy in both the public and private spheres, as well as moral integrity. 3.) After that, the researcher divides the paragraphs into sentences that highlight the main points based on patriarchy in the public and private spheres and the moral integrity of the female characters.

3. Result and Discussion

The novel in this study is a novel entitled "*Al-hubb fii Zaman an-Nafth* by Nawal El-Saadawi" which consists of 252 pages. The novel was first published and translated into Indonesian version by Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia in 2012 and then redesigned by Rahmatika. This novel depicts the story of a female character who fights against discrimination from various parties. This novel describes a lot about the morals that are held firmly by the female character when she receives criticism from various parties. So this novel depicts patriarchal culture which is quite complex. However, there is a main character, a woman who holds on and is able to survive with the moral integrity that she has and believes in. This

study will describe how patriarchal culture which exist in literary works, then what efforts are made by the main female character using the theory of moral integrity of Barnard et al., (2008).

3.1. Research Result

Analysis of the forms of patriarchy that exist in the novel and the moral integrity maintained by the main female character in the novel."Al-hubb fii Zaman an-Nafth by Nawal El-Saadawi".

Table1. Forms of Patriarchy in the Novel Al-Hubb in the Age of An-Nafth

Novel Text	Category
Police: "Is the woman sane? I think the woman is not sane." Husband: "You mean the research?" Police: "Yes, usually a woman who is involved in activities outside the home is not sane." (page 8)	Public patriarchy
The woman filled out the job application form with a typewriter. She filled in the boxes for name, age and religion. In the gender box, she wrote "female." The department head stared at her with wide eyes. This department only accepted men. The work we do, I mean digging, is not suitable for you. (page 35)	Public patriarchy
Man: "Prepare dinner immediately!" The man said in a tone like someone who had hired a woman to cook for him. There was no box for it on the form he was filling out on his typewriter. (page 37)	Private patriarchy
The woman lifted her head and the man caught her head from behind. The man was standing behind her, rubbing his body against her body shamelessly. (page 39)	Private patriarchy
Woman: "I don't want to cook it." The man stretched out his long arm, which held a knife. The woman watched the gleaming blade and then bent her neck. She shrank her body inward while protecting her neck with her palms. (page 50)	Private patriarchy

Table 2. Moral Integrity of the Novel Al-hubb fii Zaman an-Nafth

Novel Text	Category
Police: "Is she one of those women who like to cause trouble and oppose the legitimate government?" Husband: "No, she is a very obedient woman." (page 5)	Self-discipline
His feet were swollen from the journey he had made, and the skin on his feet, covered with a layer of black dirt, was peeling off. (page 36)	Responsibility
When he was a child, he did not know who the holy fairy was. Or perhaps the holy fairy was Princess Zaynab, the only prophet who was able to cure his aunt's illness.	Self-Motivation and Encouragement

<p>Man: "What did you say, what are you talking about?"</p> <p>Woman: "I will be a prophet, so that I can heal people."</p> <p>Man: "Are you crazy? There are no female prophets." (page 43)</p>	
<p>Woman: "This jar makes my head very hot!"</p> <p>Man: "There is nothing to do but wait, absolutely nothing." (page 53)</p>	Honesty
<p>Woman: "I can't stay here!"</p> <p>The woman stood stiff and her voice was choked. (page 61)</p>	Courage and Moral Firmness
<p>There was a feeling that tied him to the man. But it's definitely not love. (page 61)</p>	Trust
<p>The woman reached out to grab her chisel when a sharp stinging sensation shot through her side. It was as if a piece of frozen oil had slipped into her lungs with the air. (page 64)</p>	Commitment
<p>Since childhood the woman could not bear to carry anything on her head. She lifted the jar from her head and shifted it onto her back. Perhaps this was a better way to carry it. If heat flows down the back, only bones are there. Heat in the head melts the brain. (page 73)</p>	Perseverance
<p>Every time he looked into the eyes of the women, the pain increased. The women disappeared one by one. One of them disappeared first, followed by the others. They were gasping for breath in broken voices. The joints of their necks ached from the weight of the jars. (page 82)</p>	Justice
<p>As long as the man could laugh there was no reason to run away, at least for tonight. The woman could go on sleeping, and tomorrow she would try again. (page 250)</p>	Consistency

3.2 Discussion of Social Issues and Moral Integrity in the Novel *Al-hubb fii Zaman an-Nafth* by Nawal El-Saadawi

In this section, the researcher will explain the analysis findings based on the table above. The discussion that will be discussed is regarding patriarchal form which is depicted in the novel and the moral integrity held firmly by the female characters in facing patriarchal culture faced from various region in the Novel *Al-hubb fii Zaman an-Nafth* by Nawal El-Saadawi. Where are the research results? There are two forms of patriarchy depicted in the novel, namely: 1.) private patriarchy or domestic patriarchy 2.) public patriarchy.

3.2.1 Private Patriarchy or Domestic Patriarchy

The dominant structure of domestic patriarchy is the arena of household production, state, sexuality, violence and culture. The data above illustrates female figures experience discriminatory behavior from various parties. Based on data in mattersafe8. which is described in the novel: "Yes, usually a woman who is involved in activities outside the home is not sane". Based on this diction, the woman was deemed insane by the police when a woman involved in activities outside the home such as conducting research and looking for statues.

