

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

This is chapter contains findings analysis of Rupri Kaur's poetry entitled *milk and honey*. The poetry tells many issues of women have faced in society. The issues are about women's bodies and identity which are issues raised in feminism. The researcher found out in the poetry, the author much using feminist symbols such as; *women, women's body hair, female body, her* in writing her poetry in order to tell the readers and criticizes the patriarchal society's view about women.

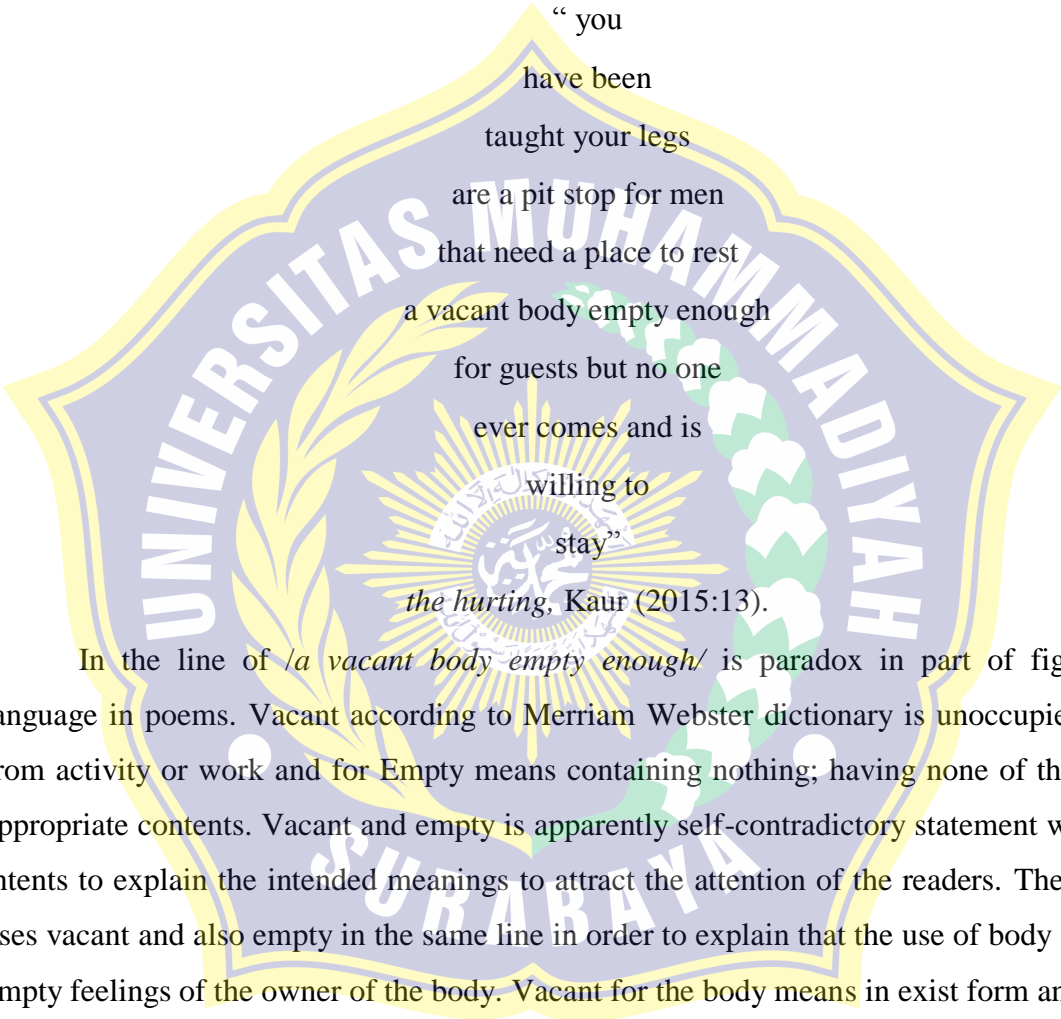
4.1 The Representation of Female Body in *milk and honey*

In this part of discussion, the researcher analyzes the way female body and identity is portrayed in Rupri Kaur's "milk and honey". The data is taken from the four sections of the poems which are *the hurting, the loving, the breaking* and *the healing*. Kaur's poems well known for its poetic style by not using capitalization in all her poems even for its title it is because as an ode to her family and ancestors (as Indian woman) that her mother tongue in Punjabi doesn't have any capitalization. Kaur also added the illustrations to her work in order to help readers in understanding her work (Kaur, 2017). In this part of discussion of the poems divided into several part according the issues of female body in feminism.

4.1.1 Female Body as Sexual Objectification

In this poetry, the researcher will analyzes the poems which represent female body and identity. In this poems the authors used the first person point a view "you" refers to women and also the authors tells the readers about her experiences during her lifetime also from her family's background. Kaur as Indian-born and she explained that in India it is really burden to be born as a female. The author clearly explained in her culture society's view about women and men is really different, men are superior than women as we can read in the poems and the roles of women in society as a daughter that should follow the cultural beliefs in her family as clearly describe by the author in the poems as */you have been taught/*, since the first time she was born she was born with the

norms of patriarchal society that she have to follow and apply in her lifetime because her family already teach her and as the traditional roles of a woman as a daughter that have to keep the honor of her family. The author also used metaphor in her work by saying */your legs are a pit stop for men/, /that need place to rest/* it means Kaur represents the female body as a place, a place for men to rest, a place to serve men's needs.



“ you
have been
taught your legs
are a pit stop for men
that need a place to rest
a vacant body empty enough
for guests but no one
ever comes and is
willing to
stay”
the hurting, Kaur (2015:13).

In the line of */a vacant body empty enough/* is paradox in part of figurative language in poems. Vacant according to Merriam Webster dictionary is unoccupied; free from activity or work and for Empty means containing nothing; having none of the usual appropriate contents. Vacant and empty is apparently self-contradictory statement which is intends to explain the intended meanings to attract the attention of the readers. The author uses vacant and also empty in the same line in order to explain that the use of body and the empty feelings of the owner of the body. Vacant for the body means in exist form and there is the use of it but empty intent to explain the feelings because it does not have any form.

Thus, both word vacant and empty is related to the female body and feelings. In this poem, the authors described her feelings when she know how is the society's forced her to give her body to a man without asking how are the feelings of her. She feels her body is empty knowing that her body became sexual objectification it is really the opposite treatment for man. The next line */for guests but/ no one ever comes and is willing to stay/*

no one ever comes is the litotes use in the poem, the use of litotes is to emphasize the conditions that the author want to explain in her poetry in unique way to attract the reader because in the sentence before Kaur wrote *guests* refer to men but the next line she wrote *no one ever comes* and *willing to stay*. Guests are people who are invited to stay in a place and as a guest you have to stay in honor to respect the invitation it is the opposite of what Kaur wrote that the guest never comes and never willing to stay. Kaur use the litotes in her poem in order to criticize men around her from the way how they treat women. From here it is clearly explained that patriarchal society's views men are having rights over women's bodies without having to take responsibility, women's bodies are only sexual objectification for them and men can do anything they want to women's bodies as they please without thinking their feelings.

The next poems to analyze is about rape in the section of "the hurting". Kaur had an experienced being inappropriately treatment from men, even from the member of her family.