On the data on pagesafe35 depicted in the novel: "The work we do, I mean digging the ground is not suitable for you." The female character gets unfair treatment when filling out a job application form by filling in the gender "female" because in general archaeological work is only done by men.

3.2.2 Private Patriarchy

Based on data in casesafe37as described in the novel: "prepare dinner immediately! "The female character gets forced treatment when she meets a man who gives her a place to stay while she is doing research. She meets a man who orders her to prepare her daily needs every day and is treated like a maid and even orders her in a high tone.

On page 39 data as depicted in the novel: The woman lifted her head and the man caught her head from behind. The man was standing behind the woman, rubbing his body on her body without shame. The female character is considered as a provider of sexual services and a satisfier of male lust.

On page 50 data as depicted in the novel: Woman: "I don't want to cook it."

The man stretched out his long arm, which held a knife. The woman watched the gleaming blade and then bent her neck. The female character experienced physical violence when she refused to cook a meal for the man who had given her a place to stay while she was looking for the statue.

In this section, the researcher will explain based on the data listed namely regarding Moral Integrity in The Novel Al-hubb fii Zaman an-Nafth. Where this moral integrity is what is held firmly by the female character in facing various...pressure social based on theory Barnard et al., (2008).

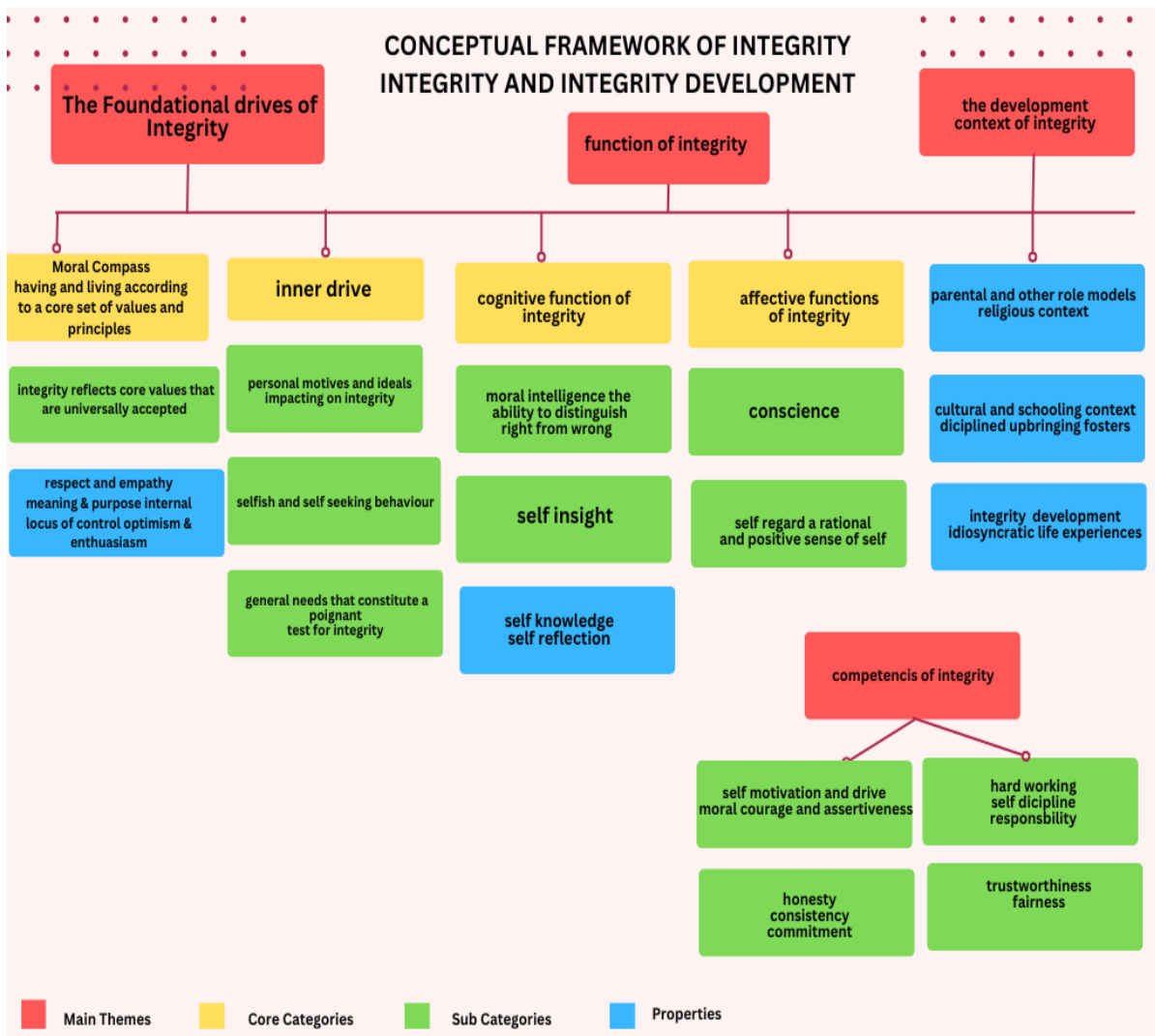


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of integrity and integrity development

a. Self-motivation and drive

The inner drive and energy to set goals and work hard to achieve them, to fulfill commitments and maintain or even exceed performance standards. Based on *datamattersafe43* depicted in the novel: "Woman:" I will become a prophet, so that I can heal people. "The female character describes the motivation and encouragement from herself since childhood when she grows up, she wants to be someone who is useful to many people.