"our knees
pried open
by cousins
and uncles
and men
our bodies touched
by all the wrong people
that even in a bed full of safety
we are afraid"

the hurting, Kaur (2015:36)

The researcher found the use of irony language in this poem in sentence */bed full of safety/* it is mean that the author intentionally make the reader to think about what happens to the women in our surrounding and to stop the injustice treatment from men. Thus, there is no safe place for a woman whether in her own home if men still behave disrespectfully over women also society will always blaming the victim instead of the suspect who did it. The author explains rape culture in her surrounding and how she really feel as a woman according to her culture life, how society's belief forming those men to downgrading women. The author used metaphor to

explain how the women's condition in her surroundings are. Women bodies can be owned freely without asking women's permission and it is really sad to know, women's bodies as sexual objectification and men also society forced women to remain silent. Women often get victim blaming when they criticized or tell the real story to the society, society will start to blame women than supporting or teach a man to do not rape women. As a feminist Kaur criticized this misogynists of men and patriarchal society. The author also explain this treatment can happen anywhere even men around you as she wrote in her poems /even a bed full of safety/.

4.1.2 Disciplined Female Body

The analysis in this poem is about female body hair. The author addressed this poems to men as it can see at the first time because the problems about female body is never ending and always happens repeatedly. /the next time he/. Kaur tells about her experiences as she wrote "the next time". Kaur as a feminist criticized patriarchal society because when women having body hair it will judge by the society as something disgusting and not normal, this is created by the society. Kaur also addresses to men for disciplining or asking a woman for shaving hair from their body /remind that boy/. Kaur also explained that having body hair is normal and it can grow again because it's the nature works of our body nothing to be ashamed for it is same as men too.

The researcher also found that Kaur also use metaphor in the line of her poetry /is not his home / home is a place to rest and a place to comeback. /he is a guest/ so he doesn't have the rights to disciplined woman's body because he doesn't own the body. *Guest, his home, and his welcome* in here is the irony language in poems. The use of figurative language in this sentence of the poem is to emphasize the intended meaning by the author. The author refers men as a guest because men do not own the body, men only a guest who came then leave without taking responsibility of their own action toward women.

"the next time he
points out the
hair on your legs is
growing back remind
that boy your body

is not his home
he is a guest
warn him to
never outstep
his welcome
again”

the healing, Kaur (2015:165)

As feminist, the author wrote */warn him to never outstep his welcome again/* Kaur also encouraged women to be brave in order to speak up for their rights over their body because your body is belongs to you. Female body is never ending problems in our society as the author explain */the next time/* it means that it always has happened for a long time up until now. Female body hair became the tools of oppression by men which held belief that women is subordination to them, this beliefs became normal norms in society and applied by men in threatening women in such awful way, society still praised men more than anything than women, when it is normal for men it can be not normal for women.

The second poem is about women’s body hair. The author tells her reader to be brave to take actions over their bodies without concerning about society’s views. Here is the poetry as follow:

“removing all the hair
of your body is okay
if that’s what you want to do
just as much as keeping all the hair
on your body is okay
if that’s what you want to do
you belongs to yourself”

the healing, Kaur (2015:176)

Body hair nowadays seen as a problems by society, as we know having body hair on woman is seen as disgusting when it is the natural work of our bodies while male hair perceived as masculine but when it comes to women society makes it something vulgar or even considered dirty. Women’s body hair became phenomenal problems in society

and even society's rules asked women to shave or having no body hair because women's body hair is seen disgusting. The author explained on the first to third line */removing all the hair/ of your body is okay/ if that's what you want to do/*. Women shouldn't be shamed for something that happens to everyone because all human beings grow hair on their bodies. Thus, it should have never been a problem in the first place. Women's body hair became the issues it is because the negative and beliefs from patriarchal society. In the end of the poetry the author stated that "*we belong to ourselves*".

The last poem going to analyzes is about female body hair. Here is the poetry as follows:

"hair

if it was not supposed to be there
would not be growing
on our bodies in the first place

-we are at war with what comes most naturally"

the healing, Kaur (2015:193)

The researcher found the use of hyperbole in this poem in the last line of the poetry */we are at war with what comes most naturally!*. The use of "war" in this poem describing the situation of how female body is being disciplined by the norms of society it still continues until now and never ends. What comes naturally for woman it can be a serious problem in this society. When woman keep her hairy body society will judge that it is against the rule, woman should not allowed to growing her body hair. Sadly, society seen it gross but very different when it comes to a man, patriarchal society will allow man to grow the body hair freely.