b. Courage and moral firmness

The courage to act and defend what is believed and to demonstrate the principles and values that are held in public and to voice them. This includes the courage to reflect on oneself in an effort to seek self-insight. Based on *datamattersafe61* depicted in the novel: "I can't stay here!". The female character depicts courage and decisiveness to act quickly to leave the place where she is staying because she is aware that if she continues to stay silent, she will not find the statue she is looking for soon.

c. Honesty

Honesty with oneself and others about one's intentions and capacities. This includes telling the truth and stating one's intentions. This is manifested in transparent and open communication and proactive sharing of information. Based on *data mattersafe53* which is described in the novel: "This jar makes my head very hot!". The female character tells the truth about how she feels to the man who tells her to carry a jar filled with oil.

d. Consistency

Consistent application and living according to core values and principles in all different areas of life (i.e. work and personal life). Based on *datamattersafe250* depicted in the novel: "As long as the man can laugh there is no reason to run away, and tomorrow he will try again". The female character describes a consistent attitude in accordance with her initial goal of searching for the statue. The effort she made was trying to escape and she would continue to try until she could get out of that place.

e. Commitment

Perseverance in achieving what one has committed to do and one's duties, responsibilities, and obligations, whether they are public commitments (commitments to others) or private commitments (commitments to oneself), and in difficult or challenging situations. Based on *datamattersafe64* depicted in the novel: "The woman reached out her hand to take her chisel when a sharp stinging sensation passed through her side." The female character depicts a commitment to her duties, responsibilities and obligations. Even though she felt a sharp stinging sensation passing through her side.

f. Perseverance

Display of diligent attitude towards one's work, persistence in work efforts and industrious character. Based on *datamattersafe73* depicted in the novel: "She lifted the jar from her head and shifted it onto her back. Perhaps this was a better way to carry it. If the heat flowed down her back, only bones would be there." The female character describes her perseverance in working to lift the jar. Various methods were used to reduce the heat and to be able to continue carrying the oil jar.

g. Self-discipline

The discipline to live according to one's values and principles and to achieve what one has set out to do (as expressed by one's inner drive). The discipline to function within the boundaries of one's moral compass, within agreed-upon rules and principles, and within commitments to oneself and others. Based on *datamattersafe5* described in the novel: "no, she is a very obedient woman". The female character depicts an attitude of obedience to the applicable rules. This can be seen from the husband's confession that she is an obedient woman.

h. Responsibility

Accepting responsibility for one's goals and aspirations, for one's limitations and strengths, for the choices one makes, and for the consequences of one's actions. Accepting responsibility for other people or institutions, for their interests and for one's role in relation to them. Based on *datamattersafe36* depicted in the novel: "Her feet were swollen from the journey she had taken, and the skin on her feet, covered in a layer of black dirt, peeled off." The female character depicts a responsible figure who is ready to accept the risks of her choice to become an archaeologist.

i. Trust

Displaying a reputation for keeping promises, commitments, and responsibilities so that others can trust someone to do what they say. Based on datamattersafe61 depicted in the novel: "There is a feeling that binds her to the man. But it is certainly not love." The female character describes a trustworthy figure because she is sure that the feeling that binds her to the man is not based on love. However, she only wants to devise a strategy so that she can find the statue she is looking for in that place and then after that return to her house and can prove to everyone that a woman is capable of working as an archaeologist.

j. Justice

Fairness, equality and non-bias in decision making, especially in decisions that involve and impact other people. Based on datamattersafe82 described in the novel: "Every time she looked into the eyes of the women, the pain increased. They gasped with broken voices. The joints of their necks ached from the weight of the jars." The female character wanted to prove that the treatment experienced by the women was an act of injustice to them and they needed justice in the world of work.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the data analysis and the discussion that has been presented above regarding the forms of patriarchy and moral integrity depicted in the novel "Al-hubb fii Zaman an-Nafth by Nawal El-Saadawi" can be concluded that the novel "Al-hubb fii Zaman an-Nafth by Nawal El-Saadawi" describes the existence patriarchal culture in a society that is attached which occurs in two areas, namely: public areas and private areas, and what the female character experienced when conducting research to find the statue. This female character was able to survive because she held fast to her moral integrity, such as self-motivation and drive, moral courage and firmness, honesty, consistency, commitment, perseverance, self-discipline, responsibility, trust, and fairness.

So with this research, the results of the research can be used as a reflection for the future to be better. Especially when a woman works in an environment dominated by men. This can also be used as a consideration for all agencies that a woman is also able to work in a field of work dominated by men as long as this woman is able and has a persistent and strong will in her work.

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