4.1.3 Sexual Reproduction Issue

Next poetry is about period. The researcher found the use of litotes in Kaur's poems instead of directly point out the true meaning in her poems */what's between woman's legs/* it can make the reader pause and thinking again what it is mean, it makes the reader guessing the meaning of what's between woman's legs there is a lot between woman's legs instead of wrote it directly because Kaur wants her readers to read and imagine her poems. Therefore she also use the words */recreational/* and */nature/*. Kaur mentions that the female body is a place of nature recreational for men that will bring pleasure and

release any anxiety. Even Kaur's poems labelling as the simplicity but it can make the reader guessing and imagine what is the truly meaning in it.

In this poems, Kaur also describing her experiences when having her periods. The author used metaphor in writing her poetry and it is criticized towards men or society's view about women's periods. It is often happens when women have their periods they will see it so gross and taboo. In her work */ungrateful of me to mention my period in public/*, Kaur represent her growing-up culture and a lots of women's feeling when they mention their periods in public because it is something which is comes naturally */cause the actual biology of my body is too real/*. Some people can be immature about periods. This problems occurs because of society traditional belief's that woman who have her periods is unclean and other myth about women's periods. The poem is here as follow:

“apparently it is ungraceful of me
to mention my period in public
cause the actual biology
of my body is too real

it is okay to sell what's
between a woman's legs
more than it is okay to
mention it is inner workings

the recreational use of
this body is seen as
beautiful while

its nature
seen as ugly”

the healing, Kaur (2015:177)

Therefore, it is more than okay to sell what's between woman's legs than talk about the inner workings of women's bodies. The author used metaphor in writing her poetry by saying *between a woman's legs*. Patriarchal society are not going to criticized for being so grossly

disgusting about it than talking about periods. The metaphor used in Kaur poetry is explained the nature of female body such as; body hairy, periods, and women's skin got a lots of criticized from society if it is not perfectly fine as society expects about their standards. Kaur also used metaphor in her poems by saying / this body is seen as beautiful/ female body is too beautiful and doesn't have any definition and it was meant to be looked with fascination, both of the inner workings or the recreational use. Meanwhile society see the other part of female body when it comes to periods seen as gross as something disgusting. Thus, a lots of women struggle over this problems.

4.2 The Representation of Female Identity in *milk and honey*

4.2.1 Female Identity as Cultural Symbol

The first poems will be analyzes by the researcher is in the first section of Kaur's work "the hurting". At the beginning of the sentence of her poems, she begins with a rejection of the norms set by the patriarchy society. According to (Doshi: 2018) described women was raised with the norms of society and their bodies loaded with cultural symbols. The identity roles women here as a daughter that have to keep the pride of her family.

“there is no bigger illusion in the world
than the idea that a woman will
bring dishonor into a home
if she tries to keep her heart
and her body safe”

the hurting, Kaur (2015:24)

The author explains about being a daughter and a woman in her family. The author as Indian-born tells how her culture is threatening women, downgrading women even your parents didn't much pleased when they have daughter. Kaur also explains how her surrounding expecting to her to get married by a certain age by saying /*if she tries to keep her heart/ and her body safe/*. As a feminist she criticized those belief that woman is merely an objectification and society expects to control over woman as she wrote /*there is no bigger illusion in the world/*. Women have a rights to determine what they choose over themselves without getting interrupting by society. In this line /*bring dishonor into a home/*. Kaur explained her position or her roles as a daughter, a woman in her family and surrounding. The writer also conveyed the

values over her culture (Indian culture) that women in her country should be married as their parents choices.

Thus, the researcher found the symbol used in this poems, the author used the feminist symbol in this poems using the word *woman* and *her*. On the last fourth and fifth line the author wrote / *if she tries to keep her heart and her body safe*/ in this poem the author explained about female body loaded with symbolism in her family in her cultural and it's led to controversies in society. There is no something wrong when a woman keeping her body and her heart safe. Safe in here means a freedom to determine in every aspects over their lives without getting interrupted to follow society's rules because women also born as human beings and have a rights to equal to others. Women's bodies are their own.

4.2.2 Female Identity in Gender Roles

The next poetry written by Rupi Kaur is about her cultural hereditary, how men in her country threatening women and the traditional roles of a woman as a wives and mother who taking care of her child and also must be obedient to her husband. Here is the poetry as follow:

“ when my mother opens her mouth
to have conversation at dinner
my father shoves the word hush
between his lips and tells her to
never speak with her mouth full
this is how the women in my family
learned to live with their mouth closed”

the hurting, Kaur (2015:35)

The author explains how women should behave according to society norms. Kaur used feminist symbol which is her mother as a woman in her family, Kaur's mother live her life as her father said to her mother Thus, Kaur criticized the way how her family life without no freedom to express what they really feel (what woman feels) because women in her family live with their life with their mouth closed /*this is how the women in my family/ learned to live with their mouth closed*/, in here clearly explains that man have a control over woman's life.

The next poems is from the hurting's section. In patriarchy culture, female identity is shaping by the society as it is expected. Women always get discriminated according to their role in society. In this poems the traditional gender roles seen from the roles of a woman as a daughter in her family.

“a daughter should
not have to
beg her father
for a relationship”

the hurting, Kaur (2015:28)

Kaur also describing her cultural belief that women's life is according to her father. Woman roles here as a daughter in her family carrying the responsibilities to keep their family's pride. Women based on the gender identity belief of society expect to act feminine, weak, and subordinate to men in both public and private life. Kaur described her father as a man in her family who follows patriarchal culture that see women as inferior and has a power over women as his daughter and it is led to women's oppression. Kaur criticized the norms belief of patriarchal society that men can determine women's choices.

The next poems from the healing section. The researcher choose this poems because this poems contain the representation of female identity. In the second and third line of the poem the author wrote /so beautiful/ it means that as a women we born so pure to welcome the world but it turns out to be tragedy when society's norms limited women's rights. The greatest tragedy/ is when we live must be according to what society expects rather than just being ourselves. The use of irony is to increase the readers either men or women's knowledge and to change the readers perspective to not apply the society's beliefs if it is not fair for women. It is also the greatest tragedy when we born but we have to live as the patriarchal society's belief for example; men is superior than women, women does not own their own body it is really sad to know, and society decide what should woman do and what should not woman do.

“we are all born
so beautiful

the greatest tragedy is

being convinced we are not”

the healing, Kaur (2015:183)

Female identity clearly illustrated in the poem, how patriarchal culture shaping the identity. Kaur explained /we are all/ refers to herself as a woman and every woman out there that we are born so beautiful and so pure but here is come the greatest tragedy being convinced because of the patriarchal belief that expected women to behave as their norms. The metaphor of beautiful means that women was born with their own unique identity and their freedom to do whatever they wants also to be able to determine their lives for their future. Kaur wrote /the greatest tragedy/ tragedy here mean expressed her feeling how sad and terrible the patriarchal culture convinced women to act like their construction belief in given identity to women. Patriarchal society expects women to behave feminine, submissive and subordination to men.

4.3. The Representation of Female Body and Identity from Feminism Perspective

In this part of discussion, the researcher analyzes the representation of female body and identity as portrayed in Rupi Kaur Poems *milk and honey* using feminism perspective.

Based on the analyzes above the researcher found that in the poems represent the third wave feminism because Kaur works discusses about woman’s body, rage, culture and racism, sexual reproduction and women’s decision over their bodies. In “milk and honey” Kaur much talking about how the female body became a tool of oppression in society. In the third wave feminism, criticizes about the ideology formed by society which is led to the women’s oppression from the opposite sexes. In the poems Kaur represent women does not have the rights over their bodies as explained in her poems in several sections of “milk and honey” for example in the hurting’s section Kaur explained that women have to give the rights of her body to men. Women also have been taught according the society norms that men is superior and have control over women.

Feminism perspective see the portrayed of female body in Rupi Kaur poems as a sexual objectification, being disciplined, as a cultural symbol and also sexual oppression. In this poems men threatening women as a mere object of their sexual desire rather than as a whole person. The culture of patriarchal society also has important roles in framing this belief, women no longer have a rights over their bodies. Men see that female body as a tools for their desire and it is also supported by society’s norms that women had been taught that their legs are a pit stop for men to

rest, men hold primary power over women. It is supported by (Twenge, 2002) that female body is subordination to men and it is something to be controlled. Women have no rights over the body even since she was a kid raised by the norms of society that her body is for men.

In Kaur's poems female body is loaded with cultural symbols that construct by the society. Women have been taught to keep the family's pride no matter how even she has to enter marriage in such a young age. We were born with the ideology from society. From a young age, girls are indoctrinated into virtues norms in order to fulfil the normal ideology as the society construct. This practice is still happen which itself contributes to maintaining the traditional gender roles and it is very disadvantage for a woman in every aspects. This patriarchy culture lead to misogynist. Women doesn't have a rights over their bodies because society expects women to follow their beliefs.

Feminism perspective also seen in the poems that female body is being disciplined by the standard of beauty that women have to be hairless according the society norms. Patriarchal society and men expects women behave as their beliefs, female bodily hair is seen as disgusting and there is no women should have growing hair in their body they should shave it. Feminism criticize the standard rule from society that women should not growing their body hair. Society expect women hairless, banishing hair for the sake of normal view of society as it should be, women need more shaving, waxing, plucking to keep it hairless. The hairless body becomes the only acceptable and see as normal according to the norms of society. Therefore, based on the poems using feminism perspective, female body belongs to men when they get married. Women have to remain silent of the injustice treatment. This problems is still being practiced in our society and there are not any women in the world that had not been through this discrimination.

Female identity seen from feminism perspective in *milk and honey* is the identity of a woman shaped by society. Society expects for woman to behave as their ideology. Women does not get the equal rights in every aspects even in determine their decision about their future. For example in marriage, women often forced to enter marriage in such a young age because of the tradition in society as portrayed in the poem */a daughter should not beg her father for relationship/*. The traditional roles of woman as a daughter in her family, which get oppression from her surroundings. Women often forced to enter marriage in such a young age in order to

follow the social norms and they cannot choose their husband by themselves. Therefore, various problems emerge because of the norms construct by society.

Patriarchal society belief bring the serious problems to women. Women's right are restricted by the odd beliefs that men is superior to women. In feminism perspective there is no bigger illusion that men is more superior than women because basically both men and women are human being and has the same rights also equal to each other as clearly explain in Kaur poems */there is no bigger illusion in the world that woman will bring dishonor into a home if she determine the future by herself /*. Women's have to struggle because of the male oppression, male thinks that they are superior than women so have a rights to determine women's choices. As a feminist Kaur bringing up the condition of women in her country (India) and how patriarchal society make it worse for women until they lost their freedom to express what they really feel even when Indian women got raped they have to shut their mouths */women in my family learned to live with their mouth closed/*.

Feminism as a way to bring a change in society's view over women, it is also supported by (Freedman, 2006) that patriarchal society's view over women is need to change in order to end women's oppression. Women have the right to be treated fairly as men without being seen as inferior to men. Thus, feminism is to end sexism, oppression, and sexual harassment, the concept of beauty standards, patriarchal culture over women, rape culture and another women's issues. Feminism criticized the patriarchal culture which still exist if the society continues to construct those beliefs and it will always happen. Feminism is to empower women to rise up against all forms of discrimination as the message in Kaur poetry. Feminist voice in this poetry is to encourage women to speak up for their rights in every aspects. Women have a rights over their bodies; growing body hair or not also to choose whatever they wants in her life without getting interrupted by society and told what they should and not.